

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF DIFFERENTIATED
INSTRUCTION AT A FOUNDATION SCHOOL IN TURKEY: A CASE STUDY

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TURKEY: A CASE STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

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Process of learning a new language can be a challenging journey shaped by various differences students bring into the classrooms. This situation can pave the way for adopting the differentiated instruction approach. Since teachers are the ones managing the process of differentiated instruction, they hold a significant place as stakeholders. Therefore, this case study aims to investigate the ways the instruction is differentiated in English lessons in a private middle school in Ankara and how the teachers perceive differentiated instruction. Fifteen teachers took part in the study, and the data was collected with interviews and analysis of ten lesson plans. The inductive analysis approach was applied to analyse the qualitative data, and significant themes emerged. The findings revealed that the English teachers taking part in this case study differentiate their instruction mainly on the products of their lessons considering their students' readiness level, working style preferences, and interests. They perceived differentiation with many advantages, such as the increase in student motivation, engagement and academic progress. Regarding the disadvantages, the participants observed the emergence of negative feelings and negatively affected class atmosphere because of some students' negative perceptions. Findings also revealed the obstacles and challenges of the participants, such as lack

of support and information regarding differentiated instruction. The results also showed that the teachers overcome these challenges mostly with the help of their co-workers. Considering these findings, the current study provided some recommendations regarding the role of the institutions and integration of differentiated instruction in teacher education programs.

Keywords: Differentiated Instruction, Teacher Perceptions of Differentiated Instruction, EFL, Teacher Experiences, Teaching English

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE’DE BİR VAKIF OKULUNDA ÇALIŞAN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN FARKLILAŞTIRILMIŞ ÖĞRETİMİ ALGILAYIŞ ŞEKİLLERİ: BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

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Yeni bir dil öğrenme süreci, öğrencilerin sınıflara getirdiği çeşitli farklılıklarla şekillenen zorlu bir yolculuk olabilir. Dolayısıyla, bu durum farklılaştırılmış öğretim yaklaşımının benimsenmesine zemin hazırlayabilir. Farklılaştırılmış öğretim süreci bizzat öğretmenler tarafından yönetildiği için, öğretmenler bu süreçte paydaş olarak çok önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Bu nedenle, bu durum çalışması, Ankara’da özel bir ortaokulda İngilizce derslerinde öğretimin nasıl farklılaştırıldığını ve öğretmenlerin farklılaştırılmış öğretimi nasıl algıladıklarını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırmaya 15 öğretmen katılmış ve veriler röportaj ve on ders planının analizi ile toplanmıştır. Nitel verilerin analizinde tümevarımsal analiz yaklaşımı uygulanmış ve önemli temalar ortaya çıkmıştır. Bulgular, bu durum çalışmasına katılan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin, öğrencilerinin hazır bulunuşluk düzeyi, çalışma tarzı tercihleri ve ilgi alanlarını göz önünde bulundurarak öğretimlerini esas olarak derslerinin ürünlerine göre farklılaştırdığını ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin farklılaştırmayı, öğrenci motivasyonundaki artış, katılım ve akademik ilerleme gibi birçok avantajla algıladıkları sonucunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Dezavantaj olarak ise, katılımcılar bazı öğrencilerin farklılaştırılmış materyallere karşı olumsuz algıları

nedeniyle olumsuz duyguların ortaya çıktığını ve sınıf atmosferini olumsuz etkilediğini gözlemlemişlerdir. Bulgular ayrıca katılımcıların farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair destek ve bilgi eksikliği gibi engel ve zorluklarla karşılaştıklarını sergilemiştir. Aynı zamanda, sonuçlar öğretmenlerin bu zorlukları çoğunlukla iş arkadaşlarının yardımıyla aştığını göstermiştir. Bu bulgular göz önüne alındığında, mevcut çalışma, kurumların rolü ve farklılaştırılmış öğretimin öğretmen eğitimi programlarına entegrasyonu ile ilgili bazı önerilerde bulunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Farklılaştırılmış Öğretim, Öğretmenlerin Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimi Algılaması, İngilizcenin Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğretimi, Öğretmen Deneyimleri, İngilizce Öğretimi

*To my beloved parents
and
to every educator who is dedicated to inspiring other hearts*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DI	Differentiated Instruction
EFL	English as a Foreign Language

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes a background to the study with the research problem, significance of the study and definition of terms.

1.1. Background to the Study

In most of the educational contexts, learner communities are not likely to reflect the same background or preferences 100% all the time. Each individual in a learning community comes from a different segment of life and brings a different learning experience to the class. Thus, the learner community, “a class of students”, makes it necessary for the teachers to take this diversity into consideration. Also, it could be argued that these unique and identical learning environments can be observed in every kind of subject, regardless of the content.

This is especially true in English classes where English is the foreign language due to the fact that learners are not exposed to English in their everyday life and not every learner may have the same opportunity to practice the language effectively. In addition, their learning process is impacted and shaped not only by the social and/or cultural background of the students, but also their emotional and mental readiness and maturity. The learners’ interests can also carry an essential role in this process. Krupičková (2005) also states that students’ interests can be different both in terms of topic and intensity, which leads to various levels of academic readiness in many aspects of even only one subject.

In general, these statements point out that teachers should design a needs analysis for their students, so that each and every individual can be an active party of their learning community. Teachers are the ones who can create a class atmosphere with

respect to diverse student needs and this gives them the leading role in the whole process.

Related to the role of teachers, these needs pointing to the role of teachers' jobs and the quality of their teaching have existed in the past. As Richards and Rodgers (2014) stated, language teaching has a long history and the basis of current language teaching methods were mostly developed in the early parts of twentieth century because most applied linguists and others worked on the framework of teaching methods and materials. As a result of this seeking, various approaches and methods for language teaching have emerged such as *grammar-translation* or *direct method*. Considering that none of the new emerging methods had the capacity to completely satisfy the needs and aims of the teachers and learners, the emergence of a series of approaches or methods have continued. Therefore, it can be assumed that the search for a perfect approach to teaching is a continuing journey for the education world.

Not only abroad, but in Turkey, educational contexts have sought for a better approach to language teaching. In the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) strategy report, a project named as "English Speaking Generation" is mentioned. The starting point of the project is that most students in Turkey cannot use English especially as a means of speaking and they cannot use their knowledge to be able to actually produce the language (MEB, 2015). Thus, the project aims to help students to improve their speaking skill by having them use English in daily life with their personal experiences and perspectives, such as keeping a diary, or summarizing a book that they enjoyed reading English (MEB, 2015).

Another study conducted by Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2012) highlights that while deciding on the materials and the approach to adopt in English language teaching, educators in Turkey should consider their students' needs and how they can use the language outside of their own context while also aware of the possible purposes of their usage. Along these lines, it is underlined that learners in Turkey need to be aware of what they are learning and why they are learning to be able to have an effective English learning journey. Therefore, teachers should be attentive to improving this mindset.

Considering this situation in Turkey, teachers in Turkey may want to be aware of what kind of approaches and methodologies will help their students learn and use English at a qualified level. Although there have been different kinds of methods and approaches, choosing the right one may change in accordance with the target student profile. Consequently, teachers may adopt an approach or a strategy that goes well with their own student profile, which can be connected with the approach “differentiated instruction” improved by Carol Tomlinson (Tomlinson, 1999).

According to Tomlinson (2014), teachers should create an environment where students are provided with alternatives whereby each one of the students can find out his/her own road map to be able to learn as deeply as possible in the most effective way. Thus, it is highlighted that each road map is unique representing the unique side of each individual in the classroom and depending on the teacher’s aim and priorities, content, process or product of a lesson can be differentiated based on the teacher’s observation of the students.

Thereupon, it would be best to go over the basic terms related to the differentiated instruction. Content refers to the target information and/or skill, the process is how the student construes, adapts and uses the content, and the product is how the student reflects and shows what has been learned within the lesson (Gregory & Chapman, 2007). Additionally, using any data that reflects students’ choices in terms of their interest and learning profile can help identify the outline of this process for the teachers.

Besides the challenge of analyzing the students’ data, it is also a challenge, trying to teach the same content in the same manner to different individuals in terms of their academic level, interests, cultural background or learning preference underlining an array of needs (Tomlinson, 2014).

Tomlinson (2014) also refers to the starting point of differentiated instruction, which is one-room schoolhouses. In one-room school houses, teachers had to deal with different groups of students varied in terms of age, abilities and interests (Gundlach,

2011). Although individualized instruction may have sounded like the right plan at first, instructing the students according to their own pace and success rate, these actions also did not take long to be implemented and adopted by the teachers (Washburne, 1953). Thus, differentiated instruction has emerged from urgent needs because of the education system of the time and the challenges that teachers had to go through within this system.

As it has been highlighted at the beginning of this part, students bring in many differences into the classroom atmosphere, and differentiated instruction aims to increase the democracy in the learning environment by giving all students the same level of qualified education that is shaped according to their personal needs, abilities, and interests despite their differences in terms of race, socio-economic background or nationality (Thousand et al., 2014).

Hereby, teachers adopting the differentiated instruction approach brings along the respected learning environment both among the learners and towards the learners, which can be considered as a positive effect on the learning process powering up the bond between the teacher and the students along with the ensured appropriate space that is dedicated to personal growth.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate (1) the ways the instruction is differentiated in English lessons in a private middle school, (2) how the teachers perceive the differentiated instruction based on the advantages and disadvantages, and (3) what kind of challenges they face and how they overcome those challenges. In line with these purposes, the following research questions are created to carry out the data collection and data analysis:

1. In what ways is the instruction differentiated in English lessons in a private middle school?

2. What are the teachers' perceptions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of differentiated instruction?

3. Do the teachers working in a private middle school face any obstacles while differentiating their instruction? What kinds of obstacles do they face while differentiating their instruction?

4. How do the teachers working in a private middle school overcome the obstacles they face while implementing differentiated instruction?

1.3. Significance of the Study

This study holds a significant place in various aspects. Since the researcher herself works in the institution where the data is collected from, she has the opportunity to have access to the lesson plans that are prepared and used by the participants, which are also used in the data analysis process. Thus, with the collected data, the researcher is able to present a general frame of the case, which is teachers' experiences in implementing differentiated instruction in a private middle school through a number of themes.

In addition, the related literature still needs further research that investigates differentiated instruction and its implementation by English teachers teaching at different levels. In the literature, there are studies investigating the usage of DI with the third grade students in maths lessons, with the sixth grade students in maths lessons and its effects on their metacognitive skills, teaching Turkish as a foreign language in the context of distant education using DI, using DI with gifted children in science lessons, how DI affect the classroom environment, using DI in physical education lessons, and awareness and usage of DI by core teachers (Abu & Gökdere, 2020; Demirkaya, 2018; Ekinçi & Bal, 2019; Ozan & Göçmenler, 2018; Özbal, 2018; Salar & Turgut, 2019; Taş & Sırmacı, 2018).

On the other hand, there are still not many studies investigating the usage of differentiated instruction in English lessons. There are studies that studied on the effect of DI in English lessons in terms of the academic success, students' perspectives on DI according to the students' ways of thinking, gifted students' affective connection with English lessons, and using DI with gifted children (Güllühalı, 2019; Kaya et al., 2022; Özer & Yılmaz, 2018; Şan, 2021; Türegün, 2020).

As it can be seen, there are not enough studies focusing on the implementation of differentiated instruction in English lessons in K-12 context. In the relevant literature, most studies focus on the gifted children or the other subjects with DI. Thus, the context of Turkey is still in need of research studies that focus on differentiated instruction in English lessons in K-12 level.

Moreover, it is aimed in the current research study to help other educators in the field to gain more insights on other teachers' experiences on the usage DI in a private school context, which can pave the way for possible solutions for the future generations to be able to improve the quality of DI and for the teachers that seek the ways to get better at differentiated instruction.

1.4. Definition of Terms in the Context of Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated Instruction (DI): A student-centered, proactive, evaluation-based and qualitative teaching method which offers the content, process and product with various approaches by considering student readiness levels, interests and learning needs (Tomlinson, 2001).

Content: The knowledge and/or skill aimed to be taught (Gregory & Chapman, 2007).

Process: How students internalize and make sense of content, skills or ideas (Tomlinson, 2001).

Product: How students demonstrate what they have learned during a unit, semester, or year (Tomlinson, 2001).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter aims to provide essential information regarding the main framework of differentiated instruction (DI). It contains brief information about the roots of differentiated instruction, the definition and major characteristics of differentiated instruction, ways of differentiating the instruction, differentiated instruction strategies in EFL context, the rationale for differentiated instruction, various studies on differentiated instruction, the role of teacher beliefs and misconceptions about differentiated instruction, and challenges for differentiating the instruction.

2.1. The Roots of Differentiated Instruction

It was not until the 1600s that the history of differentiated instruction started when the education was given by one teacher in one room where students varied in terms of grades and maturity levels (Gundlach, 2011). Surely, it should also be emphasized that there was no technology at all. The same resource also states that one room schoolhouses were still in use till 1919 in the United States (Gundlach, 2011). The nature of these classroom types showed a great variety just like the classrooms today, which means that students were different in terms of their abilities, skills, interests, and their academic level. Later in time, Washburne (1953) also points out this problem in his article titled as *Adjusting the Program to the Child* discussing the need and urge to find a solution for meeting the student needs in a varied classroom environment. The article goes over some attempts to find out a solution within the frame of this problem and finally can illustrate an approach proposed by Preston Search in 1889. As Washburne (1953) illustrates Preston Search was “ahead of his time” and improved a way where students could learn at their own pace facing the actual problem of the time in the education world. He suggested that a flexible program could be managed to be able to provide each student an environment where

they could get along with the classroom activities and tasks in accordance with their own pace. According to this approach in a nutshell, Washburne (1953) explains in the article in the end, *the common core* or which can be thought as the content, can stay the same; however, the individual success and pace are taken into consideration to be able to achieve the overall goal of the lessons during the lesson planning stage. On the other hand, as Washburne (1953) states all of these efforts were stuck with Search's individual interest and work for some time.

It was not until 1912 when achievement tests and intelligence tests had a breakthrough with people realizing the differences in children (Washburne, 1953). At that time, Frederic Burk in the San Francisco State Normal School transformed textbooks to make them self-instructive to be able to help students to continue in their own pace with a member of his faculty Mary Ward (Washburne, 1953). All these efforts resulted in success for some time because Burk's studies resulted in nation-wide interest and a member of his team was invited to adapt Burk's ideas to public school conditions in Winnetka (Washburne, 1953). As the experiments and all hard work of turning the textbooks into self-instructive ones grew in time, this success and popularity directed educators to talk about the "Winnetka Plan" and "Dalton Plan", which was different from the previous one (Washburne, 1953). "Dalton Plan" was built up by Helen Parkhurst and it also aimed the individual development (Washburne, 1953).

However, these two popular plans were thought of being replaced by another approach which was called the "Project Method" proposed by William H. Kilpatrick (Washburne, 1953). This approach arose with the idea that both the Winnetka Plan and Dalton Plan overlooked the social interaction and experience within the learning process (Washburne, 1953). With the relief of not replanning the curriculum, schools misunderstood this approach and went back to their former programs. Practically, in the end, as Washburne (1953) states, all these efforts and movements resulted in ignoring the differences among students in terms of their academic level, maturity, and interests.

As Gundlach (2011) addresses, the most recent movement towards differentiation happened with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It was legalized by Congress in 1975 to assure that children with disabilities can also benefit from free education (Lipkin et al., 2015). With the renewal made by Congress in December 2004, final updates were announced in August 2006 (Lipkin et al., 2015). Thus, it was aimed that students that were identified with special needs were able to have access to education that was framed within their abilities and needs (Lipkin et al., 2015). With the guidelines provided to schools by the IDEA, teachers could also make their planning accordingly, which paved the way for differentiated instruction (Gundlach, 2011).

In addition, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in the United States (2002- 2015) was enacted holding the schools responsible for student outcomes (Klein, 2015). On the other hand, in December 2015, Congress put forward the “Every Student Succeeds Act” to replace NCLB (Klein, 2015). As Klein (2016) explains in her web article, the “Every Student Succeeds Act” was created to aim states’ setting their own goals to make sure that all groups of students close their gaps in achievement and graduation scale, which actually can be thought as building up the basis of the mentality of differentiated instruction.

2.2. The Definition and Characteristics of Differentiated Instruction

Tomlinson is well-known for her works that have directed the educators regarding differentiated instruction for many years. She states that one can understand if a successful teaching happens if there are two elements which are *student understanding* and *student engagement* (Tomlinson, 2014). Specifically, students must be fully aware of what they are occupied with in the lessons, and they must make sense of the whole process. Tomlinson officially describes the differentiated instruction as the following: “At its most basic level, differentiating instruction means “shaking up” what goes on in the classroom so that students have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas, and expressing what they learn” (Tomlinson, 2001, p. 1).

To be more specific, in a classroom where differentiated instruction is applied, students should be able to choose among the options that they are presented with, should process the information they receive in a meaningful manner that is suitable with their own pace, and finally should show evidence in their own way as a sign of learning has occurred.

Tomlinson (2001) makes an introduction to the topic stating that there have been generations that experienced one type of instruction, and they may be unfamiliar with the mentality of differentiated instruction. She also discusses that differentiated instruction should not be confused with *individualized instruction* of the 1970s even though it can be thought of as the first steps of the concept of differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2001). In addition, she clearly expresses that differentiated instruction is not giving some group of students more complex questions or giving easier assignments to the others (Tomlinson, 2001).

Instead, according to Tomlinson (2001), differentiated instruction is proactive meaning that each classroom is an environment where students have different needs; thus, this situation makes it a necessity that teachers should plan their lessons beforehand including a variety of ways to start the process of learning and to provide an environment where students can show what they learn in the end.

It can be said that to be able to follow this guideline that was provided by Tomlinson, a teacher first should get to know the students well. Therefore, all kinds of information related to students should be obtained with observation, assessment, individual communication with the students, classroom interactions, and thus, the gathered information should be used to tailor the essence of what will be taught. Tomlinson (2001) also supports these ideas indicating that teachers should assess their students' readiness levels, interest and preference for learning in different ways throughout the term to be able to direct and craft the way for a successful teaching.

Although it will be discussed in a detailed way in the next part, it should also be emphasized along these lines that according to Tomlinson (2001), there are three

main curricular elements which are *content*, *process*, and *product* according to which various approaches can be created within the frame of differentiated instruction. Thus, it may be suggested that putting the students in the core of all possible approaches, differentiated instruction cares and seeks for student engagement. The main idea here is that each individual in a learning community is different from the other in terms of maturity, readiness, abilities, preferences, and interests. That's why, teachers should be searching for ways to teach appealing to this variety both in the short and long run.

The search for appealing to different student profiles brings along the necessity of a classroom environment that supports that, where each individual is treated, respected, valued and welcomed with the differences they bring (Ortega et al., 2018). Therefore, it is believed that the learning process in an environment like this should be fruitful in many manners, considering the motivating factors on behalf of the students.

Overall, it would be good to summarize the process that takes place in a classroom where differentiated instruction is applied to understand its core points and main characteristics that was designed within a table by Tomlinson (2001). A teacher that applies differentiated instruction follows progressive steps which include preparation for the whole class beforehand, reviewing and sharing the prepared content, giving the students a chance to opt for individual or group works, students' making sense of the content, extending their knowledge in accordance with their interests, and finally showing the evidence of learning or so-called *production* (Tomlinson, 2001).

2.3. Ways of Differentiating the Instruction

Teachers who adopt differentiated instruction should consider the following essential elements to use as a guideline, which are students' readiness level, interest, and learning profile (Key Elements of Differentiated Instruction - ASCD 2011). Taking these into consideration, teachers can differentiate the content, process, product and the learning environment (Key Elements of Differentiated Instruction - ASCD 2011).

2.3.1. Differentiating the Instruction according to Students' Readiness Level

Tomlinson and Imbeau define readiness as “a student’s current proximity to specified knowledge, understanding, and skills” (2010, p. 16). With this definition, it may not be harmful to consider that when one says *readiness*, it definitely does not mean ability or a situation that continues for a long term. Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) also support this statement underlining that *readiness* expresses an impermanent situation which should evolve in time with the help of qualified teaching.

The main idea of differentiating the instruction according to the readiness level of students is to prepare the teaching content in a slightly above level of the students and making sure that they receive the necessary support they need when a new level of challenge is presented (Key Elements of Differentiated Instruction - ASCD 2011). In addition, Tomlinson (2001) states that teachers should assess students’ prior knowledge to be able to know where the students are and how much support they need for the upcoming works.

Moreover, she puts forward many different ways to ensure that students are provided with the suitable level of challenge. In this respect, she underlines that to be able to address the student readiness, teachers can alter materials, activities, and products in a classroom environment in a way that the challenge of the work is set and changed in time to turn the students from possible dependent learners to more independent learners (Tomlinson, 2001, p. 47).

2.3.2. Differentiating the Instruction according to Students' Interest

Defining the word *interest* in the frame of differentiated instruction can be a good starting point. Tomlinson and Imbeau define it as: “that which engages the attention, curiosity, and involvement of a student” (2010, p. 16). Thus, as it can be clearly seen, it all comes to engaging the students to be able to capture their attention, making them curious of what will be taught, and resulting with the active participation of the

students within the teaching and learning process, which the unity of the learning environment can be achieved with.

Additionally, in the literature of educational psychology, there is a big place for the relationship between interest and motivation. Even though Weber (2003) underlines that the function of interest in learning has been controversial for many years, it could also be said that interest can play a significant role in paving the way for increased motivation. Weber (2003) also reports that various instructional researchers affirm the effect of using the interest on boosting the student motivation.

As the final remarks in this aspect, it can be stated that knowing the important relationship between the interest and motivation, teachers should plan their teaching content accordingly. Surely, it is not an easy job to cater for each student's interest during the planning and action of teaching. On the other hand, intriguing the students will always enhance the quality. In their book titled as *Leadership for Differentiating Schools & Classrooms*, Tomlinson and Allan (2000) also support this approach presenting the list below:

- Using adults or peers with prior knowledge to serve as mentors in an area of shared interest
- Providing a variety of avenues for student exploration of a topic or expression of learning
- Providing broad access to a wide range of materials and technologies
- Giving students a choice of tasks and products, including student-designed options. Encouraging investigation or application of key concepts and principles in student interest areas (p. 10).

2.3.3. Differentiating the Instruction according to Students' Learning Profile

A simple definition of the target term is presented by Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010). The exact definition of "learning profile" is as the following: "a preference for taking in, exploring, or expressing content," (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010, p. 17). Thus, it

portrays a condition where students are taken into account with their choices in how to receive what is taught, how to proceed with the received input, and how to display the act of learning.

In addition, Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) explain that a student's learning profile is molded with four components and the cooperation among them, which are *learning style, intelligence preference, gender, and culture*.

Learning style is indicated as “a preferred contextual approach” (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010, p. 17), which means that a student may prefer working individually or with a partner or working in a silent environment or with music. In this fashion, this list can continue with many more options. The essence of the idea at this point is that one's learning style means the preferred context to be enrolled with the learning process.

Intelligence preference is defined as “a hard-wired or neurologically shaped preference for learning or thinking” (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010, p. 17). Intelligence preference can be exemplified as the following “linguistic intelligence”, “intrapersonal intelligence”, “musical intelligence”, and so on (Chen et al., 2009, p. 6). Therefore, teachers may benefit from these concepts especially in the planning stage of their lessons to be able to address more students' needs.

Gender indicates any effect on learning with the idea that approaches to learning can be shaped by genetic or social factors. Maubach and Morgan (2001) also seek to understand the relationship between the gender and learning and finds out that genders may employ different avenues in interest in the lesson content, taking risks in the case of language production and presenting self-confidence while communicating with the instructor from time to time within their limited research scope (Maubach & Morgan, 2001). Thus, it may be advantageous to consider these kinds of issues while planning and actively teaching on behalf of the teachers.

Culture can also play a significant role in how students can shape their journey of learning. As Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) specifies, the circumstances which surround an individual can mold the way how the individual understands life from his/her perspective and how he/she proceeds. Thus, it may be inevitable to say that students may be likely to receive what is taught from their own perspective filtering in agreement with their own life experiences. Therefore, the experiences and experiments that are possessed by the impact of culture can direct the teachers to tailor up their instruction accordingly to be able to serve the students' needs at the highest level.

2.3.4. Differentiating Content, Process and Production

2.3.4.1. Differentiating Content

Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) define *content* as the following: “the knowledge, understanding, and skills we want students to learn” (p. 15). Thinking of this description, one can consider that there may be some circumstances to make some adjustments or changes in what a teacher wants to teach. According to Tomlinson (2001), differentiating content can be applied in two ways. The first one is making an adaptation to what is taught, and the other one is making necessary adjustments on how the teacher gives access to the intended input (Tomlinson, 2001). For instance, a more advanced learner may work on a complex grammatical structure in an English class while a lower-level student practices on a beginner grammatical structure which can be a prerequisite knowledge for the former one, which can exemplify the first way to differentiate the content. For the latter way, an example situation can be considered as the following. A teacher can keep the input, what is taught, the same; however, s/he may support the advanced learners to work on complex practices independently while the students that need more support can work on the standard practice also coached by peers (Tomlinson, 2001).

At this point, a true connection can be built up with *scaffolding*. As Hammond and Gibbons (2005) explain, scaffolding means the necessary amount of assistance at the

right time to help learners continue with their tasks in a successful manner also aiming to provide the required awareness to the students to fully understand this concept. Following the same mentality, a teacher that aims to differentiate the content can make changes on how students can gain access to the intended target topic by supporting them vigorously and always to move forward in accordance with the learners' needs.

2.3.4.2. Differentiating Process

Tomlinson and Allan (2000) introduce the process as “how the learner perceives the given input, internalizes it, getting the full concept of the key elements within the target frame” (p. 8). Additionally, Tomlinson and Allan (2000) state that process can also be perceived as activities. Further explanation is supported with the idea that an effectual activity or task should be in such properties that the learners should be utilizing a significant skill to be able to fully understand the given important concept by also being focused and aware of the learning goal (Tomlinson & Allan, 2000).

Akos et al. (2007, p. 458) also explains in their article on differentiating classroom guidance that teachers have employed various ways to be able to assist students in the process of gaining the new input, such as role play, learning contracts, and different kinds of assignments. Thus, it is crystal clear that when a teacher applies differentiation in the process, learners can have various ways and options to understand the new information (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005).

2.3.4.3. Differentiating Product

According to Tomlinson (2001), product is the step that is likely to take a longer time in its nature especially when it is compared to process. It is the stage where students can reflect upon what they have learned by using and expanding the information they have gained individually or with peers over a long period of time, such as a unit, a semester or even a year (Tomlinson, 2001). Therefore, it is quite important that the educators that are willing to differentiate the product should grasp the essence of the

matter of this fact. As it can be seen, the product holds the importance of assessment giving the students the chance and option to show what and how much they have learnt and if they can build upon the delivered essential knowledge using their personal abilities, skills, interests and approaches.

Tomlinson (2001) also states that product assignments can be quite motivational on behalf of the students because their products carry their owners' imprint, which can be used to create a positive and a strong bond among the teacher, the learner and the subject. In the same manner, Moon (2010) declares that especially the learners of the 21st century should be provided with such an environment where they can apply critical thinking, analyze the new information by filtering it from their own perspective and finally making their own assumptions instead of just showing a hint of simple understanding of the issue.

Another important aspect of differentiating products is that product assignments should be based on clear instructions also by leaving a space for the necessary amount of challenge within the frame of a certain set of criteria (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005).

All these expressions on the issue underline that students should be fully aware of the ongoing process when they are assigned with a product. They should be an active part of what they are doing using their own mentality and they should actually own the matter itself instead of just taking a test on the subject. There should always be a space for synthesizing the new information where they can make use of their prior knowledge and skills along with enough scaffolding and peer coaching. Thus, as long as teachers possess this philosophy and approach in their mindset, they can always benefit from students' products because they are the ones that open the gate to get to know the students' upcoming needs in the future, which will surely shape their instructional methods to meet the varied needs.

2.3.4.4. Differentiating Learning Environment

In an education context, classrooms can be considered as the places where learning occurs. Therefore, they have a big impact on the continuing process of learning. Even though teachers vigorously work hard to make everything close the perfect to meet the diverse student needs, there may be some bumps on the way. To be able to avoid from such scenarios, a diligent teacher always endeavors to help the students feel welcomed, respected and as an active party of the learning community.

As Tomlinson and Strickland (2005) state “classroom environment should be flexible enough to help all students reach their full potential, ensuring and meeting their varied needs especially in readiness level, interest, and learning profile” (p. 14). Thus, the place where all these components take place holds an essential part in this game. Again, Tomlinson and Strickland (2005) mention how the learning environment can be touched upon in the frame of differentiation underlining the importance of space, materials, and time also by entrusting the students in this process. The reason is not only to help them grow a feeling of belonging to the learning environment, but also because they can actively see what is going on in the classroom (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005). Furthermore, Dotterer and Lowe (2011) declare that “the efficiency of a classroom in terms of social and emotional aspects can hold the key to unpin the gate for engagement and achievement of the students” (p. 1651). Taking all these into consideration, it is an inevitable fact that teachers should create a to-do list including the tips for using space, materials, and time in the classroom to use it in the highest level of productivity.

As its name suggests, space is used to refer to the physical conditions of a learning environment. At this point, teachers and students can ask the questions about ways to organize the furniture in the classroom that can facilitate the various options of working, such as individual, pair or group work (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005). In addition to these, some basic classroom procedures can be considered within the importance of space, such as the place of a student that misbehaves in the lesson or disrupts the flow of the classroom procedures (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005).

As being one of the basic tools in a learning process, materials also hold the place when considering a differentiated learning environment. According to Tomlinson and Strickland (2005), students should be aware of what material they can use to be able to reach the goals that are planned for their individual growth and to improve as a whole class. Clearly, not only the flexibility of using the materials and supplies become prominent, but also the independent learner mentality is emphasized.

As mentioned before, making the right decisions about time is also an essential part of designing a differentiated learning environment. Time has always been the riskiest companion of a teacher depending on the usage especially when it comes to diverse classrooms in terms of academic level of students. During a lesson, some advanced learners may be already done with their tasks while lower level students are still dealing with it. Therefore, everyone in the classroom should be aware of what to do and when to do in their current situation (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005). There can be a corner for early finishers or students that have been challenged by the task can know that immediate support will be provided by their teacher or by their peer coaches. Thus, answering the questions, such as when to work individually, in pairs, or in groups, and how to use the remaining time when a task is done can be the primary job of both teachers and students at the beginning of year to settle down the procedures as effectively as possible. When considering all these aspects for a learning environment, it would be inevitable to experience a fruitful and insightful learning process.

2.4. The Rationale for Differentiated Instruction

Every teacher or every educator may have questioned how to offer a more qualified education to be able to satisfy their learners' needs. Tomlinson (2001) points out a very important stance on the issue of a "good" education. She declares that although some educators and academicians may call a "good" education environment as a place where all learners gain the basic information and get proficient in using them in accordance with the preplanned content and outline, some others can describe a "good" education as helping students to use their whole capacity and to reach their

full potential (Tomlinson, 2001). There is a crystal-clear difference between these two stances. While the former one refers to a more mechanical and restricted approach, the latter one aims to go beyond the limits independent from the current situation and is always aiming to move forward (Tomlinson, 2001). Therefore, as it can be seen, a differentiated instruction approach also embodies all kinds of elements to be able to help the learners maximize their limits by helping them to pursue a life-long learning mentality. This is an explanation in a nutshell; however, more reflective explanations will be surely presented in the upcoming parts.

As a partly reference to the former stance that is explained above, differentiated instruction can also be maintained to improve the achievement and understanding of the target taught concepts for the students. For instance, Joseph et al. (2013) also presents a research study that was aimed to answer the question if there is a relationship between differentiated instruction and student success for the tertiary level of students along with the similar questions. The findings of this research study shows that students that were instructed with differentiation received higher grades than their peers that were instructed with the traditional whole class approach (Joseph et al., 2013). In addition to this, students generally gave the feedback about the benefits of differentiated instruction positing that being given the chance of choosing made them feel at ease providing a good environment to learn the course content effectively (Joseph et al., 2013).

In the field of music education, Darrow (2014) published her paper about using differentiated instruction in the music classroom with students with disabilities and reported that the curriculum should be matching with the learning aims and lesson objectives taking into consideration the students' different skills to be able to grasp the materials. These also remark that a class containing students with disabilities can be educated effectively thanks to differentiated instruction aiming to earn all students and not leaving them behind. Thus, the aspect of differentiated instruction which focuses on including all students' different needs into account constitutes the essence of education in a sense.

Tomlinson (2014) also explains that teachers who adopt differentiated instruction seeks for giving multiple options to their students to be able to enable them to learn as effectively and as quickly as possible without imposing a selected standard learner profile. Thus, learning communities that are enrolled with differentiated instruction highlight the importance of identity, respectfulness and values. In other words, every kind of difference that students bring into the classroom environment is welcomed and used by the teacher to be able to engage the students also by modelling them how to get benefit from their individual differences.

Especially in classes where there are students from divergent cultural backgrounds owning different native languages, which can be exemplified with Turkey hosting many Syrian refugees and many other countries, there should not be a possibility of standard expectations from the students. Therefore, teachers working in these kinds of classroom environments should be at least familiar with the differentiated instruction philosophy because the nature of differentiated instruction allows the students to get access to the education regardless of their gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, and language (Thousand et al., 2014).

Additionally, Sousa and Tomlinson (2010) worked on the connection between neuroscience and differentiated classroom environments. In a very brief explanation, the aim of their research and studies was to find out what kind of relationship there could be between how the brain learns and being exposed to differentiated instruction (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2010). Their findings reveal that differentiated instruction is “brain-friendly” because it embodies the necessary components while differentiating the curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2010).

Furthermore, Sousa and Tomlinson (2010) describe some principles that reflect how the foundation of differentiated instruction can also be based on the process of effective teaching and learning as the following:

1. The environment that the students are enclosed with should include both challenge and support to be able to provide and ensure personal growth while learning (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2010).

2. While learning something new, the brain needs to get the meaning of it by specifying patterns. In time, as the brain receives more information, the more patterns it generates. Therefore, generating more patterns means that the possibility of containing the received information in the long-term memory increases (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2010).

3. There are two basic thinking styles that are carried out by the frontal lobe of the brain, *convergent* and *divergent*. When a convergent type of thinking style is applied, just one method is considered to be able to solve a problem. However, a divergent thinking style directs the brain to seek out various ways and ideas to solve a problem. This situation leads to generating more brand-new patterns and improving the current ones. Thus, differentiated instruction can be considered as leading students to use the divergent thinking style because its nature already includes diversity (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2010).

4. Emotions constitute a significant part while generating patterns in the limbic system of the brain activating the brain's reward system. This leads to the increasement of motivation, which is among the main goals and hallmarks of differentiated instruction (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2010).

5. Learning is both a social and a cognitive process, which means that people also learn by observing the others in addition to the system of the *mirror neurons* since childhood. In a more detailed explanation, it can be stated that the clusters of neurons are activated not only by experiencing a certain task or emotion, but also by observing other people experiencing the same. Therefore, thinking of a classroom environment, students' learning is affected and shaped with the practices of their peers, too. All these statements put forward the importance of constructive social interactions. Differentiated instruction also emphasizes the appropriate use of group

works and peer coaching where essential individual practices and values can be transmitted (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2010).

6. As long as a piece of information is not retained in the long-term memory, it can fade away and can be forgotten staying in the working memory, which means the temporary memory where conscious processing takes place. Therefore, if reasons to remember and use the new information are not created, students can be in the likelihood of forgetting it in a short duration of time. Nevertheless, differentiated instruction aims to give students a setting where they are required to process the new information in accordance with their own pace and use it in an extended period of time (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2010).

7. It is a well-known fact that actual learning requires full concentration and attention. In today's world, it can be said that there are many factors that distract the students' attention, especially stemming from technological improvements and tools. Considering the fact that the brain always seeks to find something meaningful, students also choose the information or style that is meaningful for them. Therefore, the learning objective and the whole process of teaching a new piece of information should be related to the outside world for making meaningful connections. In addition, a setting that is open to different interest areas should be provided. In this way, students can be more active and engaged learners, which is among the core points of differentiated instruction (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2010).

Clearly, all these statements mark that there is a strong connection between how the brain works and the core elements of differentiated instruction. Considering the cognitive, social, emotional, and pedagogical aspects and factors in education, differentiated instruction has a significant potential of serving to meet diverse needs on behalf of the students.

2.5. Differentiated Instruction in EFL Context

It can be claimed that learning and teaching a new language is not an easy job. All languages may have a structure or rule that challenges its learners. Therefore, throughout all these years full of research and reflecting within the foreign language teaching field, educators and researchers have sought for finding relatable, understandable, and practical answers and approaches to these questions. Thus, many different approaches and teaching styles have emerged. Although differentiated instruction has not emerged aiming to find answers related to language teaching, it has been viewed and applied by educators and researchers for many years because it has many benefits especially on behalf of the students. Therefore, this part of the current study will not focus on using differentiated instruction within the context of other languages or disciplines; instead, the place and impact of differentiated instruction in teaching English as a foreign language will be analyzed because the current study aimed to research English teachers who are teaching English as a foreign language in the middle school level.

Independent from the location, the 21st century classes have been famous with the divergent student profiles with different cultural, socio-economic, interest, academic and many other aspects of backgrounds. As a result, classes with various needs have emerged which has been challenging for teachers and other stakeholders. Thus, using differentiated instruction has been embraced by some teachers to regulate and manage this chaotic environment.

Komang Arie Suwastini (2021) also researched on studies focusing on differentiated instruction and its impact on EFL classrooms. The paper underlines that it is vital for teachers to understand why it is important to learn English and why learners want to learn it, so that they can match their lesson designs accordingly (Komang Arie Suwastini, 2021). Thus, as it can be seen, the rationale for learning comes in the first place to be able to start an effective and fruitful learning and teaching process.

Ortega et al. (2018) also highlight that one of the hallmarks of differentiated instruction is putting the students in the center accompanying them in the learning process to be able to support them. Using this as a start point, Komang Arie Suwastini (2021) states that EFL lessons also should be designed in a way to respond and support the different proficiency levels, which can be suitable with their different learning styles and ways of communication styles. Komang Arie Suwastini (2021) continues with suggesting that teachers can use different ways of teaching, such as *visual* or *audiovisual* along with different ways for students so that they can present their success in learning in different forms, such as *oral*, *written*, or *recorded presentation*. Such activities and styles allow students to choose the best option for themselves and also to get to know the students better with each step for the teachers, which can make the English language learning process more engaging.

2.6. The Role of Teacher Beliefs and Misconceptions about Differentiated Instruction

Teachers are the ones who can implement differentiated instruction in their classes and have the chance to observe the outcomes of this act as the active parties. However, it can also be estimated that not all teachers may be fully aware of the important points while adopting a differentiated instruction approach. As the relevant literature points out, there are many conditions that shape the process of decision making especially while choosing among the suitable ways of differentiation. The simple reason is that there cannot be one simple answer or key that can unlock all the questions or problematic situations that are encountered within the learning environments. Therefore, the nature of the differentiated instruction may lead teachers who are not very knowledgeable or familiar with this approach may have some misconceptions, which in the end may create a setting that is not fully beneficial for students and that is extra challenging for the teachers.

For instance, the study conducted by Mavidou and Kakana (2019) also underlined that teachers' misconceptions and usage of differentiated instruction in a wrong way may block its usage in daily practice despite the fact that it is a beneficial and

advantageous approach especially on behalf of the students (p. 566). The same study presents some misconceptions about differentiated instruction that were collected from the participants. Some of the misconceptions are as follow:

- Considering that differentiated instruction as an individualized instruction assuming that a different aim is created for each student
- Considering that differentiated instruction should only be applied with students that are low in terms of their academic level
- Having a class that consists of various learner profiles makes it very challenging to use differentiated instruction (Mavidou & Kakana, 2019, p. 566).

Another study that is conducted by Magayon et al. (2018) investigated seventh grade Math teachers' perceptions on differentiated instruction. It also portrays some misconceptions about differentiated instruction. The following some of them:

- Some participants were right to believe that students' readiness level should be taken into consideration while planning the instruction; however, they were mistaken by the idea that some weak students in terms of their academic level may be challenged by the planned differentiated instruction. Thus, as it can be seen, they did not aim to tailor their instruction in accordance with their students' personal readiness level
- Some participants believed that differentiated instruction may not be applied for daily learning activities because it just serves to reinforce the students' motivation for the lesson
- Some participants thought that using differentiated instruction is highly interrelated with integrating the latest technology within the lessons (Magayon et al., 2018, p.1003).

Thus, it is clear that although teachers and educators may have some background information or familiarity with differentiated instruction, their lack of knowledge can lead them to misjudge the use of it. Therefore, it can be underlined that teacher

education programs or institutions that expect the teachers and instructors integrate the differentiated instruction within their lessons should first give importance and priority in educating teachers and improving their professional development, so that a healthy and effective learning and teaching process can be achieved.

2.7. Challenges of Differentiated Instruction

The current literature is full of research data and findings pointing out the benefits of differentiated instruction and various ways of implementing in different levels. On the other hand, the complex structure and mindset of differentiated instruction brings along the challenges that are experienced by teachers and educators, as well.

For instance, a study conducted by Turner and Solis (2017) aims to research on how instructors understand differentiated instruction and how they perceive its challenges while adopting it in large classes. The findings of the study highlight that the instructors found applying differentiated instruction quite challenging in terms of *class sizes, limited face time and resources* in addition to the *academic requirements* (Turner & Solis, 2017). These findings show the arrow in the direction of lack of theoretical and practical knowledge of applying differentiated instruction in addition to the conditions where the instructors do not have a say, such as the class size.

Another study conducted by Taylor (2016) aims to research the challenges of implementing differentiated instruction in the secondary schools in America. The paper underlines that too much workload, high expectations of content coverage, and negative behavior in classrooms towards teachers increase the challenging side of differentiated instruction (Taylor, 2016).

Melesse (2016) also indicates some challenges encountered by 232 primary school teachers whose fields are language, social science, natural science and mathematics in Ethiopia. The findings that refer to the challenges of differentiated in the process of implementing it are listed below:

- Lack of knowledge and experience
- Large class size
- Lack of commitment and motivation
- Shortage of materials/ resources
- Shortage of time
- Range of diversity in classroom
- Lack of parental support
- Lack of school administration support
- Traditional outlook of one size-fits-for all
- Engaging on routine tasks
- Amount of planning time
- Lack of Staff collaboration (Melesse, 2016, p. 262).

Clearly, there can be many factors starting from teachers' personal reasons continuing with the reasons that are sourced from the workplace related issues. Thus, the relevant literature displays a picture where the misconceptions about and challenges of differentiated instruction are interrelated. It can be indicated that lack of theoretical and practical knowledge brings along a diversified group of related challenges. Therefore, it would not harm to say that an effective adoption of differentiated instruction starts with an effective and augmenting professional development, which should be supplied both by the teacher education programs and from the primary level to the tertiary level of institutions.

2.8. The Previous Studies on Differentiated Instruction in Turkey

As the result of the literature review, it was observed that the studies that were conducted on differentiated instruction were mostly carried out on the subjects of maths and science (Belcer, 2010; Demir, 2013; Özyaprak, 2012; Şaldırdak, 2012; Yabaş, 2008). Regarding the context of English language teaching, there are also studies that were conducted at a higher education level, tertiary level and in K12 context. (Leblebiciler 2020; Özer, 2016; Yavuz, 2020). There are also studies that sought to understand and examine the application of differentiation through the eyes

of teachers (Özkanoglu, 2015; Pilten, 2016). In general, most of the studies conducted in Turkey investigated the effects of differentiated instruction on the students' achievement, self- efficacy beliefs, metacognitive skills, students' learning level, and students' attitude towards the lesson.

An experimental study conducted by Yabaş (2008) investigated the effect of differentiated instruction on students' metacognitive skills and self-efficacy. The research study used a pretest-posttest design to be able to examine the before and aftereffects. Participants were 25 sixth grade students in a primary school. The achievement test was developed by the researcher and metacognitive skills and self-efficacy perception scales were adapted by Üredi (2005), which are applied twice as before and after treatment. The findings revealed that differentiated instruction affected the total academic achievement, metacognitive skills, and self-efficacy scores significantly and in a positive way.

The study carried out by Beler (2010) also sought to analyze the effects of differentiated instruction on classroom management and the learning level of students. The differentiated instructional program was built for an introductory science course, which was taken by the 3rd grade students at an elementary school. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research methods. As a qualitative research study, the design was determined as a case study, and as a quantitative method, scanning was adopted. To be able to collect data, interviews were done with the teacher and the students. In addition, observation form and post-test were also used. Students were categorized into ability groups by using the “tomb up” technique. At the end, each group worked on their learning activity via individual and group tasks that were planned according to their abilities. The results revealed that differentiated instruction had positive effects on the learning outcomes of all students with both high and low abilities. Thanks to the activities that were in line with the students' levels, all students could complete the tasks in a successful way. Their motivation also increased with the achievement. They were also observed as being willing to participate and the teachers did not go through any difficulties to facilitate the participation.

Another study conducted by Özyaprak (2012) determined to develop, administer, and test how effective the differentiated mathematics program was for the academic and cognitive needs of gifted and talented students. To be able to investigate this, two units, which were “Algebraic Equations” and “Line Graphs”, were differentiated for 5th grade gifted and talented students. 24 students participated in the study. 12 of them participated as the experimental group and 12 of them participated as the control group. To be able to collect data, the researcher developed Test for Creative Thinking – Drawing Production (TCT-DP), Raven’s Standard Progressive Matrices (SPM), WISC-R, The Scale of Attitude Towards Mathematics and with open-ended and multiple choices items Math Achievement Test. Except SPM, the other three tests were applied as pre and post – tests to the experimental and control groups. Regarding the statistical analysis of data, Mann Whitney-U and Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Tests were applied. According to the results of the study, the Math program which was differentiated for the gifted and talented students resulted in an increase on the course achievement. In addition, students’ creative thinking and attitude towards mathematics scores were affected in a positive way.

Another study conducted by Demir (2013) sought to understand if differentiated instruction and station techniques influenced students' achievements, learning approaches and learning retainment. Learning approaches were categorized as surface and deep according to information processing preferences of students. The aim of the study was to describe how effective the differentiated instruction was based on the students' preferences. The participants were the 5th grade elementary school students. They were applied with the pre, post and delayed test model. 66 students took part in the experiment and control group. The Science and Technology course was redesigned within the frame of differentiated instruction. Regarding the validity and reliability, an academic achievement test was designed by the researcher and other professionals. The researcher applied the test before, after and four weeks later than the instruction. To be able to decide on the students' approaches, Learning Approaches Inventory was used. The results showed significant difference was detected favoring the positive effect of differentiation on the academic achievement and retention levels.

Regarding language teaching, Leblebiciler (2020) conducted action research aiming to find out if differentiated instruction built in the academic writing course could be a beneficial way to meet differences in students' learning and development of academic writing skills. 21 second year university students participated, and the study was carried out over a 10-week period. During the whole process of the study, the participants attended academic writing classes that were prepared in accordance with differentiated instruction. To collect data, the researcher used a student background and learning profile questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, after lesson questionnaires, and also reflection notes. The results indicated that the students had positive views on taking differentiated writing courses and it also helped them to improve themselves regarding their academic writing skills in English.

Another study carried out by Yavuz (2020) also sought to examine the effect differentiated instruction on Turkish L2 learners' L2 achievement with the perceptions of learners and the teachers. The study was conducted at a private high school in Istanbul, Turkey. The control group consisted of 14 participants and the other group contained 8 participants. While traditional instruction approaches were used in the control group, the other group received differentiated instruction that was prepared according to the principles of constructivism, multiple intelligence theory (Gardner, 1993), and the differentiated instruction framework of Tomlinson (1999). The findings implied that the group that was instructed with differentiation showed more achievement than the control group in overall L2 achievement. The participants shared their experiences regarding the differentiated instruction with the help of reflective essays. The essays indicated that Turkish L2 learners receive differentiated instruction as extraordinary, entertaining, and engaging. They could also relate their interests within the lessons, which had a positive impact on behalf of them. On the other hand, reflective journals written by the teacher revealed the issue of time management, need for the learner's awareness, and the need for training for the differentiated instruction.

From the studies focusing on the teacher perspective, Pilten (2016) determined to examine how practical the “Differentiated Reading Instruction Approach” was in primary school grades in Turkey. She also investigated how teachers perceived it regarding the significant roles of this approach practically. The research was designed as a phenomenological study. 17 class teachers took part in the study, and they were chosen from different regions of Turkey with the help of maximum variety sampling. The findings revealed that the existing implementation of the differentiated instruction by the teachers was not ready to consider students’ individual differences. Thus, they did not follow the basic principles of differentiation. Moreover, teachers did not have positive views about the applicability of the differentiated instruction in Turkey after receiving seminars about the theoretical practical insights of the target approach. Some of the reasons why they were not in favor of adopting a differentiated approach were limited time, intensity of the curriculum, inconvenient classroom settings, lack of teacher education regarding this approach, problems related to the Turkish educational policies, and lack of cooperation among the stakeholders, such as parents and the school management during the teaching process.

Özkanoglu (2015) also investigated how early childhood teachers perceived differentiation and how they applied it. 19 pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers in a private school participated in the study. Data was collected with the help of interviews, curriculum documents, and lesson observations. The study was designed as a qualitative case study. The school was decided as the case because differentiation was a significant teaching and learning method there. Data was collected over five months. The results of the study showed that teachers had a positive view on using differentiation within their lessons. They also mostly differentiated ‘process’ and ‘readiness’ to be able to reach the variety in students’ needs at the top level. On the other hand, participants also reflected on some disadvantages of implementing differentiated instruction, such as planning, time management and classroom management. They also underlined the need for more training and practice with differentiated instruction to observe more fruitful outcomes. Lastly, the results also highlighted that the Turkish Early Childhood

Education Program was appropriate with the general principles of differentiation, which showed the suitability of the adoption of differentiated instruction.

2.9. The Previous Studies on Differentiated Instruction Abroad

There are many studies focusing on the teacher's perception and level of impact regarding the application of differentiated instruction outside of Turkey. Thus, studies in this regard were focused on in this section because they are in line with the scope of the current study.

A study conducted by Onyishi and Sefotho (2020) investigated how primary school teachers perceived the use of differentiated instruction in an inclusive classroom in Enugu state, Nigeria. 382 primary school teachers participated in the research study, and a descriptive survey research design was utilized. As the data collection tool, Teachers' Use of Differentiated Instruction Questionnaire (TUDIQ) that was developed by the researcher was used and it was validated. The findings indicated that teachers could not apply differentiation in an extensive way, and they also experienced time management issues. Moreover, the results also underlined the importance of teacher proficiency regarding the theoretical and practical knowledge about differentiated instruction to be able to develop suitable materials and manage the assessment procedures in an appropriate way. Also, classroom management was challenging because of the class size. According to the findings, the curriculum should also have been rebuilt in a way that DI could have been integrated effectively. Also, the school system was not found proficient enough to provide the teachers with necessary materials and resources for the diverse learning aids. The study highlighted the need for the integration of DI into the curriculum of teacher education faculties as the implication.

Another study conducted by Roe (2010) aimed to examine the application of DI in urban, suburban, and rural language arts classrooms. The study sought to find out what kind of an understanding of differentiation the teachers have, how they apply it on their students, especially the ones that are academically weak or for the ones

English is the second language, and how students and teachers perceive differentiation with the advantages and challenges. The data was collected with 9 teachers and 135 classroom observations were conducted. In addition, interviews were applied with students and teachers. The results revealed that differentiation should not be considered as just a classroom event, the environment in the classroom had an effect on the way DI was applied, and differentiation facilitated affective and cognitive changes on the students.

From a more different perspective, Goddard and Kim (2018) sought to find out the relationship between teachers' perceptions of their collaboration, their practical use of differentiated instruction, and the teacher efficacy in high-poverty rural schools in a Midwestern state. The study was collected from 95 elementary schools. 1623 elementary teachers and 4167 students in rural high-poverty areas took part in it as the participants. Data was collected with the help of surveys. While survey data that included collaboration, differentiated instruction, and teacher efficacy scales were collected from teachers during regularly scheduled faculty meetings, demographic and achievement data were collected from a state accountability data system. The researchers utilized multilevel structural equation modeling (MSEM) to analyze the data. According to the results, teachers' collaborative work had a positive impact on the school improvement, curriculum and the quality of the program, and professional development. In addition, cooperation among the teachers and adoption of DI had a positive effect on teachers' efficacy beliefs. Thus, the study suggested that school managements and policy makers should be aware of the things that can support teachers, so that they can improve their instruction.

Furthermore, Moosa and Shareefa (2019) researched on the differences in teachers' sense of efficacy, their knowledge, and implementation of DI in the frame of their experience and qualification. The study also sought to analyze the connection between teachers' experience and qualification. Data was collected from 101 elementary teachers. Parametric statistics of independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA were applied to analyze the differences among the groups. According to the results, teachers' sense of efficacy was not affected by the experience. In addition,

teachers' knowledge and application of DI were not related to the experience or qualification. Also, it was found out that their years of experience or qualification was not a constructive item for their adoption of DI. Thus, the study suggested that teachers should be compatible with necessary information related to DI; however, this should be with the integration of DI in the teacher training programs.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This chapter presents research design, research questions, data collection instruments, and data analysis procedures. In addition, reliability and validity of the current research are elaborated.

3.1. Overall Design of the Study

This research study is a qualitative study that aims to investigate English teachers working in a private middle school and their experience with respect to their perceptions of differentiated instruction. In addition, in which ways they use differentiated instruction and what kinds of challenges they go through are addressed. To be able to achieve these aims, the study was designed as a case study bound in “place” because only the teachers working in the English department of a private middle school in Ankara are the participants. The English department of the target institution consists of 23 teachers including 18 main course teachers (including the researcher) and 5 native teachers that teach the skills lessons. 15 teachers in the department gave their consent to participate in the current study by being interviewed while others did not find it appropriate to participate for themselves. It should also be underlined that there were some teachers who decided to quit work; therefore, they could not attend the current study.

In addition, the lesson plans of this department are designed in a way that contains differentiated instruction and formative assessment strategies; therefore, they are used as a source of data in addition to the interviews. While analyzing the lesson plans as the source of data, teachers that participated in the interviews were taken as

the main source of information. The grade levels that are the most frequent ones were chosen to analyze the lesson plans of the related levels.

As Creswell (2018) defines, a case study is “a design of inquiry found in many fields, especially evaluation, in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (p. 51) . Also, it can be categorized in two groups, which are “multi- site study” and “within-site study”, the former one refers to various programs while the latter one refers to a single program to investigate (Creswell, 2018). Since this study aims to investigate only one English department, it is a “within-site study”.

Regarding the case study method, there have been different categorizations. Yin (1994) maintains that case studies can be carried out as explorative, descriptive, and explanatory research. McDonough and McDonough (1997) introduce other categories such as interpretive and evaluative case studies. Stake (1995) indicates three types of case studies, which are intrinsic, instrumental and collective.

Considering Yin’s (1994) categorization of case studies into consideration, this research study is designed as an explanatory case study. Explanatory case study facilitates the analysis of a contemporary phenomenon, and the researcher does not own the control over the phenomenon that is investigated (Yin, 2014). Because the current study investigates the case of teachers’ perceptions who work in a private middle school on differentiated instruction and seeks to understand how they experience it, explanatory case study approach was seen as suitable regarding this phenomenon. Furthermore, the researcher does not own any control over how the participants perceive the differentiated instruction process, or how the institution asks the teachers to apply it.

3.2. Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate (1) the ways the instruction is differentiated in English lessons in a private middle school, (2) how the teachers

perceive the differentiated instruction based on the advantages and disadvantages, and (3) what kind of challenges they face and how they overcome those challenges. In line with these purposes, the following research questions are formulated to carry out the data collection and data analysis:

1. In what ways is the instruction differentiated in English lessons in a private middle school?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of differentiated instruction?
3. Do the teachers working in a private middle school face any obstacles while differentiating their instruction? What kinds of obstacles do they face while differentiating their instruction?
4. How do the teachers working in a private middle school overcome the obstacles they face with while implementing differentiated instruction?

3.3. Setting

The current explanatory case study is conducted in a private middle school in Ankara, Turkey. The medium of instruction is preferably and mainly English in all grade levels in English lessons. Both the main course teachers and the native (skills) teachers working in the institution prioritize the usage of English in the lessons. While the main course teachers mostly deal with the academic achievement and improvement of related grammar and vocabulary knowledge integrated with four skills- reading, listening, writing, and speaking-, native teachers mostly deal with just improving the skills in a more literature integrated way.

The current setting that was chosen for investigation is preferred by the researcher mainly because the researcher also works in this department. In addition, the institution uses and integrates differentiated instruction in all kinds of subjects for

four years. Thus, the teachers working in this setting are already familiar with differentiated instruction, and they have been adopting it for such a time.

The reason why the institution attaches a big importance to the integration of differentiated instruction is that it has been getting prepared to gain “Council of International Schools Certificate”. Since differentiated instruction has a significant role within this frame, the institution has been trying to provide the necessary conditions, sources and professional development meetings to be able to educate and prepare the teachers for the last four years.

Therefore, this setting is worthy of study because it simply includes the teachers that have been experiencing differentiated instruction in various aspects. Moreover, in the previous year, there were meetings that were held to bring up teachers of different subjects together and analyze and give feedback from one another especially in the aspect of integrating differentiation, global citizenship values, and usage of formative assessment. Thus, it can be said that this institution was the most suitable option for the researcher to be able to investigate the answers of the research questions.

3.4. Data Collection

3.4.1. Interviews

In this research study, interviews were used mainly to be able to understand the results and answers provided by the participants could be explored and explained in a detailed way. Additionally, the researcher also believed that the participants would offer useful and reliable information with respect to the questions because they have the specific characteristics, which are having experienced differentiated instruction for some time and having improved insights related to the topic (Goodman et al., 2001). To achieve this aim, the researcher adapted interview questions that were firstly created by Avgousti (2017). The interview protocol can be seen in Appendix B. In Part A, questions between the second and sixth were adapted, Part B questions

are fully adapted, in Part C, question seven, nine and ten are adapted, and in Part E, the third question was adapted.

The first draft of the adapted interview questions was reviewed by the researcher's supervisor, who is an Assistant Professor in the department of Foreign Language Education at Middle East Technical University. Afterwards, two pilot interviews were conducted. One of the pilot interviewees was a retired teacher who was experienced in differentiated instruction and had worked in the department of the target institution for almost 30 years. The other interviewee was the head of the English department of the target institution, who has had the pioneer role in the English department to apply and integrate differentiated instruction within the English curriculum. She has been working as a teacher for 18 years.

Having reviewed the interview questions with the help of two pilot interviewees and the expert opinion, and also adapting it from a master study, the researcher was convinced to achieve the content and face validity of the questions (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011). In addition, the researcher tried to adapt the interview questions in a way that they can be matched with the research questions to be able to gain detailed and relevant data for the sake of the study (Bailey, 2007).

The adapted interview protocol (Avgousti, 2017) consisted of five parts, starting with the demographic information about the participants, and continuing with the teachers' understandings and approaches towards differentiated instruction, teacher practices in applying differentiated instruction, advantages, and disadvantages of differentiated instruction, and finalizing with obstacles that teachers go through while applying differentiated instruction (Avgousti, 2017).

Interviews lasted around 50 minutes on average, and they were conducted either via online Zoom meetings or voice recordings in face-to-face meetings. Only one interview was conducted in English while others were carried out in Turkish. The reason is solely the participants' own choice because they were asked which language they would prefer at the beginning of the interviews. Thus, both the English

and Turkish versions of the interview questions can be seen in Appendix B and C. In the same manner, Cortazzi, Pilcher, and Jin (2011) also state that researchers should offer participants the choice for the language that they prefer to use, which can enhance the rapport and trust between the researcher and the participants.

3.4.2. Reviewing the Lesson Plans

As it has been explained before, case studies generally adopt usage of more than one sources to be able to collect the relevant data (Creswell, 2018). In this research study also, the researcher uses in- depth interviews adapted from Avgousti (2017) and lesson plans that were created and designed by the English department of the target institution, which actually means that the participants themselves.

As it can be seen in Table 2, the most frequent levels that are taught the most by the participants in the target institution are grade six and eight. Below, the relevant table can be seen, as well.

Table 1 Grade levels that are taught the most by the participants in the research setting

Grade Level	Number of the Participants	IDs
Grade 5	3	T9, T12, T14
Grade 6	7	T2, T6, T8, T11, T12, T14, T15
Grade 7	3	T8, T12, T13
Grade 8	7	T1, T3, T4, T5, T7, T8, T10

The lesson plans that were prepared by the teachers include the differentiated instruction and formative assessment strategies (See Appendix D for a sample lesson plan). Therefore, it is aimed to find related and supportive answers for the research question number one. Thus, the researcher also aimed to support the data that was gathered from the interviews for the ways that teachers in the target institute differentiate their instruction. At this point, it can be said that reviewing the lesson

plans that include differentiated instruction strategies along with the matching interview questions (Avgousti, 2017) are used as an attempt of methodological data triangulation because different types of data sources are used (Denzin, 2009). Considering these aims, ten lesson plans both from grade six and grade eight will be analyzed because these are the grades that most of the participants have taught the most in the current institution. Since only three participants have worked with the grade five and grade seven mostly in this institution, lesson plans that were prepared for those levels will not be analyzed.

3.5. Participants

The English department of the target institution consists of 23 teachers including 18 main course teachers (including the researcher) and 5 native teachers that teach the skills lessons. 15 teachers gave their consent to be a part of this study as a participant.

Purposeful sampling was chosen because the researcher is the one that chooses the case that presents various perspectives on the event that is aimed to be investigated (Creswell, 1998). Additionally, the researcher has a clear judgment and knowledge of the target setting as a member of it (Creswell, 1998).

Related demographic information of the participants can be seen in the table below, which includes the participants' age, gender, total years of teaching English, grades that they are currently teaching, grades that they taught in the past, and grades that they taught the most in the current institution they have been working in. The table was constructed with these elements because they were asked about to the participants to gather the demographic information related to them.

Table 2 Demographic information of the teachers who participated in the study

ID	Age	Gender	Total years of teaching English	Grades that are currently taught	Grades that are taught in the past	Grades that are taught the most in the current institution
T1	50	Female	30	8	From kindergarten to high school	8
T2	25	Female	3	7	6	6
T3	28	Female	6	6,8	5,6,8	8
T4	32	Female	10	8	Tertiary level, 5,6,7,8	8
T5	32	Male	10	8	Tertiary, primary and middle school levels	8
T6	26	Female	4	6	Highschool, 6, 7	6
T7	38	Female	15	7	Tertiary and middle school levels	8
T8	42	Female	22	7	From kindergarten to high school	6,7,8
T9	25	Female	4	5	5,6,8	5
T10	36	Female	13	8	High school, 7,8	8
T11	28	Female	4	5	6	6
T12	25	Female	3	7	5,6	5,6,7
T13	30	Female	7	8	Tertiary level, middle school level, 3,4	7
T14	28	Female	6	6	2,3,4,5,6,7	5,6
T15	26	Male	3	6	4,5,6,7	6

As it can be seen, only two of the participants are male and the rest of them are female. It should be highlighted that this is not an aimed profile of participants. In addition, teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction will not be analyzed based on gender; therefore, it is just aimed to present the basic information about the participants of the research.

Table 3 Descriptive information about the participants

Participant	Age	Gender	Education	Total years of teaching English
T1	50	Female	BA English Language Teaching	30
T2	25	Female	BA English Language Teaching	3
T3	28	Female	BA English Language Teaching & MA Educational Sciences	6
T4	32	Female	BA American Culture and Literature & Double Major in Translation and Interpreting & Initial Teacher Training	10
T5	32	Male	BA English Language Teaching	10
T6	26	Female	BA English Language Teaching & MA English Language Teaching	4
T7	38	Female	BA English Language Teaching & MA English Literature	15
T8	42	Female	BA English Language Teaching & MA English Language Teaching	22
T9	25	Female	BA English Language Teaching	4
T10	36	Female	BA English Language Teaching	13
T11	28	Female	BA English Language Teaching	4
T12	25	Female	BA English Language Teaching	3
T13	30	Female	BA English Literature & MA English Language Teaching	7
T14	28	Female	BA English Language Teaching & MA Educational Sciences	6
T15	26	Male	BA English Language Teaching & MA English Language Teaching	3

All of the participants have an educational background on teaching, and they have been experiencing DI practically for the last three years. They have been also working on integrating differentiation within the curriculum, the lesson plans and the programs for the last 3 years. None of the participants mentioned being familiar with DI practically in the undergraduate level or in any teacher training program. Thus, they have come across with the term both theoretically and practically in the setting

of the current research. Therefore, their perception and experience of DI is significant for this research study.

3.6. Data Analysis

Creswell (2013) asserts that the data analysis process includes “organizing the data, conducting a preliminary read-through of the database, coding and organizing themes, representing the data, and forming an interpretation of them” (p. 179).

In the current study, an inductive analysis approach was used to be able to analyze the data. Thomas (2006) explains the features of inductive analysis in a detailed way. It is stated that inductive analysis mainly employs detailed readings of the raw data to be able to create “concepts”, “themes” or a “model” with the help of interpretations of the raw data by a researcher (Thomas, 2006, p.238).

Thomas (2006) continues with the explanation that inductive approach mainly aims to let research results arise from the “frequent”, “dominant”, or “significant themes” that are existent in the raw data regardless of the constraints dictated by “structured methodologies” (Thomas, 2006, p.238).

The main stages of general inductive analysis process are presented by Thomas (2006) as the following:

1. Preparation of raw data files (data cleaning)
2. Close reading of text
3. Creation of categories
4. Overlapping coding and uncoded text
5. Continuing revision and refinement of the category system (Thomas, 2006, p.242).

Figure 1 shows the stages according to Thomas (2006).

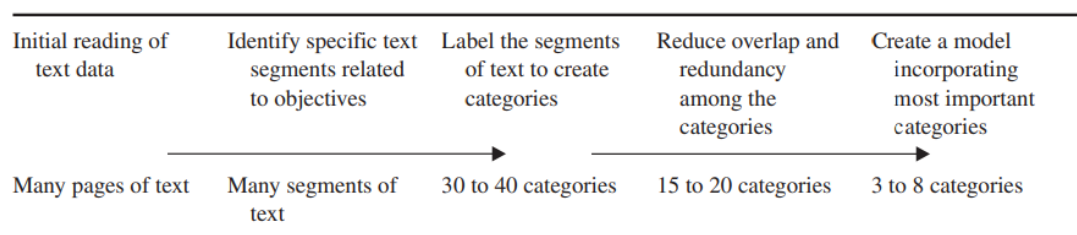


Figure 1 The coding process in inductive analysis

Source: Adapted from Creswell (2002, p. 266, Figure 9.4) by permission of Pearson Education, Inc. (© 2002, Upper Saddle River, NJ).

The first step in the analysis was the transcription of the interviews to be able to read it as a text format. Then, the transcribed interviews were checked one more time by listening to the related audio recordings to make sure that there is not any missing or wrongly worded data. After this crosscheck, the data was ready for the first step, which was identifying specific text parts related to the research questions. Following this phase, the researcher coded the relevant parts in the transcripts and came up with categories. After the emergence of categories, they were collected under matching themes to be able to present the findings in a clear and organized way. Table 3 presents a sample of this process below.

Table 4 Sample codes, categories, and themes as the result of the interviews

Codes	Categories	Themes
academic level	deciding according to students' readiness	factors that affect teachers' decisions
working style	deciding according to students' working style preference	
interests	deciding according to students' interest	
classroom management	deciding according to students' behavior	

All the gathered data was analyzed and categorized. In the process of coding and labeling categories, the MAXQDA program was used. In the end, a model that presents all the categories and themes was presented in the beginning of the results section of the paper, so that the readers can have a clear image and organization of the data while reading the findings.

Analysis of the lesson plans were conducted by examining the frequency of the target terminology within the frame of differentiated instruction, such as content, process, product, readiness, learning profile, and interest. The frequencies of these strategies of differentiated instruction were integrated within the relevant findings to be able to support the data gathered from the interviews.

As the final step, while presenting the results and findings, excerpts from the transcripts were added in the relevant categories to be able to support the interpretations made by the researcher (Krippendorff, 2004). In this step, the researcher was careful with deciding on the quotations which highlight the important results and findings that are worthy to mention (Sullivan, 2012).

3.7. Validity and Reliability

As Creswell and Miller (2000) emphasize, validity is one of the strong points of qualitative research and it is based on deciding whether the results are accurate from the researcher's point of view, the participant, or the readers. Regarding the validity, this research study has collected data with the help of two tools, which are interviews and document analysis. Thus, data triangulation was attempted to be achieved with the help of the analysis of lesson plans in addition to the interviews regarding the first research question.

Furthermore, as a validation strategy, Creswell (2018) touches upon the issue of "member checking" which means participants' viewing the results and the interpretations (p. 274). However, the current study could not maintain such an approach due to the participants' busy work schedule. The results could not be

shared with them to see if their experiences and perceptions really match with the findings.

In addition, the researcher aimed to provide a detailed description of the setting and the participants with the help of related information that can help the readers to make decisions regarding transferability (Creswell, 2018). This can be connected with the thick description of the setting and the participants as Creswell (2018) also underlines in the frame of validity.

Regarding the reliability, Creswell (2018) expresses it to decide whether the researcher's approaches are reliable or not, which means if they are consistent and stable. Yin (2009) highlights that qualitative researchers should present the procedures of their case studies and the steps of the procedures as much as possible. Creswell (2018) also shares some steps by Gibbs (2007) as suggested strategies of reliability. The steps that were followed in the current study can be seen below.

Firstly, as in line with the recommendation by Gibbs (2007), the transcripts of the interviews were checked to make sure that they do not have obvious mistakes. Secondly, the researcher put an effort to make sure that the definition of codes was clear and there was not a misinterpretation of the codes during the process of coding. As Gibbs (2007) also stresses, the researcher continually worked on the codes and the data to compare them by writing the definitions of the codes. Thus, the codebook can be seen in Appendix F.

Finally, as another strategy regarding the reliability, the codes were cross-checked by a different researcher, so that the analysis can be done in an effective way. Creswell (2018) also calls this process as "intercoder agreement" (p.276). After the codes were decided by the researcher, another researcher who was a postgraduate student also checked the codes without seeing the researcher's codes. When the other researcher was done with checking the codes, both groups of codes were compared. It was seen that there was an agreement at a high level other than some wording differences. Thus, the data was ready to be presented to provide the results.

3.8. Limitations

This research study has some limitations. Data triangulation was attempted to be achieved by using sample lesson plan analysis as another data source related to the research question one in addition to the interviews. On the other hand, a similar approach could not be maintained to support the data that were gathered to answer other research questions. As a triangulation attempt, field notes, lesson observations or reflective teacher journals could have been used to be able to improve more insight into the perceptions of teachers. In addition, member checking could not be applied because all of the participants were too busy to be able to go over the results that were reached. To be able to check the resonance of their experiences, results could have been shared with the participants.

Another limitation can be conducting some of the interviews in an online environment using Zoom platform. Thus, there may have been unanticipated or unpredictable factors that affected the interviewees during the interviews.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings collected from the interviews conducted with the teachers and the lesson plans that were prepared by them. The anonymity of the participants was ensured by using pseudonyms, such as T1 which stands for Teacher 1 in the explanation of the results.

In Figure 2 below, it can be seen that five main categories emerged, and these categories were constructed by the researcher as a result of the data analysis. The categories are “ways of differentiating the instruction”, “factors that affect teachers’ decisions”, “teacher perceptions regarding DI”, “challenges and obstacles experienced by teachers”, and “ways of overcoming the obstacles and challenges”. These categories of results were created to be in line with the research questions and the researcher aimed to answer them with the help of these categories. The first two categories which are “ways of differentiating the instruction” and “factors that affect teachers’ decisions” are used to serve the first research question. Supporting themes of “differentiating content” and “differentiating product” have emerged as the major findings. The third category which is “teacher perceptions regarding DI” emerged to answer the second research question, and it brought along the themes “advantages and motivating factors while implementing DI” and “disadvantages of DI”. The next category “challenges and obstacles experienced by teachers” emerged to answer the third research question and the themes of “lack of support”, “assessment that is not associated with DI”, “lack of information regarding DI”, and “program and system of the institution” came up with the data analysis. Lastly, the last category which is “ways of overcoming the obstacles and challenges” was developed to answer the fourth research question. It brought up the themes of “support from co-workers” and “suggestions regarding overcoming the obstacles”. Thus, in this chapter, findings will be presented within these categories and themes.

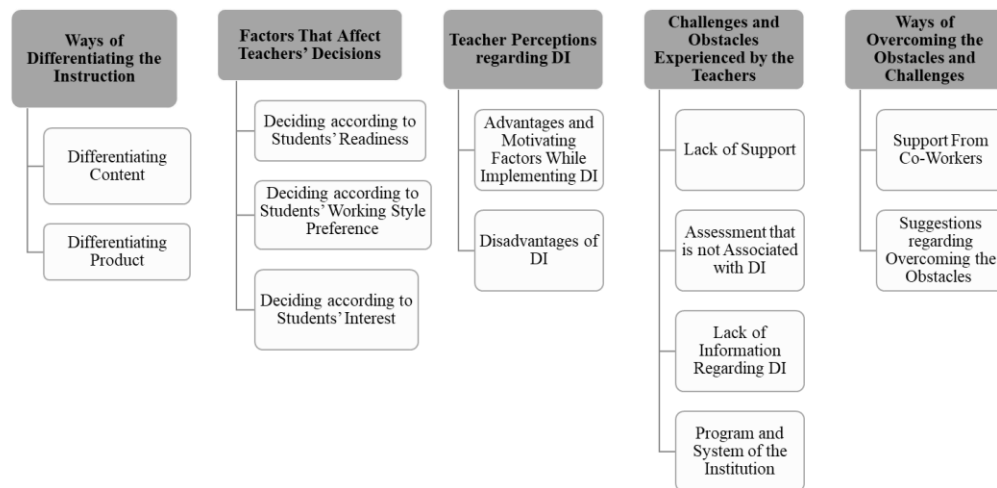


Figure 2 Data analysis categories and themes

4.1. Findings regarding Research Question 1

The first research question was created to be able to investigate the ways that the participants apply differentiated instruction. Related results will be presented both with the help of interviews and lesson plans. Since most of the participants have taught the most in grade eight and grade six in the current institution, ten lesson plans for these grades were analyzed. Thus, their results will also be presented in this part because they outline the ways that the participants intended to differentiate their instruction.

Before presenting the results related to the ways of differentiated instruction applied by the participants, it would be better to explain how knowledgeable they are about this approach. To be able to find an answer to this situation, the researcher asked how long they have been familiar with the term differentiated instruction, if they learnt anything about it in their teacher education program, where and how they learnt most of their knowledge related to differentiated instruction and for how long they have been applying differentiated instruction in their lessons (Avgousti, 2017). None of the participants stated learning about differentiated instruction in the program that they practiced becoming a teacher and they became familiar with the term in the institution they are currently working. Additionally, all of the participants

said that they have been using differentiated instruction for three years in their lessons, being aware of the procedure and actively using it.

After this brief information describing the participants' background information about differentiated instruction, it would be good to present the themes that emerged as a result of the interviews and analysis of the lesson plans of grade eight and grade six. As the findings of the interviews were analyzed, two main themes emerged, which are ways of differentiating the instruction and factors that affect the teachers' decisions. These main themes will be explained in a detailed way with the relevant excerpts belonging to the participants in the emerged categories.

4.1.1. Ways of Differentiating the Instruction

Analysis of the data showed that ways of differentiated instruction preferred by the participants can be categorized into two categories: (1) differentiating content and (2) differentiating products.

4.1.1.1. Differentiating Content

When the relevant data was analyzed by the researcher, it was clear that most teachers did not prefer differentiating content. Only one teacher stated that differentiating content was preferable sometimes because the teacher wanted to make a connection with the students' interest within the lessons. Thus, the teacher made some changes in the content of the lesson providing different kinds of materials related to the hobbies and abilities of the students. T12 who is the only participant articulating this way of DI made the explanation below:

That class was so into different kinds of sports and art activities and the students were participating in the related events, so I knew that they were interested in them. Therefore, I mostly differentiate content in that class. I try to give different materials about different topics in that class. (25, 3 years of experience Female)

The same participant also explained that she differentiated content in the online reading portal that they have been using to help students gain the habit of reading articles in English. T12 stated her reasoning as the following for differentiating content:

I also differentiate content like this: We use a platform to assign a reading text sometimes with the seventh graders. In this platform, we choose books on different topics according to students' interests at the same level. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

As it can be seen in this excerpt, she stated that she differentiated content based on her students' interests on the reading platform they used. Although the participant herself declared this, it can also be valid to say that her decision to differentiate content was affected by her students' interests, which is another category in the second theme that emerged.

In the chosen lesson plans, which are five grammar and five reading lesson plans from both grades 6 and 8, there was not a differentiation made on the content.

4.1.1.2. Differentiating Product

Seven participants stated that they mostly differentiate their instruction in the product stage of their lessons. Nearly all the teachers gave similar examples to explain their reasons. They stated that they differentiate their product by providing different task options. Thus, they believed that students could choose the task that they felt more comfortable with, and they could work in a more effective way feeling the autonomy by making their own decisions.

For instance, T9 stated that she differentiated the product by giving different topics and letting the students choose what they want. She also pointed out that she gave different topic options in a way that students would present the expected and aimed language use. Her related explanation can be seen below:

Sometimes we can also change the topic in a way that they could use the same structure or the same language. Some of them maybe want to write a letter, or some are interested in theater and acting out. So, we give different tasks, and this is kind of related to their interests. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

T6 also stated that she differentiated product by providing different tasks as she explained below:

Generally, I give different tasks, for example fun tasks, matching activities for vocabulary, or taboo cards, or drawing something and interpreting that drawing. So, I differentiate products with different tasks like this. (26, 4 years of experience, Female)

Another teacher reported how she used differentiation in product giving multiple task options as the previous teachers; however, she also explained that she considered the academic level of the students while diversifying the tasks in a way that high, medium, and low level of students in terms of academic level could find an appropriate task option for themselves. The explanation belonging to T1 can be seen below:

I try to vary the production as much as possible. I do not like providing only one option for the weak students. Generally, three options are provided, and students choose among them. However, they chose the one that they could handle well. I can differentiate the production by increasing the variety for the weak learners, too. For example, some students want to choose a writing activity, some want to write a dialogue, or a story, some want to read a newspaper article, or some want to prepare a poster. These are very important. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

T2 also stated similar explanations but basing it on a different perspective. She reports that while she decides on the task options, she thinks of the lesson objective, so that students can make production of the language that is aimed for that lesson in an appropriate way. Her reasoning can be seen below:

I give options in the production stage. For example, for a reading lesson, I want students to use something they learn in reading, and I ask a critical thinking question and ask students to produce something different from one another. One may write a poem, or one may prepare a poster using the

information in the reading. However, all of these are dependent on the learning objective of the lesson. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

T3 also stated that she mostly differentiates the product in a lesson because students choose according to their own will. She also reports that she creates task options varying in the challenge level, so that different students in different levels can choose accordingly just like T1.

On the other hand, T4 reported that differentiating products is “just a fun part of the lesson”. Therefore, she generally leaves differentiating products aside.

Although the majority of the participants asserted that they apply differentiation in product stages, some participants explained that differentiating content or process can be more beneficial when they are asked if any of these strategies can be more important than the others. For instance, T12 stated that process differentiation can be more important with the explanation below:

Process differentiation is very important in our school because there is a big gap among the students in terms of academic level in some classes. Therefore, we need to differentiate the process and support the weak students, so that they can improve. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

Another teacher reported that content differentiation may be more important, so that some students can understand and possess the target information in an easier way. T6 explains her reasoning as the following:

I think if the content is hard, differentiating the content may be more important than differentiating the product because the student needs to understand the content to be able to produce something. When the student understands the content, that student can be good at whatever task you give. (26, 4 years of experience, Female)

On the other hand, one of the participants asserted that comparing differentiation strategies is meaningless because every student has unique needs; therefore, differentiation strategies can be changed in accordance with these needs. T8’s explanation can be seen below:

We cannot say that process or content is more important than the other because every unique individual will need something different. Some may need content; some may need process. Therefore, decisions should be made according to what those individuals need at heart. (42, 22 years of experience, Female)

The results of the lesson plan analysis also showed differentiating the product as the most common way. In the grade 6 level, five grammar lesson plans and five reading lesson plans were analyzed, and the results showed that 6 of these lesson plans were differentiated based on the product stage of the lesson. The other four lesson plans were differentiated based on either content or process.

In the grade 8 level also, five grammar lesson plans and five reading lesson plans were analyzed, and the results showed that 7 of these lesson plans were differentiated based on the product stage of the lesson. The other three lesson plans were differentiated based on either content or process.

4.1.2. Factors that Affect Teachers' Decisions

While participants explained in which ways they use differentiation, they also reported the reasons that directed them in the decision-making process while choosing among the differentiation strategies. The analyses of the relevant data revealed four categories: (1) deciding according to students' readiness, (2) deciding according to students' working style preference, and (3) deciding according to students' interest.

4.1.2.1. Deciding according to Students' Readiness

Eleven participants reported that while differentiating their instruction, they decide on what to differentiate and how to differentiate according to the readiness level of the students. By the readiness level, they refer to the academic level of the students. All of the participants said that they grouped the students in three levels based on their academic level, which are high level, middle level, and low level of students. They also stated that although there was not such a level-based classroom system in

the institution, grouping the students based on their academic level helped them to understand the needs of their student and how much support they needed to be able to improve.

For instance, T12 reported that they made differentiation based on the level of knowledge of their students. Her explanation can be seen below:

We make differentiation based on students' level of knowledge and abilities as the following: We change the form of the activities that we provide. What I mean is that we support some students more or we leave some students free while giving them an activity to work on. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

Another teacher stated that she decided on how to differentiate her instruction while designing materials according to the academic level of the students, and she made changes especially in the instructions of the activities. While adding more explanatory instructions and tips for the low level of students, she left the high-level students freer by not adding any extra explanation or tip to complete the task. Relevant quotation of T9 can be seen below:

Three groups of students change the way we create practice handouts. I add extra instructions for the weak students or if I want to leave the student free and if I know that student will feel okay with it and will Express himself better, I leave him free. For example, in a writing task, I give some students the handout with more blanks to control himself and practice in a freer way. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

T1 also highlighted how she differentiated her instruction according to the readiness level of her students, but from a more different perspective. She stated that students may vary in terms of academic level, but the topics that they were challenged can be different from one another. At this point, she took their readiness level into consideration, too asserting that every student is unique in every aspect. Her explanation can be seen below:

Surely, our academic support system changes for every student. For example, I may have two students that are both weak in grammar; however, while one is weak in past tenses, the other is weak in present tenses. Thus, even the

topics differ among themselves. So, you cannot use the same extra grammar material for each child. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

T2 also explains how she uses different task and question types in listening and reading lessons to differentiate according to her students' academic level. She stated that even though the audio of the listening is the same or the reading text is the same, she differentiates her instruction by making differences in the question and task types. Her expression is as the following:

I make differentiation in the practice stage. I give different handouts. I change the question types. For example, I give one student that is in the low-level multiple-choice activity while I give another student fill-in-the-gap activity. In the reading, it changes according to the lesson objective. Different handouts and the question forms change although the text is the same. So, the question forms change according to the students' level. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

The same teacher also reported how she differentiated the checklist of production activities based on the academic level of her students. At this point, sentence structures, wording of the criteria and the way she gave feedback differed according to her explanation: "While I use more simple structures for the low achievers in the checklist criteria, for the high achievers, I use more complex structures with advanced vocabulary."

T3 also supported this approach by reporting how she categorized and applied different levels in an opinion essay critique activity with the following explanation:

For example, according to the student's level, I give a bad opinion essay to correct it to the high level of students while the middle group of students compare a bad and good opinion essay sample. And to the lowest group of students, I just give them a checklist asking them to underline the mistakes and asking them about the good sides of the essay by receiving their explanation, too by providing them a guideline. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

T13 also supports the previous statements by explaining how supporting and guiding weak students can be beneficial for them especially in the reading practices. Her explanation can be seen below:

We started to use differentiation in readings a lot, and it worked very well for us. For example, in the open- ended questions, we guide low level students more or we give them easier texts to practice. Or we leave some blanks in some practice activities asking them to write the linkers only. (30, 7 years of experience, Female)

Differentiating the instruction according to the readiness level of students by the participants was seen at a high level of frequency; however, not all the quotations responding to the target category are worth presenting in this section. The reason is that their content is also similar to the ones that are already presented and explained. As it can be seen, participants differentiate their instruction according to their students' readiness level which refers to their academic level mainly while preparing and designing their materials. These materials can be practice handouts, production task handouts, checklists, or question types in the handouts. All of these show that many of the participants prioritize improving and supporting the academic level of the students, especially the low-level students.

The results of the lesson plan analysis also showed differentiating according to the readiness level was a common strategy. In the grade 6 level, five of these lesson plans were differentiated according to the readiness level of the students. The other five lesson plans were differentiated according to either interest or the learner profile.

On the other hand, in the grade 8 level, six of the lesson plans were differentiated according to the readiness level of the students. Additionally, among these lesson plans, four of them were grammar lesson plans and two of them were reading lesson plans.

4.1.2.2. Deciding according to Students' Working Style Preference

In addition to the readiness level of the students, four participants stated that they took how students wanted to work in a classroom activity into consideration, as well. This statement refers to preferences of working in groups, in pairs or individually. Teachers reporting that they made differentiation by considering their students'

preferences asserted that they needed to be respectful and understanding especially for the students who prefer working alone.

T14 states that there may be students that do not want to take part in a pair or group work activity. Instead, they may prefer working alone. Therefore, she presents her students that option, as well. T14 stated:

For example, there are students that do not want to work with a partner. This is quite natural. There are also kids that do not want to work in groups, which is also normal. I give them this option: If you want, you can work alone. For instance, there is a pair work activity. I know that that student is not ready for that. Especially at the beginning of the term, I do not have to push them to work collaboratively. The student can perform and work by herself or himself. S/he does not need any help. So, I say, "Okay, work individually". (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

T12 also mentions that she tries to give her students options about her students' working preferences so that they can be a part of the process. She believed that letting the students be in the inner cycle of the learning process creates a more positive classroom environment, where students' motivation is boosted. She mentioned it as follows:

We try to provide students with different options and themes when they need to produce something, and as I said we give options for different learning and working preferences. They can work in the way they prefer. In this way, there can be a positive classroom atmosphere, and students feel more motivated. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

T1 also shares similar reflections on this issue. She makes her justification by saying that when students get to choose their own way, they grow a sense of belonging and they feel happy. She believes that this situation creates a positive learning environment. Her statement can be seen below:

Some want to do individual work, there are students preferring that way. Some other students want to work with a partner, or in groups of three or maybe four. Even this can be thought of as differentiation. So, if I have an in-class activity, I let students make their own choices, which is very important.

It is very important that the students feel happy in that classroom by making their own decisions. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

In the same vein, T6 also expressed that not all the students may want to work in the way the teacher instructs. On the other hand, she mentioned that classroom dynamics also affects and shapes this process. Thus, in accordance with the classroom dynamic and the target task to complete, she lets students decide on their own working ways. Her explanation can be seen in the excerpt below:

Surely, some students do not want to work with anyone else. So, while I am grouping the other students, I let them work individually. I cannot always do this, but if the task and the classroom environment are suitable for this, I let them work in their own way. It totally depends on the dynamics. (26, 4 years of experience, Female)

4.1.2.3. Deciding according to Students' Interest

Most of the students mentioned that they felt the need and urge to differentiate their instruction partly based on their students' personal interest areas. Most of them stated that they prefer to integrate their students' interests in the production stage of their lessons because it is easier for the teachers and students to be more willing to work on their tasks.

Although the majority of these teachers apply differentiation according to their students' interests during the in-class activities, one teacher mentioned that she took her students' interests into consideration while assigning books on the online reading platform. T12 expressed that her students are likely to use this online reading platform more effectively and in a more willing way with the help of this. Her statement is as follows:

For instance, while assigning books on our online reading platform, I think about the themes and topics that my students are interested in. I have experienced that they become more willing readers and they get curious about the next assignments. This keeps their motivation up for some time. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

T3 also explains how she prioritizes her students' interests while planning, especially the introduction and presentation stages of her lessons. She specifies that she adopts this approach while working on speaking skill. She believes that integrating students' interests into class activities and planning the lessons accordingly pave the way for a motivated group of students to participate more in the lessons. Related excerpt can be seen below:

For instance, I give four or five items in speaking activities. Everyone chooses the one that s/he is interested in and joins that group. In groups, they have a discussion about the topic they choose. For example, I remember that I showed different pictures, such as hippies, or other kinds of different groups of people. Everyone chose a specific picture and made comments in groups. It was an engaging activity. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

The rest of the participants that are affected by students' interests while planning their differentiation explained that they consider their students' interests especially in the production stage of the lessons. They consider students' interests mostly in terms of the task options. According to their statements, students feel more autonomous when they get to decide on what to do on their own.

T2 makes her explanation and justification in the same vein as follows:

The other kind of differentiation that I use mostly is by their own will, abilities, or interests. I usually use this in vocabulary lessons. I ask them to produce something using the new words and I provide different options for this, such as writing a poem. Actually, I try to find more fun activities while deciding on the options and I think about what they are interested in. most of the time, this has become students' favorite kind of differentiation. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

In the same manner, T5 expresses that he pays attention to students' interests in the production stage of the lessons and he is satisfied with the result with the statements below:

I use whatever takes their attention the most. There may be some students who want to write a song or others may want to create a poster. I provide these kinds of task options because I know that while some groups of students are interested in poetry and have skills in that, some others are more into

drawing and creating a piece of text about it. So, I have these kinds of activities in nearly all of my lessons. (32, 10 years of experience, Male)

He continues mentioning the positive effects of it as follows:

I think it definitely works in a positive way. Students feel like they are valued. Sometimes, I also try to choose the theme of my lessons by considering what my students would enjoy more especially in speaking or writing activities. (32, 10 years of experience, Male)

T7 and T1 also clearly underline that they can use what their students are interested in while planning the production stage of their lessons. They have not specified any different reason for this approach. They elaborate on the same justifications with the other participants. T7's explanations can be seen in the excerpt below:

Most of the time, we differentiate the products based on what students are more into. They can create whatever they want and in any way they want. In this way, they feel free. (38, 15 years of experience, Female)

T1 also describes some task types to elaborate on students' interest areas that are similar to T2 and T5. Similar remarks can be seen in the excerpt below:

For example, I approve if there are any students that want to write a piece of text, or there may be students that want to write a dialogue, story, newspaper article, booklet, or poster. I think capturing the students' attention with a variety of task options in accordance with what they are into creates a more engaging lesson. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

The results of the lesson plan analysis also showed that in the grade 6 level, three of these lesson plans were differentiated according to the interests of the students, and all of them were reading lesson plans.

On the other hand, in the grade 8 level, four of the lesson plans were differentiated according to the interests of the students. Additionally, among these lesson plans, two of them were grammar lesson plans.

4.2. Findings regarding Research Question 2

The second research question was created to be able to understand how the participants perceive differentiated instruction in terms of its advantages and disadvantages. Thus, the relevant results were collected with the help of interviews, and they are presented in the category of “teacher perception regarding DI” with the themes “advantages and motivating factors while implementing DI” and “disadvantages of DI”.

4.2.1. Teacher Perceptions Regarding DI

4.2.1.1. Advantages and Motivating Factors While Implementing DI

Ten participants indicated that they believed there are various advantages of using differentiated instruction within their lessons. They remarked that their students can increase their self-confidence and motivation for the English lessons, and they can be more willing to improve themselves, especially on the academic level. Additionally, they can become more curious about what they need to work on to achieve the expected learning outcomes. Moreover, their participation and interest in the English lessons can be boosted and even classroom management can be affected in a positive manner.

For instance, T5 claimed that since he started adopting the idea of differentiated instruction, he could clearly observe the increase in student motivation and their academic progress. He stated that he could get this result not only with his observation but also with the help of student feedback. According to him, the feedback he received from his students on behalf of the benefits of differentiated instruction was a pure source of evidence in this aspect. His personal stance can be seen in the excerpt below:

I think it is very beneficial in terms of motivation and progress. The increase in participation in the lessons and the feedback we received from the students

created an essential source of feedback. So, I am satisfied with the results most of the time. (32, 10 years of experience, Male)

T10 also shared the same stance as T5. She explained that when she used differentiated activities, students can become more engaged, and they can be more motivated. Along with these, their confidence to participate more can be supported. She says: “Students become more interested. They can speak more English. I think they are gaining confidence.” She continues her justification by saying: “Of course, I find it very useful in terms of making children feel better and being more integrated into the lesson.”

T1 agreed with these remarks also highlighting that with the help of adopting DI, students could also get rid of his/her prejudice against his/her ability to improve and grow in any of the target skills or abilities. Her statements are as follows:

As the student breaks down the prejudices, s/he goes home with a calmer and happier sense. His/her awareness increases and s/he feels much happier receiving extra practice worksheets. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

She continues her supporting ideas and justifications as follows:

I have been observing really good results and this is reflected even in the presence of the student in the classroom. As a teacher, you can see it in the boosted self-confidence, from the way of doing his/her homework, the way s/he participates in class activities, the way s/he answers the questions, and even the way s/he communicates with you during recess times. Also, the student’s success is reflected on the increase in any assessment you make afterward. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

The same teacher articulates that these students also request more support from the teacher because they know, and they believe that they can get better, and they feel ready to go further. T1 explains this situation in the excerpt below:

As I said, the quality of the homework increases. Then, the student comes with a request. S/he says: “Can you give me one more practice sheet, please? Can I work on another reading practice?”. This is something very crucial because it shows the growth of self-esteem and confidence in the student,

which is also reflected on his/her academic progress. I can observe this case clearly with my students. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

In the same manner, T2 expresses her opinions on the benefits of adopting DI within class time with the explanations below:

As I explained, students' confidence increases because they can see that they can be good at something in English genuinely. Their participation increases. They can come across activities that are about their interest areas and they can integrate their knowledge within their tasks. Thus, their motivation is affected by a positive mood. This has been one of the most common observations I get on the positive side of differentiated instruction. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

The same teacher continues her explanations as the following, pointing out the positive connection between the differentiation according to students' interests and their engagement level in the lessons. Her explanations are as follows:

The lesson becomes a source of fun apart from the expected lesson outcomes for them when students encounter something they personally like. Thus, all the lesson procedures are affected by this. Even classroom management gets easier because it is easier to work with a group of students that are willing to make an effort and also it is easier to lead them so that they can reach the lesson objectives. So, I can say that I have been observing really fruitful results on behalf of the students. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

As it is underlined in these remarks, she believes that making use of DI approach also creates a foundation in students' minds, with the help of which they can perceive the English lesson as something they can enjoy. T2 also supports the idea that they can achieve the lesson objectives in an easier and in a more enthusiastic way. She also mentions that classroom management can get easier because students get already ready to be directed when they encounter activities or tasks they are into, or they are capable of.

T3 is on the board with these explanations, as well. In addition to these, she also points out that she also likes the variety of classroom activities that are inspired by

the DI as a teacher because the students can get the chance of becoming more engaged and creative. Her statements can be seen below:

We kind of need to let students choose because in this way, they can be connected with the tasks they need to perform or work on. Their participation is also built up perceptibly. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

The lesson becomes more attractive for the students. Instead of boring and ordinary practice exercises or activities, we can have variability in the tasks. Students feel free and they can be more creative. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

T4 agrees on these aspects, and she also points out a different benefit on behalf of the students. She specifies that when there is a classroom environment where students are aware of their personal growth areas and in what ways they will be treated, there can be a respectful atmosphere. She states that because students are familiar with the DI processes such as receiving a different worksheet as a high-level or low-level student, they show great respect to each other and they expect to get different tasks, as well. The explanation can be enlightened with the excerpt below:

I really see that it is a great thing for the child to be recognized, to know the child's talent or deficiency at work, and to announce it in the classroom. In other words, it turns out that all students know each other's shortcomings. I have done a lot of work for this situation. This year, I have seen it work very well with it. So, we are saying, here I am, I have a friend, Ayşe, and we are sitting together. Ayşe tells me this: "Your writing was poor. Look, the teacher gave you something like this, this is a very good thing". I think the best part of this is to make up for someone's deficiency without being a mockery, to differentiate, everyone knows the missing or good part of themselves. This is a very beautiful thing. (32, 10 years of experience, Female)

She continues her justification by saying that students also feel valued and respected because their interests, hobbies, or academically weak points are welcomed by the teacher. Thus, she feels that her connection with her students is strengthened, and they have a strong bond, which can also lead to motivation and success for the lesson. Her articulation of this is as follows:

At first, the kid sees me like this, either my teacher knows me, I make it up at work, she knows that I love history texts and she gives me history texts or she knows that I play Minecraft and she gave me Minecraft even in an eighth-grade level of work. It increases their academic success and the bond that I have established with my students. (32, 10 years of experience, Female)

T7 also agrees with the point that having the perspective of DI as a teacher creates a class environment where students feel valued. She underlines that students grow a sense of belonging and in this way, they can be more active parties. According to her, she can understand this from the way especially academically weak students push themselves to improve and they get better. Her related excerpt can be seen below:

Children increase their sharing more according to their interests. We increase the feeling that they are valued. You know, we create a sense of belonging in the classroom. (38, 15 years of experience, Female)

She also adds how she can involve academically weak students, as well with the excerpt below:

In other words, when we look at the production stages, the weak students try to write one or two sentences at the end of that year or at the end of that semester. In other words, if there are equally small fluctuations in their grades, I can observe it in this way, whether it is reliable or how it is a good method at work, and I can really understand that students feel safe and are open to sharing. (38, 15 years of experience, Female)

Together with these highlights, T6 also points out that students get eager to push their own limits because they are recognized by their teacher. Thus, after some time, she does not even need much support from the teacher or from any other source because the student improves at his/her own pace in time. Her related stance is as follows:

At least, s/he can apply what you give at a certain level, s/he comes to her level, and s/he can do it with her own efforts without the need for a lot of support from others or from me. (26, 4 years of experience, Female)

Moreover, T8 expressed that in the process of DI, she observed that as a teacher she could help students explore their own potential and help them gain awareness of how to use that potential in an effective way. She clarifies that she aims for the long-term benefit of DI along with the short-term advantages such as the ones that are exemplified above. Her reasoning can be seen in the excerpt below:

So, I think the advantage is that you can help them discover their own essence as an individual. As teachers, we can afford them to be happy with the features they have. Therefore, we can really guide them to reveal their own potential. I think this is the most important thing. You know, I'm talking about creating awareness about what and how to do with the features they contain and discovering their own essence by using them in the right way, you know, in the very long term. (42, 22 years of experience, Female)

T9 holds the same perspective on this issue, as well. She points out that with the help of differentiated classroom activities, students can gain insights and awareness of their own strong and weak points. According to her, this is a healthier option for the sake of their own gain instead of pure praise or criticism. Her personal explanation can be seen below:

However, this raises awareness. I think it is much more important to create that awareness at this age. I think it has a positive effect on students in the future. Because at this age, constantly gassing a student by saying yes, you're doing very well, you're great does not gain us anything. At some point, they have to be self-aware. (25, 4 years of experience, Femal)

4.2.1.2. Disadvantages of DI

Apart from the advantages of differentiated instruction, there are also some disadvantages during implementation. Five of the participants announced some drawbacks in the process of applying differentiated activities. They are mainly about how specifically academically weak students may feel like they are in the outer cycle when it comes to academic success. According to some of the teachers, this situation may demotivate them because they may be upset about receiving a different worksheet compared to their peers. Other than this, some teachers articulated that it may also have a drawback effect for them because sometimes applying differentiated

activities may bring along a strong management and control mechanism especially when it comes to students with individual learning difficulties. Thus, all these emerging themes are presented in a detailed manner below.

Some teachers that share the same stance indicated that some weak students do not feel at ease when they need to work on something different, which is something easier in terms of the challenge level in general. T1, T2, T3, and T15 mentioned that they may need to explain to help those students gain the necessary insight when they feel like they are outsiders.

T1 specifies that these students can feel intimidated by their peers on these occasions. Her related excerpt is as follows:

I have seen this over the years, too. “Am I stupid, do I not understand?” Or the child can feel it as lameness because of the possibility of bullying friends. Even if you do not allow it, these are the things that happen. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

T3 also points out that some students do not welcome differentiated activities because they are not aware of the aims of DI. Thus, they may not enjoy class time according to her. She states: “Children understand if they will receive a lower-level practice or if they will be in a group that has less challenging tasks. This makes them a little sad, frankly”.

T2 also explains in a detailed manner how some students are unmotivated and sad because they feel like they are discriminated against while working on different activities. Her explanations can be seen below:

They can feel and understand that there are tasks created according to the level. In this case, they get upset or they may think why I am at a low level at work. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

I've had this happen while differentiating according to the readiness level of the students. After a while, they understand how these levels are created, and some students sometimes want to be in the high group or there are students who feel bad during this differentiation. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

According to her, this problem is likely to occur especially when differentiation is applied by students' readiness level. She also shares an experience she had with one of the parents. Thus, not only the students but also parents may likely be concerned about this. Therefore, T2 suggests that the system of differentiation may be presented to parents beforehand to avoid any misunderstanding or misjudgment. Her clear attitude is as follows:

Even the parents can sometimes come into play about this issue. They may say: "Why my child is in that group?". I have experienced this once, so this may be the feeling they get. Therefore, the concept actually needs to be given from the beginning of the term. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

T15 also brought up a different problem that he experienced with his students. The problem he stated is that because some of his students are well aware of their high academic level of English, they do not avoid expressing this loudly in the classroom. According to him, this situation ends up with disagreement among some groups of students referring to the unequal challenge level. His detailed feedback on the issue can be seen below:

I wanted to give different activities to the students. But two of my students are aware that their English level is really high. I do not want this attitude in the classroom, but I couldn't control them at that moment, and they said that difficult activities came to us again. In other words, they expressed in a way that this could create discrimination or inequality at work, especially among students. There may be students who think so. This is not a common problem I have, but there are some mindful and really confident students who can provide such feedback. (26, 3 years of experience, Male)

On the other hand, T9 presented a different approach as a disadvantage. Not the students, but as a teacher, she indicated that she had been experiencing hard times while managing the transitions between the activities or the sense of unity during differentiated in-class tasks. She experienced this problem, especially while working with students that have individual learning difficulties. She also stated that those students needed a different program to be able to fulfill objectives that are suitable

for their level instead of being obliged to the objectives that were designed for the other students. Her detailed response can be seen in the excerpt below:

Probably the biggest challenge is working with students with individual learning difficulties as I mentioned. Having to differentiate in the classroom for forty minutes at the same time is really hard because at that moment, it is not enough to differentiate the process, product, or content. You have to run a completely different program. I can say that the most difficult thing in a differentiated program is a classroom environment like this. In fact, this is the same at my current school, you know, it does not necessarily have to be dyslexic or have a diagnosis of another individual learning disability. It is challenging to differentiate and manage with certain students in the classroom environment if their number is high. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

Finally, regarding the disadvantages, T3 shared her experience on how differentiated instruction can affect the in-class procedures in a negative way. She mentioned that some groups of students may need further explanation or direction on certain activities. According to her, this may lead to time consumption in vain, and the activities or tasks may not be fully completed in a meaningful manner. Thus, the aimed activity or the task may not function well to reach the target lesson objectives. Her explanation of the issue is as follows:

Sometimes there can be time-consuming application processes. For example, there are four different things. You know, you cannot give everything in writing because children already have a problem with reading instructions. So, you know that you have to deal with each group separately. If you make a statement like this at the beginning, it can also be time-consuming. Sometimes teaching can increase talking time too much. You know, when you say: “you are going to do this, you are going to do this, you will look at it”, it's already the middle of the lesson, and half of the lesson may be passed until the students complete it. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

4.3. Findings regarding Research Question 3

4.3.1. Challenges and Obstacles Experienced by the Teachers

The third research question was created to investigate whether participants go through any kinds of obstacles while implementing DI and if they do, what obstacles they experience. To be able to reach relevant results, data was collected with the help

of interviews, and they are presented in the category of “challenges and obstacles experienced by teachers” with the themes “lack of support”, “assessment that is not associated with DI”, “lack of information regarding DI”, and “program and system of the institution”.

4.3.1.1. Lack of Support

When it comes to the obstacles that are experienced by the participants, six of them mentioned having trouble while implementing DI due to inadequate support. These participants pointed out that they could not receive enough support from the school, the institution where they are currently working. The support they expect to gain is in-service training, materials/resources to use while applying DI, and any kind of support from parents to ease this challenging process in a collaborative manner.

For instance, T2, T3, and T10 articulate the problem of deficiency in in-service training. They believed that since differentiated instruction is an essential approach for the institution itself, there should be more training like webinars that are held frequently to be able to become more knowledgeable on DI. T2 expressed her opinion as follows:

There was only one training, which is actually something negative. Yes, this is a must-have thing because what the school actually expects from us is that we constantly apply differentiation in our lessons. In other words, when the expectation is like this, of course, we should be constantly taking webinar training, or we should be constantly being offered different opportunities. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

T3 also mentioned that the support they receive from their institution in terms of training is not sufficient enough. Thus, she questions the expectation and the reality. Her view on the issue can be seen below:

How will I do, what will I do, how will you make me knowledgeable? I do not think I have ever had any support. As I said, I get help from my colleagues with an idea. Apart from that, there is no support given by the school. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

T10 holds the same idea, and she also implies that there is not any support from the administration in the process of DI. Meanwhile, she underlines that she is open and ready to be trained more to get better at implementing different strategies to differentiate her instruction with the following excerpt:

Now, I do not think I can get any support from the administration regarding this issue I just mentioned. As I said, there is something ahead of you, which you must follow. But other than that, we received training, but I would like to receive more training in a way that answers the questions in our minds. (36, 13 years of experience, Female)

In addition to the inadequate in-service training, T3 and T4 also indicated that they should be provided with different sources and materials that they can use to differentiate their activities and tasks. T4 specifies this issue by giving an example scenario as follows:

I think the resource is a shortcoming, that is, the school offered us a few resources, of course, but there can always be more, such as the course content. Because there is nothing in most of the books or resources on behalf of differentiation, I would like this: “How can I teach the present perfect with differentiated instruction?”. I think there is such a shortcoming, let me be more specific. More point-to-point things are needed. If we had such sources of differentiation, I would use them. Something could happen in an activity that I never thought of before. I see such a deficiency in our department. (32, 10 years of experience, Female)

T3 also underlines the same issue as a challenge for herself. She also stated that insufficient materials and sources make her feel overwhelmed and anxious, and this may be reflected in the students, too. Her statement can be seen below:

I mean, if you expect this from me, then you have to teach me about it. This affects the encouragement, in fact, it is a troublesome thing that annoys the teacher as well as the students. In the end, I have to do it, but how am I going to do it? We should be supported with materials and sources instead of investigating them on our own. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

T4 and T6 claimed the issue of lack of support in sources and materials while differentiating their instruction, and they also highlighted that this issue brought up the time management problem, as well. They expressed how busy they were most of

the time. Along with this, they needed to create a specific time and effort to be able to create differentiated activities and tasks that could actually meet different student needs. T4 explained this issue as follows:

This is not the difficulty of the differentiation process, but I work in a busy school. Time is the most important thing because it is very easy to take something ready and go. Now, after a certain point, the difficulty is that the method is never to reach information, not to think about ideas. Because the basis of differentiation is really well-functioning and interconnected, it is very difficult to find different ideas on the same subject. So I will differentiate it, but it is not necessarily difficult. According to what, according to the lack of which skill of the child, according to what situation will I differentiate? So you have to sit down and plan properly and come up with something that really works. That's why I think the biggest obstacle is the lack of time at that point. (32, 10 years of experience, Female)

T6 agrees on this issue with the statement below:

Because there may be things that we need to develop very momentarily and quickly, I think the biggest challenge is not being able to outsource material quickly. If we look at it from the other point of view, the teacher can of course learn these and improve him/herself, but in how many different ways can you differentiate a reading text in a short time? Of course, you can learn these, but these are very time-consuming things. Especially it takes time for young teachers to learn about these. These are time-consuming things. As I said, I can say that the time constraint is an obstacle. Because I want to learn, I want to differentiate, but I do not have enough time. The biggest obstacle is the lack of time and material, I would say the lack of resources. (26, 4 years of experience, Female)

Lastly, T9 claimed a different point of view on the issue of lack of support. She implied that she should have been supported by the parents to be able to work in a collaborative and effective manner in the process of differentiation. According to one of her experiences, one of the parents did not welcome his/her child receiving different worksheets. Thus, it created a challenging time for her while trying to explain the logic behind it. Her explanation can be seen below:

Sometimes there are parents who really insist on this. There are also parents who say that their child does not really need something differentiated. It is a bit challenging to convince the parent rather than convincing the child. It is much harder because s/he does not want him to do anything different. He

wants everyone to do the same worksheet. When we explain the reasons for this, let's say he is not convinced or does not want to see it at that moment, this can be a bit challenging. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

4.3.1.2. Assessment that is not Associated with DI

For three of the participants, it was a problem that the exams were not prepared in a differentiated way. They pointed out that although they differentiated their instruction purposefully to meet and welcome various student needs, at the end of the day, these efforts were not in line with the assessment procedures.

For instance, T1 explains how it could be overwhelming for some of the students to face something different in the exams as opposed to what they worked on in-class activities or extra practice worksheets. Her explanation of the issue is as follows:

Also, as I said, this is not a system that has its biggest handicap in the education system, and unfortunately, this is not included in our exams. Since the weak student takes the same exam, s/he gets into trouble when s/he cannot see what s/he is used to in the classroom. S/he may not be able to catch up with his performance when s/he does it there individually. In other words, we also caught such negative things in some students. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

T3 holds a similar attitude against standard exams while in-class and extra practice materials are differentiated according to students' readiness levels mostly. Her stance can be seen in the excerpt below:

As I said, again, I think exams are a big problem, so in the end, it is okay to get the outcome, I suppose I reached the same objective, but that student did it with such simple things in the process. However, in what sense did s/he reach that objective? When you put the exam at the same difficulty level in front of him/her, can we expect his/her success as in the differentiated materials? No, of course. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

Thus, she suggested that exams can also be differentiated in accordance with the readiness level of the students. In this way, she believes, personal growth and academic progress of students can be followed in a more meaningful sense. She states:

Maybe we can do this, the exams we apply to these children are very heavy and they all have to take the same exam. If we differentiate the exams, maybe then we can observe the difference much better, but unfortunately there is no such thing at the moment. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

T10 shares the same perspective on the issue also highlighting the emotional damage that students may go through in this controversial situation. According to her, working on differentiated materials and taking a harder exam may result in demotivation and decrease in self-esteem. Her statements are as follows:

I differentiate the process, but I measure once and evaluate once. For example, you are differentiating the process by providing supported options, but you cannot do the same in the exam. I think you are harming the students when you are differentiating the process in this way because they may feel insecure. (36, 13 years of experience, Female)

4.3.1.3. Lack of Information regarding DI

In line with lack of support, five of the participants mentioned that they had hard times while preparing differentiated materials or applying them in their lessons because they did not have enough or qualified information regarding DI.

T1 stated it clearly in relation to the lack of materials as follows:

The biggest obstacle that came from the past was limited resources. We did not have a lot of resources. I did not know about such applications. So, we could not gain enough information about how to differentiate instruction. This surely blocked us a lot in the whole process. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

T10 also shared the same view, but from a different angle. She explained how hard it could be for her, especially while working with students that had individual learning difficulties. She stated that it was quite challenging for her to apply differentiation with that special student along with other students that did not carry the same features. Her explanation is as follows:

Knowledge and experience I received; for example, I received most of the resources from that private trainer. Books about what to do and what not to

do when working with dyslexic children were sent to me. I did not know about it before. We have not received the related education at the university. They take us after graduation from undergraduate education and put us in that class. They want us to work with fourteen other students against a student who has an individual learning difficulty. This turns the issue of differentiated education into a bit of a disadvantage because I am not very knowledgeable about this. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

T2, T3, and T6 also gave the message that they did not feel well equipped with the right sources and they did not have enough qualified information. T6 again made a connection with having to use her time ineffectively while trying to understand what to do and what kind of a way to pursue to be able to meet different needs. She stated:

I cannot find enough resources. I search for them myself. Maybe you need to look at the studies, but as a teacher, unfortunately, you do not have time to sit down and read pages and pages of articles. So, I usually use the Internet to get an idea about regular tasks. If I knew what to do or where to look, I would be more sufficient. (26, 4 years of experience, Female)

T2 also supported this case with her explanations below:

In other words, when I was making differentiation at first when I did not know how to differentiate, I had a lack of knowledge. So, I did not know how to do it or what strategies to use. Thus, I naturally made mistakes. This was the biggest challenge for me, namely the lack of knowledge. How to differentiate, we know how to differentiate, yes, we know what it is, but how should it be done, what should be paid attention to? I did not know these. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

In addition to them, T3 also pointed out that they were not trained well to be able to apply differentiation in a qualified and fruitful way. She articulated that she felt like she was pushing herself just to do something without being fully aware. She said:

As I mentioned at the beginning, I do not think it is well-known and can be applied well. I think we are diving into something heady right now. You know, I think we just call this differentiation and apply a few things. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

4.3.1.4. Program and System of the Institution

Along with the previous obstacles and challenges that the participants reflected on, four teachers mentioned that sometimes the nature of the program and system of their institution can also be likely to block them. T1 reported:

As I said, when you encounter great obstacles in the administrative dimension, such as “no, it will not be like that, let’s not do it like this, let’s not do it there, let’s do it.”; in other words, it should be left to the initiative of the teacher. When it is not the case, when some things are forced on the teacher, it can be an obstacle for us. I have had these, too. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

She also added that when she is blocked by any administrative issue as a teacher in the process of applying differentiation or reaching out to students, she could feel demotivated. She also added that she should be the one that is given the initiative role as a teacher. Her statements can be seen below:

Being demotivated or being disapproved of something I do can demotivate me. They need to allow the teacher to take initiative at a certain stage. We are the ones who know the students well. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

T8 also supported this issue on the angle of not always receiving the initiative role as a teacher. She also underlined that this is a nationwide problem because, in this way, students may be restrained from fruitful learning environments. She explained as follows:

This is a subject that has always been left out, at least in our education system, which we have seen since I was born. Field trips and workshops that will enable the student to learn by experience are always restricted. It is a very big deficiency, and I think it is a serious problem. (42, 22 years of experience, Female)

T8 also highlights that the institution and the system hold specific sets of objectives and goals for everyone. On the other hand, she implied that the nature of differentiation did not welcome these kinds of acts. Thus, she stated that this made her feel limited mostly. Her explanation can be seen below:

I mean, it's a constraint, for example, something I'm unhappy with, I would like to add to it. In general, there is a specific expectation or a curriculum that needs to be reached, here are the objectives that should be accepted. The school has a total cumulative expectation system. In other words, since these are always limiting things, we can make that differentiation within a certain limit. (42, 22 years of experience, Female)

In the same vein, T9 explained that she had hard times because she had to act in accordance with some regulations, which limited her freedom as a teacher. She stated:

Sometimes the program does not give enough freedom to the teachers, I think, in this regard, even most schools have this. The school where I worked before gave me more freedom, but you have a program to run and an exam to take. If it forces you on this issue or if you cannot find an open door in terms of management or applications, you are forced to struggle because you have to act accordingly somehow. However, it is a bit challenging. I think not being free is compelling anyway, which is another point that I have difficulty in teaching in general. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

She also exemplified the issue with the problem of class size. She indicated that because the classrooms are crowded, it could be challenging to follow and check students' different needs and progress. She stated:

I think one of the biggest handicaps is that the classes are very crowded here. It is much free in some other schools, where you can work in smaller groups. I can say that the students also felt much better. As the crowd grows and the number of students increases, I think differentiated education starts to become harder to hold onto because the teacher is divided. So, it is very difficult for us to be divided into so many people. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

Lastly, T10 came up with a different issue, which is the intensity of the English curriculum they follow. She stated that because the program itself is very busy, she may not be applying differentiation in a proficient way. Her statements are as follows:

The biggest obstacle I encounter while applying differentiation is that the curriculum is progressing very intensively. For example, it takes time to apply differentiation. You need to be able to get to know the students. If you are doing differentiation, then something else is needed. So, I wonder how I

can continue with the differentiation I made before. (36, 13 years of experience, Female)

4.4. Findings regarding Research Question 4

4.4.1. Ways of Overcoming the Obstacles and Challenges

The fourth research question was created to investigate how teachers overcame the obstacles and challenges they went through in the process of differentiation. To be able to reach relevant results, data was collected with the help of interviews, and they are presented in the category of “ways of overcoming the obstacles and challenges” with the themes “support from co-workers” and “suggestions regarding overcoming the obstacles”.

4.4.1.1. Support from Co-Workers

Five of the teachers mentioned that the support they got from their colleagues helped them a lot while trying to solve the problems they encountered while working on differentiating their instruction. They stated that they always shared and talked to one another about their experiences. Thus, the process got better for them.

For instance, T15 explains how got help from his colleagues and the head of the department while working on differentiated materials. His related expressions can be seen in the excerpt below:

We share information with teachers and other colleagues, especially when preparing lesson plans. We talk about how we can differentiate it, and how we can get the most benefit from it. Apart from that, we have the head of the department. So, I can sometimes ask her: “I have differentiated it like this but is it appropriate?” It is important to understand for me, too. (26, 3 years of experience, Male)

T2 also made her justification in a parallel way. Additionally, she also expressed that the lesson observation procedures helped her a lot in directing and leading the way for her. her statements are as follows:

Well, we have lesson observations. They are actually very helpful because, you know, you can also differentiate like this or that, and there can always be a better version. I am still making corrections with the feedback to get better. For example, I may forget something that should be in a differentiated activity. I just correct it. This is of course thanks to the feedback I get. These help me a lot. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

She continued how she thought of the importance of sharing their experiences with the excerpt below:

I actually get the biggest support from my colleagues in terms of differentiation because we share our lessons with each other, or we visit each other's lessons. There is of course a lot about differentiation and the different things that we learn from each other. However, as I said, while I am making differentiation and sharing it with my friends all the time, the feedback I get from them is very helpful. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

Similar to T15 and T2's points of view, T4 also talked about how she got help and support from her colleagues while getting prepared. She stated:

We are a very crowded group, and what someone does surely works for someone else, too. Sharing them, and telling them to each other in school, I usually make use of my friends' suggestions, or the head of our department also gives a lot of ideas. (32, 10 years of experience, Female)

T6 and T9 also have the same opinions. They clearly stated how it was comforting for them to share their ideas and information regarding DI with one another. T6 explained as follows:

I would definitely say that the support of my colleagues works a lot for me. You certainly do not get ideas from your superiors, you can get ideas from your colleagues, of course, you search and search on the internet. However, when you get stuck, you ask the head of the department, and you get help from your colleagues. You are talking with experienced people. This is how I get over it. (26, 4 years of experience, Female)

In the same way, T9 specified how she could work effectively with the teachers that were teaching to the same grade level with her. Her explanation can be seen below:

Apart from that, actually talking and discussing these things with my colleagues help a lot. Because within our group, there are people with very different experiences. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

In addition to these points, T9 also emphasized how it was important for her to receive support from the counselor and assistant principal especially while communicating with parents on the issue of using differentiated materials. She clearly pinpointed how comforting it was with the explanation below:

Both the counselor and my assistant principal are very supportive, especially in communication with the parents. You know, they are in constant communication, and they can have an approach with a solution-oriented approach. It was a great opportunity for me this year. My colleagues, as well as the teachers I work with at my own level, are people who are open to communication. So, I can say that our job is getting a little easier. So, if one of us has a problem, we try to at least put our heads together and find a way to solve the problem. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

4.4.1.2. Suggestions regarding Overcoming the Obstacles

As well as the support they gave each other within their department, teachers also suggested how they could get challenged less or how they could act in a more proficient way in the process of applying DI. Most of them underlined the importance of getting familiar with theoretical and practical information before they started to work as a teacher.

Firstly, T1 stated openly: “That's why the vision of the people who run the school should be very broad.” She mentioned how it is important to work with people who capture the nature and essence of DI to be able to adopt it in a sufficient way.

She also pointed out that publishers needed to be well-prepared and ready to support schools and teachers with various resources and materials. Her explanation can be seen below:

For this, institutions need to support us. When publishing their books, publishers need to give a lot of resources and materials about differentiated

instruction to the teacher in the teacher's book. (50, 30years of experience, Female)

The same teacher also put forward the importance of in-service training. According to her experiences, there were more training sessions, and they were beneficial for the teachers. On the other hand, she stated that she could not observe the same situation anymore. Thus, she highly recommended in-service training, so that teachers can get proficient to internalize the idea of DI. Her explanations can be seen below:

These should be renewed, and updated training and institutions should offer this to their teachers as in-service training. Now, the training I received in the past was fruitful. They gave us many different types of training, so there is no lesson I have not learned. It was very good because we got trained very well. However, now I see that in-service training seminars among institutions have decreased a lot, unfortunately. (50, 30 years of experience, Female)

As another suggestion, T2 put the emphasis on the extensive use of DI not only by the English department but also by the other departments of subjects. She articulated that in this way, students would gain more awareness and their system of DI would work more effectively. She stated:

So let me put it this way, I think this issue should be brought up more in the era we live in because it is a new term. It is a very important term, and therefore all teachers, regardless of which course they are, should be informed about it. In this way, students can also gain a better understanding of the process. (25, 3 years of experience, Female)

Other teachers also stressed that teachers should learn about differentiated instruction when they are in the undergraduate level instead of trying to push themselves into an unknown journey by themselves. Many of the participants highly recommended the importance of getting familiar with the DI before working as a teacher. For instance, T3 articulated that there could have been a methodology course where they could learn about the implementation of DI within English courses. She expressed it as follows:

This methodology should be mentioned in the courses, that is, a few examples should be shown, not even a few, but of course a lot. I think that at least its logic should have been established at the undergraduate level. You know, just like how we took a detailed course like how grammar is taught. (28, 6 years of experience, Female)

T11 also pointed out that they could have been introduced with DI and practiced on it especially when they were doing their internship as prospective teachers. Thus, she also pinpointed the issue of being familiar with the important strategies to differentiate one's instruction before actually learning about them in a limited way.

All these differentiation processes that we have talked about can be given to students one by one, maybe even under the name of a course because differentiation is a very detailed subject. Maybe it can be an elective course to take before the internship course. There may be additional lessons. These should definitely be taught in detail to those who will become teachers and should be applied during the internship, as well. In other words, it should be given in the form of writing the lesson plans containing these and then applying them. (28, 4 years of experience, Female)

T8 also underlined that a teacher can reach theoretical information on how to differentiate the instruction always, but what is more important is having the chance of learning it in practice and experiencing it beforehand. Thus, she stated:

I think the teacher should take everything for practice, not only theoretically, but by actually living and experiencing it. You can reach the theory everywhere, but it is very difficult for a teacher who has not experienced what it means and what it really means to understand this, especially for a teacher who has always been successful in academic terms. So, practical training should be provided to prospective teachers. (42, 22 years of experience, Female)

T9 also reflected on the significance of the same issue with the previous explanations. She also indicated that many learning environments in Turkey are quite suitable to use a differentiated approach because there is a wide variety in the student profile. She described this issue with the following words:

The only thing I know is that the theory they told me is a bit of an undergraduate program, and their programs actually need to give a lot of importance to practice in both differentiated education and other subjects.

Because there are many examples in Turkey. There are many different classroom environments. Since we are provided with the most ideal classroom environment, we can experience a little shock when we enter the actual place. (25, 4 years of experience, Female)

She continued her explanations with the following words:

In other words, it is not a differentiated education that will be explained to us with slides, but real classroom examples, or what is done in very challenging classes, not a differentiation made in a perfect class. For example, how are these done in classes where Syrian students enter as inclusive students? I think these issues should be brought up more. (25, experience: 4, Female)

T13 also presented similar explanations and insights on the issue. She also articulated that she was not familiar with DI beforehand. Therefore, it was not an easy process for her, and she still had some questions to answer about DI in her mind. Instead of learning about it on her own out of necessity, she clearly implied that she preferred having been educated for it. She described it as follows:

That's why I think that training should be given, and the internship should be based on this, that is, the internship in schools should focus on this. In other words, there will be a difference between learning by experience in time and learning from scratch in a limited time with limited sources. So, for example, if I had been educated about differentiation, I would have the answers to these questions in my mind. I would be more competent with the whole process and the stages. Also, the system of the whole school should be built on this, so that we can all act accordingly. (30, 7 years of experience, Female)

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter consists of three sections. Firstly, the results of this study are discussed focusing on the existing literature to explore the relationship between them. Secondly, implications for practice in the educational contexts are pointed out. Lastly, suggestions for further research are addressed.

5.1. Discussion and Conclusion

The current research study mainly pursued to understand differentiated instruction through the eyes of the participant teachers. In a more detailed way, it aimed to investigate in what ways English teachers working in a private middle school differentiate their instruction, what kinds of advantages and disadvantages they perceive during this process, what kinds of obstacles they go through and how they overcome those obstacles. Fifteen teachers volunteered to take part in the study. Interviews and lesson plans were the source of the data collected. The results were presented under five categories, which were in line with the research questions in the previous section. The results are discussed under four headings in the following sections to be able to make meaningful connections between them and the existing literature.

5.1.1. Ways of Differentiating the Instruction

The first research question aimed to investigate how English teachers differentiate their instruction, and the data obtained from interviews and lesson plans were analyzed. Results revealed that the participants mostly differentiate the products that they intended the students to create at the end of the lessons. In addition, the results revealed that while planning and designing their instruction to differentiate, they

mostly considered students' academic readiness level, working style preferences, and interests.

It was interesting to see that participants did not articulate differentiating the process although many of them explained how important it was for them to support and direct students that were weak academically. Most of them explained how they provided different tasks or practice sheets for the students that need to practice more. Although they explained it as differentiating according to the readiness level of the students and they exemplified it by sharing their experiences, they did not put it as differentiating the process during the interviews. This situation shows that participants still have some gaps regarding the theoretical information in differentiation. Özkanoglu (2015) also mentioned parallel results about mostly differentiating the 'process' and 'readiness' to be able to reach the variety in students' needs at the top level. Although this study did not reveal the differentiation of the process as a clear outcome, many participants mentioned it without being aware of it.

On the other hand, many participants mentioned how they differentiate the products in their lessons. Additionally, most of them stated that they preferred it because students were likely to enjoy having different task options to choose from. Many participants explained that they intended to aim to capture the attention of students by making use of their interests while providing different task options. Thus, as it can be seen that teachers thought of their students' personal interests while planning and designing their instruction. They had some information about their students' interests and hobbies thanks to some tests they applied to them or the meetings they had with the management and counselor at the beginning of the school year. Thanks to the information they gathered, they could pinpoint the related interest areas either on the production activities or the online reading platforms they used.

Consequently, they were affected by their students' academic level and interest while applying differentiation to the products. In addition to these affective factors, they were also directed by the students' working style. Many of the participants

mentioned that they wanted to set free students while they were working on their tasks. They expressed that it motivated their students and they wanted to participate more in the lessons. It would also be good to stress that teachers observed quite positive feedback from the students when they supported them with extra practice sheets, provided different task options, and let students work in any way they wanted. They all pointed out that this process full of endeavoring had been fruitful resulting in an increase in motivation, commitment, and participation on behalf of the students. Baecher et al. (2012) also presented the experiences of some teachers that applied differentiation to the process, content, and product in accordance with the needs of their students. Even though the teachers that participated in this research study could not differentiate the content because of the standard curriculum, they also reflected on positive outcomes of differentiation. Thus, the experiences of the teachers in the current study are mostly in line with different teachers working in different educational contexts.

In conclusion, teachers had some practice on making use of some strategies while differentiating, on the other hand, it could be said that they needed more theoretical information and maybe some freer working conditions to be able to practice with them. It can be said that not being able to differentiate the content and not being fully knowledgeable about what is being done are the examples of this current situation. Thus, the current research shed light on the importance of owning theoretical information for the teachers, also underlining the need for more research in the field.

5.1.2. Teacher Perceptions regarding DI

To be able to answer the second research question and to understand how the participants perceived differentiated instruction, the results based on the advantages and the disadvantages of differentiated instruction were presented in the previous section.

Regarding the advantages, the results showed that there are plenty of advantages of differentiated instruction according to the participants.

Teachers reflected and appreciated that due to differentiated classroom activities and the approach internalized by them, students had the chance of understanding their own potential with their strong and weak points. This was due to the fact that they were provided with different activities or were given special attention by the teachers so they were able to complete their gaps. Teachers also mostly highlighted that their students felt well valued, respected and they developed a sense of belonging to the learning context they were enrolled within. The study conducted by Yavuz (2020) also reflected the importance of integrating students' interests within the lessons, creating a positive impact on the learning process.

Some teachers also pointed out that due to differentiation, they could observe the creative side of their students more, which is also in line with the discussion by De Jesus (2012). De Jesus (2012) also presents that differentiated instruction paves the way for the students to become more creative and facilitates higher thinking skills.

In addition, many of the participants stated that their students' motivation increased due to the use of activities that were in line with their interests. The study conducted by Beler (2010) to find out the effects of differentiated instruction on the student achievement and classroom management presented parallel findings in regard to the positive relationship between student motivation and differentiated instruction. The study also resulted in the same positive effect on student learning, which was also put forward by the participants of the current study. Many teachers explained that they could especially see the academic progress of weak students with the help of tailored activities and supporting sources that were in line with their individual needs. Moreover, even though the levels are different, a study conducted by Tulbure (2012) also presents that differentiating the instruction according to personal learning styles and individual differences leads to an increase in learning in higher education.

Respectful classroom atmosphere and student engagement were the other results that were brought up in this study. There were teachers supporting the idea that because of DI, students could learn to respect one another because they were all experiencing special attention from the teacher when they were in need. Beler (2010) also revealed

that differentiated instruction had positive effects on the learning outcomes of all students with both high and low abilities. As a parallel result, Beler (2010) suggested that students' motivation and participation increased creating a positive classroom environment.

Thus, there have been many advantages of DI according to the results of the current study in line with the existing literature. It may be said that the current study added more insights to the literature regarding the advantages of DI when it is applied in English lessons.

Apart from the advantages, teachers also shared their perspectives on the disadvantages of adopting DI approach. According to their experiences, although there were students whose motivation increased when they were treated differently in line with their needs, there were also students who felt demotivated, and they ended up with a decrease in self-confidence. Participants articulating this problem mentioned that these students were generally among the weaker ones in terms of academic success. They also expressed that these students also could not develop insight and awareness of their personal growth. As a result of this issue, some teachers also mentioned that the class atmosphere was affected in a negative way. Their experiences revealed that there were some students who did not welcome receiving a different task or some students who bullied the others in this process. This issue can be viewed as the adjustment problem that was gone through by these students. Similar findings were revealed in the study by Massa and Mayer (2006). Their study claimed that because the instruction was tailored to meet different student needs all the time, they may have had some flexibility problems in the learning environment.

Another negative side that teachers experienced while differentiating their instruction was the parent issue. Some participants stated that some parents were not happy with the different worksheets that were given to their children in the classroom activities because they believed that their children were not different from the other students in the class.

5.1.3. Challenges and Obstacles Experienced by Teachers and Ways of Overcoming Them

Endeavoring to understand differentiated instruction through the eyes of the teachers who participated in this research study, the researcher also aimed to investigate the challenges they go through and the ways they use to overcome them.

The results revealed that teachers mainly had obstacles and challenges because they did not think that they got enough support from the institution they were working in, and assessment procedures were not associated with differentiated instruction.

Regarding the lack of support, many of the participants stated that they had hard times receiving enough support from their institution because they had to understand and find out what and how to differentiate their instruction on their own. Also, they stated that they had to spend extra time to design differentiated materials and task ideas. They mentioned that their working environment was already busy; therefore, they could not always find enough time to get prepared for differentiation. Thus, they revealed that they needed extra support especially regarding materials. The findings of the study by Turner and Solis (2017) also highlight that the instructors found applying differentiated instruction quite challenging in terms of class sizes and resources in addition to the academic requirements.

About the assessment that is not associated with DI, participants suggested that especially academically weak students were put in a disadvantaged position. The reason was that they mostly received fewer challenging tasks that they could handle in accordance with their own level. However, they had to take the same exams and went through the same assessment procedures with the other students. Thus, it was hard for the students to keep up with the expected academic achievement and for the teachers to maintain their academic progress.

Moreover, teachers also believed that they still did not have enough theoretical and practical information to apply differentiation effectively. In addition, they expressed

that sometimes the program they followed, and the system of their institution limited them on their way to use some strategies to reach each and every student. At this point, they stated that they had mostly problems regarding the intense curriculum they had to follow and management related issues that they had to act accordingly. Melesse (2016) also indicates that lack of knowledge, experience and intense curriculum can be a big challenge for the teachers in the process of DI.

It was also aimed to find out how these teachers overcome these challenges. The results showed that they could mostly solve their problems due to help from their co-workers. They always shared the problems that occurred during their instruction, and they shared their problems with their colleagues; thus, they improved some other strategies to apply differentiation more effectively. Regarding colleagues, they both referred to the other teachers they worked with and the head of the department. Goddard and Kim (2018) also reflected that teachers' collaborative work had a positive impact on the school improvement, curriculum, and professional development.

There were also teachers mentioning lesson observations and how it was beneficial for them to receive some feedback. They pointed out that with the help of feedback they received from their colleagues and head of the department, they could see the parts that affected the flow in their lesson plans, and they could improve themselves better.

Since the teachers could get a gateway only thanks to their colleagues, many of them recommended some other ways which could make their job easier. Firstly, many of them stated that they were not educated neither with the theoretical nor the practical information regarding the differentiated instruction in the undergraduate level. Thus, they explained how it would be beneficial for them to be familiar with it both theoretically and practically. Pilten (2016) also pointed out the importance of teacher education regarding overcoming the challenges while applying DI in a parallel way.

This also led the way for the issue of teacher training programs and internships. There were participants who indicated that necessary education both in the teacher training programs and internships should take place, so that novice teachers could be equipped with related information and practical experience. Thus, they would be more competent in their actual teaching experiences. Along these results, it could be said that the current study endeavored to point out the possible gaps in teacher training programs and internships based on the participants' experiences. The results indicated that teacher education programs should be more alert to apply and integrate the concept of differentiated instruction to be able to prepare teachers for varied learner groups.

There were also teachers who stated that there should be more in-service training because they needed more qualified training to be able to endeavor for the improvement of their plans and differentiation strategies. Yavuz (2020) also suggested a similar result on the importance of lack of teacher education. As both studies imply, teacher training has an essential part on behalf of the effective impact of DI.

5.2. Implications of the Results

In the following section, implications for educational practice and implications for further research are discussed with the help of the findings in this research study.

5.2.1. Implications for Educational Practice

This case study is teacher- oriented and it revealed some suggestions for teacher training programs both in the undergraduate level and initial teacher training programs. Even though this research study focused on how these teachers perceived differentiated instruction, it also shed some light on the missing elements related to other educational contexts in Turkey.

The findings revealed many obstacles that were gone through, such as lack of support, parent related issues, assessment, and existent program and system of the institution. Thus, it could be said that even though differentiated instruction has many advantages on behalf of the students, the findings also point out that the problems deriving from the external factors should be fixed and considered thoroughly to ease the process for the teachers. In this way, the current study offers implications and precautions that should be considered by the stakeholders, such as parents and school management. For instance, parents can be informed at the beginning of the school year by the school management about the process of differentiated instruction. In this way, negative feedback about the adoption of DI can be prevented and parents can start to have an initiative role in this process. Thus, students that have negative insights on DI can also start to realize the positive sides of using differentiated materials.

On the other hand, today, there are many classes that reflect cultural diversity in Turkey, which increases the possibility of diversity in the learner's background and their needs. Therefore, considering the possible positive outcomes of differentiation that were shared in the current study, improved ways of teaching and approaches could be integrated within the curriculums followed in education faculties in the undergraduate level and other teacher training programs in the very first place. Therefore, findings of the current study indicates that the first step could be working on the applied curriculum in these programs, and then educating the prospective teachers accordingly. To be more specific, especially in the methodology courses or in the pre-service teaching programs in teacher education faculties, teacher candidates can be provided with the theoretical knowledge regarding the differentiated instruction. In addition, they can be given the responsibility of applying differentiation methods and strategies in their pre-service teaching experiences and tasks. Afterwards, feedback sessions can be organized, so that they can start to improve an insight on how to apply differentiated instruction.

Moreover, many participants of the current study mentioned how challenging it was for them to try to help some students gain awareness on this process as well as with

their parents. In addition to this, they also mentioned the challenge in designing materials all the time with limited resource support. Thereupon, the current study asserted the significance of cooperation and assistance of the institutions. They can work on taking actions regarding these problems to facilitate appropriate conditions, so that differentiated instruction can be applied in a more meaningful and competent way. Specifically, they may prefer working with publishers that adopt the idea of differentiated instruction, so that teachers do not spend their time and effort just to prepare differentiated materials. This can ease the whole process for the teachers, and they can spend more time on their professional development.

5.2.2. Implications for Further Research

This case study was only conducted with teachers working in a private middle school. Therefore, to be able to investigate the issue of differentiated instruction further, studies with teachers working in state schools and different levels can be conducted to examine what kinds of experiences are observed and what kinds of differentiation strategies could work in those educational contexts.

Furthermore, this study only focused on the teacher's perceptions. Not only the teacher's perceptions, but also how students experience differentiated instruction and how they consider its effect on their learning processes can be investigated.

Finally, in the current research, only interviews and document analysis were used as data instruments. To be able to understand and analyze different kinds of factors that can shape the process of differentiation, different data collection instruments, such as observations or field notes could be adopted. In addition, the impact of differentiated instruction on English language teacher efficacy in private and state schools can be studied to compare the perspectives and experiences of English teachers in a more expanded context. The results can offer different insights and views into the literature as well as the educators that are seeking ways to improve their teaching skills and practices.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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04 AĞUSTOS 2022

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Müge GÜNDÜZ

Danışmanlığımı yürüttüğünüz Esmâ TOKATLI'nın "MADALYONUN DİĞER YÜZÜ: ÖĞRETMENLER FARKLILAŞTIRILMIŞ EĞİTİMİ NASIL DENEYİMLİYOR?" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülerek gerekli onay 0414-ODTÜİAEK-2022 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Bilgilerinize saygılarımla sunarım.

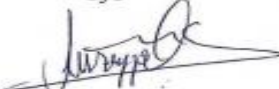

Prof. Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY
Başkan


Doç. Dr. I. Semih AKÇOMAK
Üye

Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ
Üye


Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Şerife SEVINÇ
Üye


Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Murat Perit ÇAKIR
Üye


Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Süreyya ÖZCAN KABASAKAL
Üye


Dr. Öğretim Üyesi A. Emre TURGUT
Üye

B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (ENGLISH VERSION)

Interview Protocol and Questions

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study, and for making time to be interviewed today. This research study aims to investigate English teachers' experience with respect to their perceptions of differentiated instruction. In addition, I also would like to learn about in which ways they use differentiated instruction and what kinds of challenges they go through in this process. This interview will last approximately 40-45 minutes, and I will ask you a series of questions divided into five sections, beginning with your background information, leading into your understanding and approaches towards differentiated Instruction, how you apply it in your lessons, what advantages and disadvantages you observe while differentiating your instruction, and finally, what obstacles you go through. Surely, in the end, I will ask about any concluding remarks you wish to make regarding the next steps for teachers. I want to remind you that you may refrain from answering any question, and you have the right to withdraw your participation from the study at any time. As I explained in the consent letter, this interview will be audio-recorded. Do you have any questions before we begin?

A. Demographic/Background Information:

1. Can you give information about your age and level of education?
2. How long have you been working as a teacher?
3. Which grade or grades do you currently teach?
4. Which grades did you teach in the past?
5. Which grade have you taught the most in the institution that you are currently working?
6. Can you give information about the institution or program that you obtained your teaching certificate with?

B. Teachers' Understandings and Approaches Towards Differentiated Instruction:

1. What kind of an approach do you have for teaching English? What are the important aspects for you?
2. Are you familiar with differentiated instruction? How long have you been familiar with differentiated instruction?
3. How do you define "differentiation"?
4. In the program that you practiced to become a teacher, did you learn about "differentiated instruction?" If you learnt about it, can you talk about what you can remember about differentiated instruction?
5. Where and how have you learned most of what you know about differentiated instruction?
6. How long have you been using differentiated instruction in your lessons?

C. Teacher Practices in Applying Differentiated Instruction

1. Do you use a specific method to get to know your students at the beginning of the school year in terms of their prior knowledge, skills and interests? What kinds of methods do you use for that?

2. How do you use the information you obtained about their skills and interests later? Do you think that it makes a difference in your instruction?
3. According to Tomlinson (1999) regarded as the pioneer of differentiated instruction, teachers can differentiate content, process, product and environment according to students' readiness, interest, and learning profile (Tomlinson (1999)). Which of these do you differentiate in your lessons? Why? How?
4. Do you think that one or some of them are more important or can be more effective than the other(s)? Why/ Why not?
5. How do you decide on what to differentiate while getting prepared for your lessons?
6. Can you give information about the strategies, methods and/or resources you use while differentiating your instruction?
7. Is there a specific group of students that you consider while planning the differentiated instruction in your lessons? How do you decide on that specific group of students?
8. Apart from the differentiation that you plan before the lesson, do you also differentiate your instruction instantly during your lessons? If so, what leads the way for you to do that?
9. At the end of the lesson, do you use formative assessment? Do you apply differentiation in formative assessment as well? What kinds of outcomes do you observe when you apply differentiation in formative assessment?
10. How do you understand that your differentiated instruction works well with your students?

D. Advantages and Disadvantages of Differentiated Instruction

1. What advantages of differentiated instructions do you observe? Do you think that students get any benefits of it?
2. Are there any disadvantages of differentiated instruction that you observe? Can you explain them? Can you give further examples?
3. While applying differentiated instruction, is there anything that encourages or supports you? If your answer is yes, can you explain them with examples? If your answer is no, can you explain the reasons?

E. Obstacles While Applying Differentiated Instruction

1. As a teacher, what is the biggest challenge that you have experienced while differentiating your instruction? As a teacher, what kinds of obstacles do you experience while differentiating your instruction?
2. How do you overcome those obstacles?
3. In which ways do you think the education system in your institution could support you to overcome those obstacles? Do you get any administrative support, or do you get any support from your colleagues? If you do, can you explain how?
4. Would you offer any advice to current and future teacher education programs regarding the differentiated instruction?
5. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Thank you for your time and participation in this research study.

C. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (TURKISH VERSION)

Röportaj Protokolü ve Sorular

Bu araştırma çalışmasına katılmayı onayladığınız ve zamanınızı ayırdığınız için teşekkür ederim. Bu araştırma çalışması İngilizce öğretmenlerinin farklılaştırılmış öğretimi nasıl algıladıklarını deneyimleriyle birlikte araştırmayı hedeflemektedir. Buna ek olarak, nasıl farklılaştırılmış öğretimi kullandıklarını ve bu süreçte ne gibi zorluklarla karşılaştıklarını da öğrenmek istiyorum. Bu röportaj yaklaşık olarak 40-45 dakika sürecek ve size temel bilgilerinizle başlayan, farklılaştırılmış öğretimi nasıl anladığınız, farklılaştırılmış öğretime karşı yaklaşımlarınız, derslerinizde nasıl uyguladığınız, öğretiminizi farklılaştırırken ne gibi avantaj ve dezavantajlar gözlemlediğiniz ve son olarak ne gibi zorluklarla karşılaştığınız gibi konularla beş kısımdan oluşan sorular soracağım. Sonunda elbette öğretmenler için atılacak gelecek adımlara dair yapmak istediğiniz yorumlarınızı da soracağım. Size hatırlatmak isterim ki herhangi bir soruyu cevaplamama hakkına sahipsiniz ve çalışmadan istediğiniz zaman çekilebilirsiniz. Gönüllü katılım formunda da açıkladığım gibi bu röportaj ses kaydına alınacaktır. Başlamadan önce sormak istediğiniz herhangi bir sorunuz var mı?

A. Demografik/Temel Bilgiler:

7. Yaşınız ve eğitim seviyeniz hakkında bilgi verebilir misiniz?
8. Ne kadar süredir öğretmen olarak çalışıyorsunuz?
9. Şu anda hangi seviye ya da seviyelerle çalışıyorsunuz?
10. Daha önceki yıllarınızda hangi seviyelerle çalıştınız?
11. Şu anda çalıştığınız kurumda en çok hangi seviye ile çalıştınız?
12. Öğretmenlik sertifikanızı aldığınız kurum ya da program hakkında bilgi verebilir misiniz?

B. Öğretmenlerin Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimi Anlayış Şekilleri ve Farklılaştırılmış Öğretime Karşı Yaklaşımları

7. İngilizce öğretimine karşı nasıl bir yaklaşımınız var? Sizin için önemli noktalar neler?
8. Farklılaştırılmış öğretim kavramına aşina mısınız? Farklılaştırılmış öğretim kavramına ne kadar süredir aşinasınız?
9. Farklılaştırmayı siz nasıl tanımlarsınız?
10. Öğretmenlik uygulamasını yaptığınız programda “farklılaştırılmış öğretim” ile ilgili bir bilgi sahibi oldunuz mu? Eğer bilgi sahibi olduysanız, farklılaştırılmış öğretimle ilgili ne hatırladığınızdan bahsedebilir misiniz?
11. Farklılaştırılmış öğretim ile ilgili sahip olduğunuz bilginin çoğunu nerede ve nasıl öğrendiniz?
12. Derslerinizde farklılaştırılmış öğretimi ne kadar süredir kullanıyorsunuz?

C. Öğretmenlerin Farklılaştırılmış Öğretim Uygulamaları

11. Öğrencilerinizi ön bilgi, beceri ve ilgi alanları yönlerinden tanımak için okul yılının başında özel bir metot kullanıyor musunuz? Ne tarz yöntemler kullanıyorsunuz?
12. Öğrencilerinizin beceri ve ilgi alanlarıyla ilgili aldığımız bilgileri daha sonra nasıl kullanıyorsunuz? Sizce sahip olduğunuz bilgiler verdiğiniz eğitimde bir farklılık yaratıyor mu?
13. Farklılaştırılmış öğretimin bir öncüsü olarak görülen Tomlinson'a göre (1999), öğretmenler içeriği, süreci, ürünü ve sınıf iklimini öğrencilerin hazır bulunuşluluğu, ilgi alanları ve profillerine göre farklılaştırabilir (Tomlinson (1999)). Siz bunlardan hangilerini farklılaştırıyorsunuz? Karar verme sürecinizi etkileyen sebepler nelerdir ve nasıl farklılaştırma yapıyorsunuz?
14. Sizce bunlardan biri ya da birkaçı diğerlerinden daha önemli ya da etkili olabilir mi? Neden olabilir ya da neden olamaz?
15. Derslerinize hazırlanırken neyi farklılaştıracağınıza nasıl karar veriyorsunuz?
16. Öğretiminizi farklılaştırırken kullandığınız strateji, metot ve/ ya da kaynaklar hakkında bilgi verebilir misiniz?
17. Derslerinizde farklılaştırılmış öğretimi planlarken düşündüğünüz spesifik bir öğrenci grubu var mı? O spesifik öğrenci grubuna neye göre karar veriyorsunuz?
18. Derslerden önce planladığınız farklılaştırma dışında, ders esnasında anlık olarak da öğretiminizi farklılaştırıyor musunuz? Eğer bunu yapıyorsanız, sizi buna sevk eden sebepler nelerdir?
19. Derslerinizin sonunda biçimlendirici değerlendirme kullanıyor musunuz? Biçimlendirici değerlendirmede de farklılaştırma yapıyor musunuz? Biçimlendirici değerlendirmede farklılaştırma uyguladığınızda ne gibi sonuçlar gözlemliyorsunuz?
20. Farklılaştırılmış öğretiminizin öğrencileriniz üzerinde işe yaradığını nasıl anlıyorsunuz?

D. Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimin Avantaj ve Dezavantajları

4. Farklılaştırılmış öğretimin ne gibi avantajlarını gözlemliyorsunuz? Sizce öğrenciler bundan bir fayda sağlayabiliyorlar mı?
5. Farklılaştırılmış öğretimin gözlemlediğiniz herhangi bir dezavantajı var mı? Varsa örneklerle açıklayabilir misiniz?
6. Farklılaştırılmış öğretim uygularken sizi teşvik eden ya da destekleyen herhangi bir unsur var mı? Eğer varsa, örneklerle açıklayabilir misiniz? Eğer yoksa, sebeplerini açıklayabilir misiniz?

E. Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimi Uygulama Esnasında Karşılaşılan Engeller

6. Bir öğretmen olarak öğretiminizi farklılaştırırken deneyimlediğiniz en büyük zorluk nedir? Bir öğretmen olarak öğretiminizi farklılaştırırken ne gibi engellerle karşılaşıyorsunuz?
7. Karşılaştığınız zorlukların üstesinden nasıl geliyorsunuz?

8. Sizde kurumunuzdaki eğitim sistemi karşılaştığınız zorlukların üstesinden gelebilmek adına sizi nasıl destekleyebilir? Bu noktada idareden ya da iş arkadaşlarınızdan herhangi bir destek alıyor musunuz? Eğer alıyorsanız nasıl bir destek aldığınızı açıklayabilir misiniz?
9. Farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair güncel ve gelecek öğretmenlik eğitimi veren programlar için herhangi bir tavsiyeniz olur mu?
10. Eklemek istediğiniz herhangi başka bir şey var mı?

Bu araştırma çalışmasına ayırmış olduğunuz zaman ve katılımınız için teşekkür ederim.

D. SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

LESSON PLAN									
SUBJECT: ENGLISH									
GRADE: 6th	DURATION: 3x40 mins								
CONTEXT/ BIG QUESTION: Why do we invent?									
UNIT: 1 SKILL: READING									
OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS								
6.1 Students will be able to develop an understanding of texts (texts of appropriately complex for grade 6) 6.2 develop a response to texts	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">DOK-1</td> <td style="padding: 5px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">DOK-2</td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> identifying specific information and supporting details (DOK2) guessing the meaning of unknown words using context clues (DOK2) identifying what certain words refer to (DOK2) </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">DOK-3</td> <td style="padding: 5px;"> making simple connections between the text and outside knowledge by drawing on personal experience and attitudes (DOK3) </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">DOK-4</td> <td style="padding: 5px;"></td> </tr> </table>	DOK-1		DOK-2	identifying specific information and supporting details (DOK2) guessing the meaning of unknown words using context clues (DOK2) identifying what certain words refer to (DOK2)	DOK-3	making simple connections between the text and outside knowledge by drawing on personal experience and attitudes (DOK3)	DOK-4	
DOK-1									
DOK-2	identifying specific information and supporting details (DOK2) guessing the meaning of unknown words using context clues (DOK2) identifying what certain words refer to (DOK2)								
DOK-3	making simple connections between the text and outside knowledge by drawing on personal experience and attitudes (DOK3)								
DOK-4									
Interdisciplinary connections:									
Science (talking about inventions)									
Global Citizenship Relationship:									
Raising awareness of the students regarding healthy and unhealthy eating habits									
VERTICAL ALIGNMENT									
This lesson builds on sts' revising and consolidating some reading strategies									
ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS									
5. Some students may have difficulty with answering some questions, so differentiation will be applied									
MATERIALS									
Student Book PP 6-8 WB P5									
STUDENT PROFILE									

<input type="checkbox"/> Learning preferences (visual/ auidial/ kinesthetic/prefers to work individually or in groups) <input type="checkbox"/> Way of thinking /Concrete/abstract thinking) <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural differences		
READINESS/PRIOR KNOWLEDGE		
General knowledge of about inventions		
WHAT IS DIFFERENTIATED?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Content	<input type="checkbox"/> Process	<input type="checkbox"/> Product
HOW IS IT DIFFERENTIATED?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Learning profile <input type="checkbox"/> Interest	<input type="checkbox"/> Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Learning profile <input type="checkbox"/> Interest	<input type="checkbox"/> Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Learning profile <input type="checkbox"/> Interest
EVALUATING THE PROCESS		
DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT (What does s/he know?)	FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT (What is s/he learning?)	SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT (What did the student learn?)
<input type="checkbox"/> Diagnostic test <input type="checkbox"/> Entrance ticket <input type="checkbox"/> Concept map <input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Questionnaire <input type="checkbox"/> KWL chart <input type="checkbox"/> Observation Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Self assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Questioning <input type="checkbox"/> Brain storming <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Observation/Monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Self-assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Group Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Questioning <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Exit ticket <input type="checkbox"/> Progress test <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment <input type="checkbox"/> think pair share <input type="checkbox"/> Raft <input type="checkbox"/> Scamper <input type="checkbox"/> Tic-Tac-Toe <input type="checkbox"/> Think-Puzzle-Explore <input type="checkbox"/> Frayer Model <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Product/display <input type="checkbox"/> Unit test <input type="checkbox"/> Performance task <input type="checkbox"/> Self-assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Peer assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Rubric <input type="checkbox"/> Exam <input type="checkbox"/> Grid <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment
LESSON FLOW (40 MINS)		
<p>T asks sts to make a list of the items they use every day, such as a toothbrush from higher to lower importance to them. It might be a good idea to limit the number of the items. Then sts compare their answers, discussing why some items are more important than others for them. (This activity can be done merely a s a whole class discussion)</p> <p>This time teacher wants sts to think about an item/an idea they have created. (SB P 6 Ex 1)</p>		

T shares the learning aim with the students. (To apply some reading strategies to the text) and asks if they use any reading strategies while reading a text. Do they look at the pictures/titles? Do they try to predict what the text is about before reading it? Do they always read every word? Do they feel nervous if there are some unknown words? What do they do if there are some unknown words etc.

T tells sts that they will start with a short text. T tells sts to look at the image first and ask what this is. T tells ts to go through the text once and ask what the relationship is between the text and the image. T asks sts to underline the parts in the text that describe the procedure to make a quadcopter. Tell them they just need to underline verbs and nouns, not the whole sentences.

T tells sts to look at the title first and try to guess what the text will be about . T tries to elicit the answer, provides the answer if there is no response

T asks sts to tell what those three accidental inventions are by looking at the pictures and headings. T elicits the answers and writes microwave oven, potato chips and plastics on the board. Remind sts that these were accidental inventions as the title of the text suggests. Ask sts to guess what the inventors originally wanted to do. T elicits some answers from the sts, writes them on the board and then the class votes and choose the most plausible ones.

T gives sts 3 minutes to go through the text to see if their guesses were correct. T asks them if they can read the text in detail in 3 minutes. T tells them that they only need to let their eyes skim over the text and look out for key words and focus on the questions. They don't need to read each and every sentence. T tells sts to underline the name of the inventors while skimming through the text as well. When the time is up, t asks sts to open SB P 8 and do Ex 1.

T tells sts to answer some questions. T asks sts to read the questions and ask if they need to find some specific information to answer the questions. T tells that this time they need to take a closer look at the text. T tells sts to read the questions first and then they need to answer them. They need to underline the information in the text. Sts answer the qs individually and compare their answers in pairs. (SB P8 Ex 2)

** Early finishers can be asked to write a question for their friends to answer.

App 1 : Refer to question type

T and the sts discuss the question in SB P7 Ex 4.

T wants sts to answer the following question by referring to the text.

‘ If you had the power to stop one of these inventions from happening, which one would you stop. why?’

* Different templates can be provided for struggling students, average ones and high-achievers as struggling ones will need more scaffolding than the others. (See App 2)

* In order to find out about sts' insights regarding the learning aim(strategies)

give App3 and collect answers from the students. Peer feedback-teacher feedback

T tells the sts to come to the next lesson having gone through the text and underline the words s/he isn't familiar with. T tells sts to think what they might mean and that they will discuss the words in the next lesson.

REFLECTION

E. THE CONSENT FORM

ARAŞTIRMAYA GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu araştırma, ODTÜ İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Bölümü yüksek lisans öğrencilerinden Esmâ Tokatlı tarafından yürütülmektedir. Bu form sizi araştırma koşulları hakkında bilgilendirmek için hazırlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın Amacı Nedir?

Araştırmanın amacı, özel bir K12 ortaokulundaki İngilizce derslerinin nasıl farklılaştırıldığı, burada çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin farklılaştırılmış eğitimi avantaj ve dezavantajlarıyla nasıl algıladıklarını, bu öğretmenlerin derslerinde farklılaştırma kullandıkları süreçte hangi zorluklarla karşı karşıya geldiklerini ve karşılaştıkları zorlukların nasıl üstesinden geldikleri ile ilgili bilgi toplamaktır.

Bize Nasıl Yardımcı Olmanızı İsteyeceğiz?

Araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ederseniz, sizden 30 soruluk bir mülakata katılmanız beklenmektedir. Yaklaşık olarak 40 dakika sürmesi beklenen bu mülakatta size farklılaştırılmış öğretime karşı yaklaşımınız, farklılaştırılmış eğitimi derslerinizde nasıl uyguladığınız ve uyguladığınızda ne gibi sonuçlar gözlemlediğiniz, farklılaştırılmış eğitimin ne gibi avantaj ve dezavantajlarını gözlemleyip deneyimlediğiniz, ve öğretiminizi farklılaştırdığınız süreçlerde ne gibi zorluklarla karşı karşıya gelip bu zorlukların üzerinden gelebilmek adına ne gibi süreçlerden geçtiğiniz ile ilgili sorular yöneltilecektir. Sorulara verilen yanıtlar araştırmacı tarafından ses kaydı veya video kaydı şeklinde kaydedilecektir.

Sizden Topladığımız Bilgileri Nasıl Kullanacağız?

Araştırmaya katılımınız tamamen gönüllülük temelinde olmalıdır. Mülakatta sizden kimlik bilgileri istenmemektedir. Cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacak, sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir. Katılımcılardan elde edilecek bilgiler toplu halde değerlendirilecek ve tez çalışmasında kullanılacaktır. Sağladığınız veriler gönüllü katılım formlarında toplanan kimlik bilgileri ile eşleştirilmeyecektir.

Katılımla ilgili bilmeniz gerekenler:

Mülakat, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek sorular içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz cevaplama işini yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda çalışmayı uygulayan kişiye, çalışmadan çıkmak istediğinizi söylemek yeterli olacaktır.

Araştırmayla ilgili daha fazla bilgi almak isterseniz:

Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için ODTÜ İngiliz Dili Öğretimi Bölümü yüksek lisans öğrencilerinden Esmâ Tokatlı (E-posta: esmatokatli9@gmail.com) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Yukarıdaki bilgileri okudum ve bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum.

(Formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra uygulayıcıya geri veriniz).

İsim Soyad

Tarih

İmza

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F. CODEBOOK

Code	Description	In Vivo Description
Advantages and benefits of DI	Participants describe the positive sides of DI.	Ama çocukların kendilerini iyi hissetmeleri anlamında derse daha entegre olmaları anlamında faydalı çok faydalı buluyorum elbette.
Ways of knowing the students	Participants describe how they get to know their students.	Okulda buna hazır bunun için hazırlanmış bir şey var anket var sene başında verdiğimiz. Çocuklar genel olarak hani nasıl öğrenmeyi seviyorlar da daha çok nasıl öğrenmeye yatkınlıkları var. Bunun için şeyler oluyor, anketler oluyor, çocuklara bunu veriyoruz. Daha sonrasında onun analizine göre bakıyoruz. Kim ne tarz öğrenmekten hoşlanıyor diye. Ama bunun haricinde okulda PDR servisiyle birlikte yapılan şeyler de var. Çalışmalar da var anketler de var Türkçe şekilde çocuklara veriyorlar. Öğrenme biçimleri şeklinde PDR ile ortak da çocukların nasıl öğrendiğine, neleri sevdiğini profiline karşı profili hakkında bilgi sahibi olabiliyoruz. Yani genelde benim kendi özel hazırladığım şeyler değil, okulun sunduğu şeylerle yaptım bugüne kadar.
Support against the obstacles	Participants describe what kind of support they receive when they apply or plan DI	Ben farklılaştırma konusunda en büyük desteği aslında iş arkadaşlarımdan alıyorum. Çünkü derslerimizi birbirimizle paylaşıyoruz ya da kendi birbirimizin

		derslerine ders gözlemlerine gidiyoruz ve orada tabii ki birbirimizden öğrendiğimiz farklılaştırma konusunda da farklı şeyler konusunda da çok şey oluyor. Ama dediğim gibi ben aslında farklılaştırma yaparken arkadaşlarımla sürekli paylaşırken onlardan aldığım geri dönütler çok çok faydalı oluyor ya da tabii ki onlar da deniyor.
Suggestions for the ELT programs	Participants describe their recommendations regarding integrating DI into ELT programs.	Ya kesinlikle kesinlikle yani bu staj yapıyoruz ya biz mesela öğretmenlikte bunları kesinlikle uyguluyor olmamız lazım. Bu bahsettiğimiz tüm farklılaştırma süreçleri şimdi isimlerini saymayayım tek tek bunların kesinlikle öğrencilere belki de bir ders adı altında bile verilebilir çünkü differentiation çok detaylı bir konu belki de staj dersinin bir alt dersi olabilir. Ek ders olabilir. Bunlar kesinlikle öğrencilere öğretmen olacaklara detaylı bir şekilde öğretilmeli ve stajda da uygulanmalı, iş hayatına geçmeden önce stajda bunların uygulanması lazım. Yani bunları içeren ders planlarını yazma, sonra uygulama şeklinde kesinlikle veriliyor olması lazım.
Suggestions for support	Participants describe what kind of support they expect from their institution against the challenges.	Yani biri gelebilir, farklılaştırmayla ilgili bir sunum yapabilir. Yani tüm okul için sadece İngilizce bazında değil çünkü diğer derslerde de yapılıyor diye biliyorum ve yapılması gerekiyor. Tüm derslerde yapılması gerekir. Okul tarafından yetkililerin

		<p>çağrılıp düzenli periyotlarla aslında çünkü benimki bir kerelik bir şeydi ve ona herkes zaten katılamamıştı ve bir kerelik bir şey zaten yeterli olmaz çoğu kişi için herkes uyguluyor şu an ve birbirimizden öğrenmeye çalışıyoruz ama okulun evet bu konuda daha aktif olması gerekiyor bizi yönlendirme konusunda.</p>
Product differentiation	Participants describe how they apply DI in the product stage of their lessons.	<p>Üründe farklılık sanki çok daha fazla oluyor gibi geliyor bana yine burada biraz daha hem öğrencinin ilgisine göre de oluyor. Kendi seçtiği şeye göre de oluyor işte üç tane farklı option veriyorum ya bunu hazırla ya şiir yaz işte ya bir kompozisyon yaz tarzında herkes istediğini seçip yazabiliyor.</p>
Obstacles and handicaps	Participants describe the obstacles and challenges they go through in the process of DI.	<p>Aslında yani bir farklılaştırma evet yapıyoruz sınıfta ama ölçme değerlendirme kısmında testing sınav kısmına geldiğimizde hepsine aynı sınava alıyorlar. O zaman benim öğretirken çocuğa farklılaştırmamın amacı ne diye düşünmeden edemiyorum ya da bunu bir ölçme değerlendirmenin dışına alıp daha fun daha onları speaking yerine mesela ya da diyelim geliştirecekleri noktalarda mı farklılaştırmaya sokmalıyız devreye çünkü weakler için yani zayıf gruplar için bir grameri ya da bir reading de farklılaştırma yaptığınızda sınav için faydalanmış oluyor. Çünkü siz farklılaştırılmış bir sınav</p>

		koymuyorsunuz önlerine.
Motivation for teachers	Participants describe what motivates them while getting ready for DI	Dersin çok rutinlerine bindiğini hissettiğimde daha çok kullanıyorum. Yani mesela çok gramer üst üste geliyor bazen grammar, grammar, grammar yani çocuklar sıkılıyor ya da bir farklı oyun bir şey istiyorlar. O an bir eğlence istiyorlar. O noktada hep sokarım mesela ben yani o benim için sinyaldir, rahatsız olmaya başladılar kaybediyorum. Öğrenci gelebilirimi yani yine burada yine öğrenci geri bildirimini, yani aslında benim uyguladığım her nokta bana göre öğrenciyi kazanmak için olması gerek.
Learning about DI in the undergraduate level	Participants describe whether they learned about DI in the undergraduate level or not.	Olmadım maalesef hayır. Yani tanıştığımız bir şey değildi açıkçası.
Lack of support	Participants describe the lack of support that they observe in their institution.	Şimdi zaten bu az önce bahsettiğim konuyla ilgili idareden herhangi bir destek alabileceğimi sanmıyorum. Dediğim gibi önünüzde bir şey var, takip etmeniz gereken. Ama onun dışında eğitimler aldık ama daha fazla ve daha benim bu hani kafamızdaki soruları cevaplayan şekliyle eğitimler almayı isterdim.
Instant DI	Participants describe the moments they instantly try to apply differentiation.	Bakıyorum çok kolay bir materyal onu hemen böyle ekstra daha zorlayacak bir task, şey yapıyorum. Farklı farklı şeyler oluşturmaya çalışıyorum. Bu bazen sevk edebiliyor. Onun haricinde dediğim gibi gruplaşma

		şeylerinde grup özelliklerine göre, farklılaştırırken anlık şey olabiliyor. Dediğim gibi bunun içinde davranış problemleri olabiliyor. Çocukların seviyesi olabiliyor o anlık. Tabii ki de ders esnasında da farklılaştırıyorum.
How to overcome the obstacles	Participants describe their ways to overcome the obstacles they experience	Ya bilmiyorum herhalde iş arkadaşlarıma sorarak diyebilirim. Hani ben bunu bunu düşündüm sence hani olur mu ya da atıyorum. Üç tane şey olması gerekiyor. Ben iki tane fikir üretebilmişim başkasına sormak da iyi geliyor, iş arkadaşlarımdan bu konuda yardımcı olduğunu düşünüyorum.
How long DI is used	Participants describe how long they have been using differentiation	Yani son iki üç senedir çok aktif olarak kullanıyorum.
Familiarity with DI	Participants describe how they got familiar with the concept of DI.	Üç yıldır aşınayım çünkü yani üç yıl önce bu kuruma başladığımda tanıştığım bir aslında bir şey bu
Possible disadvantages of DI	Participants describe the disadvantages of DI from their perspective.	Özellikle küçük yaş grupları o biraz onlar için demotive edici olabiliyor. Öğretmen için bunu açıklaması da zor, şey diyemiyorsun çünkü bak senin seviyen düşük onun seviyesi yüksek diyemiyorsun. Genellikle ben şey yapıyorum işte herkeste farklı task var gibi böyle açıklıyorum. Bir örneğim bu olabilir. Öğretmen için de kesinlikle bir birden aslında çünkü farklılaştırma yap yani uzun bir süreç bu ya bir anda hadi ben bugün farklılaştırma yapıyorum. Bu yüzde yüz doğrusu diyemiyorsun. Yani

		uzun araştırma gerekiyor, uygulama gerekiyor. Daha sonrasında ise ders gözlemleriyle bunu bildiğinden geri bildirim alman gerekiyor falan gerçekten zor bir süreç aslında farklılaştırmaya doğru uygulayabiliyor olmak ya da en çocukların avantajı olacak şekilde uygulamaya uygulayabiliyor olmak bence zor bir şey. Onun dışında ders planları hazırlarken gerçekten bir iş yükü olarak da zam oldu öğretmen açısından birazcık dezavantaj diyebilirim.
Considering the level of students in differentiation	Participants describe taking students' academic level into consideration while implementing DI.	Ya da bazen şöyle bir şey yapabiliyorum. Öğrencinin seviyesine göre atıyorum bir opinion essay hani kritiği yapacaklar en iyi öğrenciler bir tane kötü bir opinion essay i iyileştirmeye çalışırken orta öğrenciler bir tane kötüyle bir tane iyiyi compare ediyorlar hani farklılıklar ya da benzerlikleri neler. En düşük gruptaki öğrenciler ise başarı anlamında onlara sadece check list veriyorum. Sizce işte bu var mı varsa underline et, hani şu kısmı güçlü mü, neden böyle düşünüyorsun gibi onlara daha böyle keşfettirici hani ama bir guideline vererek bu tarz ürün bence farklılaşıyor.
Considering students' interest	Participants describe taking students' interests into consideration while implementing DI.	Diğer tür yine sık kullandığım öğrencilerin kendi isteklerine göre, yeteneklerine ya da ilgi alanlarına göre seçmelerini istediğim onlara farklı opsiyonlar verdiğim

		<p>farklılaştırma türü. Bunu genelde kelime derslerinde çok kullanıyorum. Kelimeleri kullanarak bir şeyler üretmelerini istiyorum aslında opsiyon veriyorum. Bu opsiyon ne olabilir? Bir şey üretme ama üretirken işte şiir yazma olabilir. Aslında burada daha eğlenceli şeyler bulmaya çalışıyorum opsiyon olarak ve farklı ilgi alanlarına hitap edecek opsiyonlar bulmaya çalışıyorum ki öğrenciler kendi ilgi alanlarını bulabilsin ve o opsiyonla devam edebilsin. Genelde de öğrencilerin aslında sevdiği farklılaştırma türü bu oluyor. Genelde bu seçebildikleri opsiyon aralarında.</p>
Different learner preferences	Participants describe taking students' interests into consideration while implementing DI.	<p>Tabii ki de bazen de bazı çocuklar atıyorum kimseye çalışmak istemiyor onları tek başına herkesi grup yaparken onları tek başına çalıştırıyorum. Tamamen sınıfın öğrencilerin tercihine göre.</p>
Definition of DI	Participants describe how they define DI.	<p>Yani benim aklımda kalan çocukların her hepsinin her birinin aslında aynı hedefe ulaşarak yaşadıkları bir süreç.</p>
Approach to teaching English	Participants describe their approach to teaching English.	<p>Hani biraz daha böyle çocuklara bir şeyleri keşfettirip sonrasında onlarla işte group work ler işte pair work ler şeklinde daha böyle interaction ın da olduğu bir ortamda yapmaya çalışıyorum. Ha fun bir şekilde olsaydı çocukların çok daha aktif katılımı çok daha iyi olduklarını düşünüyorum hani ama inisiyatif alamadığım için</p>

		daha dediğim gibi constructive ve communicative bir şekilde ilerliyorum.
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G. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

TÜRKE'DE BİR VAKIF OKULUNDA ÇALIŞAN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN FARKLILAŞTIRILMIŞ ÖĞRETİMİ ALGILAYIŞ ŞEKİLLERİ: BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

Bu çalışma, özel bir ortaokul kurumunda çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin farklılaştırılmış öğretimi nasıl algıladıklarını araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Aynı zamanda bu çalışma, öğretmenlerin bakış açılarını anlayabilmek için hangi yollara başvurarak farklılaştırma yaptıklarını, farklılaştırılmış öğretim uygularken karar verme süreçlerini ne gibi faktörlerin etkilediğini, farklılaştırılmış öğretimi ne gibi avantaj ve dezavantajlarla algıladıklarını, bu süreçte ne gibi engel ve zorluklarla karşılaştıklarını ve karşılaştıkları zorlukların üstesinden nasıl geldiklerini araştırmayı hedeflemiştir.

Çalışma beş bölüme ayrılmıştır. Giriş bölümü olan birinci bölümde, farklılaştırılmış öğretimin var olan literatürdeki yeri ve öneminden bahsedilmiş olup bu çalışmanın da genel amacı ile bağlantı kurularak aktarılmıştır. Buna ek olarak, çalışmanın arka planına, amacına ve önemine dair bilgiler sunulmuştur. İkinci bölümde, farklılaştırılmış öğretimin kökeninden başlayarak, farklılaştırılmış öğretimin tanımı, karakteristik ve belirleyici özellikleri, farklılaştırılmış öğretim stratejileri, yabancı dil öğretimi çerçevesinde farklılaştırılmış öğretimin yeri, öğretmenlerin farklılaştırılmış öğretime bakış açılarının ve farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair sahip oldukları yanlış fikirlerin öğretim süreçlerindeki rolü, farklılaştırılmış öğretim sürecinde yaşanabilen zorluklar ve hem Türkiye' de hem de yurtdışında farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair yapılan kaynakların anlatıldığı literatür taramasına yer verilmiştir. Üçüncü bölümde ise çalışmanın metotları anlatılmış olup, çalışma sürecini yönlendiren araştırma soruları, çalışmanın yürütüldüğü ortam ve çalışmaya katılan öğretmen bilgileri, çalışmayı yürütmek adına kullanılan ölçek ve toplanan verilerin analiz süreci ile ilgili bilgiler anlatılmıştır. Dördüncü bölümde, yapılan veri analizi sonucu elde edilen sonuçlar katılımcıların paylaştığı uygun verilerle birlikte sunulmuştur. Beşinci bölümde ise çalışmadan elde edilen sonuçlar özetlenerek verilmiş ve literatürde var

olan çalışma sonuçlarıyla karşılaştırılarak açıklanmıştır. Son olarak, bu bölümde ayrıca çalışmanın hem eğitim çerçevesinde hem de araştırma bağlamı çerçevesinde alana ve literatüre ne gibi katkılarda bulunduğu da değinilmiştir.

Giriş

Birçok eğitim bağlamında, öğrenciler yüzde yüz oranında aynı arka planı ya da tercihleri yansıtmazlar. Herhangi bir öğrenme ortamındaki her birey sınıfa hayatın farklı bir alanından öğrenmeye dair farklı deneyimler getirir. Böylelikle de bir öğrenci topluluğu ya da “bir sınıf dolusu öğrenci” olarak adlandırılacak topluluklar öğretmenlerin bu farklılık ve çeşitliliği göze almalarını gerektirir. Bu duruma paralel olarak, benzersiz öğrenme ortamlarının içerikten bağımsız olarak her türlü branşta gözlemlenebileceği de belirtilebilir.

Bununla beraber, İngilizce'nin öğrencilerin yabancı dili olduğu sınıflarda öğrenme ortamlarındaki bu tarz farklılık ve özgünlükleri yüksek derecede yansıtabileceği gerçeği de göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Sebep olarak, öğrencilerin İngilizce'ye günlük hayatlarında her zaman maruz kalmadıkları düşünülebilir. Aynı zamanda, her öğrencinin İngilizce dilini aynı etkin seviyede pratik yapma şansına sahip olmadığı gerçeğinin de altı çizilmelidir.

Öğrencilerin yalnızca sosyal ya da kültürel arkaplanları değil, duygusal ve mental hazırbulunuşluluk ve olgunluk seviyeleri de öğrenme süreçlerini büyük ölçüde etkileyebilir. Tabiki de öğrencilerin ilgi alanları da bu süreçte etkin bir rol oynayacaktır. Krupičková (2005), öğrencilerin ilgi alanlarının hem konu hem de yoğunluk olarak farklılık gösterebileceğine değinmiş, ve bu durumun sadece tek bir branş özelinde bile birçok farklı akademik hazırbulunuşluluk seviyesinin oluşmasına zemin hazırlayabileceğini de vurgulamıştır.

Genel olarak bütün bu ifadeler öğretmenlerin öğrencilerinin ihtiyaçlarını analiz etmeleri gerektiğini göstermektedir. Böylelikle de sınıf ortamındaki her bir birey öğrenme topluluğunun aktif bir üyesi haline gelebilir. Bu kapsamda, öğretmenlerin

farklı öğrenci ihtiyaçlarına yönelik bir sınıf atmosferi oluşturabilen bireyler olduğu ve bu durumun onlara bütün öğrenme sürecinde lider rolünü verdiği söylenebilir. Öğretmenlerin rolünden bahsetmişken, öğretmenlerin söz konusu öğrenci ihtiyaçlarını belirleme noktasındaki rollerinin birden ortaya çıkmadığı da söylenmelidir. Richards ve Rodgers (2014) dil öğretiminin uzun bir tarihe sahip olduğunu ve güncel dil öğretim metotlarının çoğunlukla yirminci yüzyılın başlarında uygulamalı dilbilimciler tarafından öğretim metotları ve materyalleri bulmak adına geliştirmiş olduklarını belirtmektedir. Bu uğraşların sonucunda da *dilbilgisi çeviri yöntemi* ve *doğrudan yöntem* gibi birçok dil öğretim yaklaşım ve metotları ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu süreçte, hiçbir yeni çıkan metotun öğretmenlerin ve öğrencilerin ihtiyaç ve hedeflerini tamamen karşılayacak potansiyelde olmadığı düşünülerek art arda yeni yaklaşım ve metotlar ortaya çıkmaya devam etmiştir. Bu sebepten dolayı, olası mükemmel yaklaşım için arayışın eğitim dünyasında yıllarca devam eden bir yolculuk olduğu söylenebilir.

Benzer arayış, yalnızca yurtdışında değil, Türkiye’de de yaşanmıştır. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı tarafından hazırlanan strateji raporunda “İngilizce Konuşan Nesil” adında bir projeden bahsedilmiştir. Bahsi geçen projenin başlangıç noktası Türkiye’deki çoğu öğrencinin İngilizceyi özellikle konuşma becerisi anlamında kullanamaması ve dil üretimi noktasında sahip oldukları bilgileri etkin bir şekilde yansıtamamaları olmuştur (MEB, 2015). Bu nedenlerden dolayı da, hazırlanan proje öğrencilerin İngilizceyi günlük hayatlarının içine dahil ederek -günlük tutma, İngilizce okunan bir kitabın özetini hazırlama gibi- kullanmalarını hedeflemiştir (MEB, 2015).

Bektaş-Çetinkaya (2012) tarafından yürütülen başka bir çalışma İngilizce dili öğretiminde kullanılacak materyal ve yaklaşımlara karar verilirken, Türkiye’deki eğitimcilerin öğrencilerin dili ihtiyaçlarına ve kendi bağlamlarının dışında olası kullanım amaçlarının da farkında olarak nasıl kullanabileceklerine yönelik düşünceleri gerektiğini vurgulamıştır.

Bu açıklamalar doğrultusunda, Türkiye’deki öğrencilerin sağlıklı ve verimli bir İngilizce öğrenme süreci yaşayabilmeleri için neyi neden öğrendiklerinin farkında

olmaları gerektiği vurgulanmaktadır. Bu sebeple, öğretmenler bu düşünce yapısını hayata geçirip geliştirme noktasında dikkatli olmalıdırlar.

Tüm bu sunulan görüşlerin üzerine, dil öğretiminde doğru yaklaşım ve metodun seçilmesi sürecinde hedeflenen öğrenci profilinin ihtiyaçları doğrultusunda karar verilmesi gerektiği söylenebilir. Sonuç olarak, öğretmenlerin kendi öğrenci profilleriyle uyumlu olan dil öğretimi yaklaşımı ya da stratejisini seçmelerinin Tomlinson tarafından geliştirilen “farklılaştırılmış öğretim” yaklaşımıyla bağlantılı olduğu söylenebilir (Tomlinson, 1999).

Böylelikle, farklılaştırılmış öğretimi benimseyen öğretmenlerin, öğrenciler arasında saygı çerçevesinde kurulan öğrenme ortamına zemin hazırladığı söylenebilir. Hazırlanan bu zeminin de öğrenme süreci boyunca öğretmen ve öğrenciler arasında pozitif bağ kurduğu, ve aynı zamanda da bireysel gelişim için öğrencilere alan tanıdığı ifade edilebilir.

Araştırmanın Amacı

Bu çalışmanın amacı özel bir ortaokulda çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin farklılaştırılmış öğretimi nasıl algıladıklarını araştırmaktır. Bu doğrultuda, aşağıdaki araştırma soruları bu çalışmayı şekillendirmiştir:

1. Özel bir ortaokulda İngilizce derslerinde öğretim hangi yollarla farklılaştırılıyor?
2. Öğretmenlerin farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair avantaj ve dezavantajlarıyla ilgili algıları neler?
3. Özel bir ortaokulda çalışan öğretmenler öğretimlerini farklılaştırırken herhangi bir engelle karşılaşılıyor mu? Öğretimlerini farklılaştırırken ne gibi engellerle karşılaşılıyorlar?

4. Özel bir ortaokulda çalışan öğretmenler farklılaştırılmış öğretim uygularken karşılaştıkları engellerin üstesinden nasıl geliyor?

Araştırmanın Önemi

Bu çalışma birçok yönden önemli bir yere sahiptir. Araştırmacının kendisi de verilerin toplandığı kurumda çalıştığı için, katılımcılar tarafından kullanılan ve veri analizi sürecine dahil edilen ders planlarına erişimi bulunmaktadır. Böylelikle, toplanan verilerle birlikte, araştırmacı özel bir ortaokulda çalışan öğretmenlerin farklılaştırılmış öğretimi birçok tema yardımıyla nasıl algıladıklarını araştırmayı hedefleyen durumu genel bir çerçeveye oturtabilmiştir.

Ek olarak, farklılaştırılmış öğretim ve farklılaştırılmış öğretimin İngilizce öğretmenleri tarafından farklı seviyelerde kullanımıyla ilgili literatür daha çok araştırmaya ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Literatürde, farklılaştırılmış öğretimin matematik derslerinde üçüncü ve altıncı sınıf öğrencileriyle birlikte kullanımının öğrencilerin biliş üstü becerileri üzerindeki etkilerini araştıran çalışmalar bulunmaktadır (Abu & Gökdere, 2020). Aynı zamanda, farklılaştırılmış öğretim kullanarak uzaktan eğitim bağlamında Türkçe'nin yabancı bir dil olarak öğretilmesi, farklılaştırılmış öğretimin üstün yetenekli öğrencilerle kullanımı ve farklılaştırılmış öğretimin sınıf ortamı üzerine etkilerini araştıran çalışmalar bulunmaktadır (Demirkaya, 2018; Ekinici & Bal, 2019; Ozan & Göçmenler, 2018).

Diğer bir yandan, farklılaştırılmış öğretimin İngilizce derslerinde kullanımını araştıran çok fazla çalışma yoktur. İngilizce derslerinde kullanılan farklılaştırılmış öğretimin akademik başarı, öğrencilerin düşünme şekillerine göre farklılaştırılmış öğretime karşı perspektifleri, üstün yetenekli öğrencilerin İngilizce dersleriyle kurduğu duyuşsal bağ üzerindeki etkisi gibi konularda çalışmalar vardır (Güllühalı, 2019; Kaya et al., 2022; Özer & Yılmaz, 2018; Şan, 2021; Türegün, 2020).

Görüldüğü üzere, farklılaştırılmış öğretimin İngilizce derslerinde K12 bağlamındaki kullanımına odaklanan yeterli sayıda çalışma bulunmamaktadır. İlgili literatürde

birçok çalışma, üstün yetenekli çocuklara ya da farklılaştırılmış öğretimin diğer branşlardaki kullanımına odaklanmıştır. Bundan dolayı, Türkiye’de farklılaştırılmış öğretimin İngilizce derslerinde K12 seviyesinde kullanımına odaklanan çalışmalara ihtiyaç duyulmaktadır.

Ayrıca, bu çalışma ile birlikte, alandaki diğer eğitimcilerin farklılaştırılmış öğretimi özel bir okul bağlamında kullanan öğretmenlerin deneyimlerinin iç yüzünü anlamalarına olanak sağlanması hedeflenmiştir. Böylelikle, bu çalışmanın, gelecek nesiller için farklılaştırılmış öğretimin kalitesinin geliştirilmesine yol açması ve farklılaştırılmış öğretimi daha iyi uygulama konusunda araştırmaya olan öğretmenler için de yardımcı bir kaynak olması hedeflenmiştir.

Metodoloji

Bu çalışma, daha önce paylaşılan araştırma sorularını cevaplayabilmek için nitel araştırma desenlerinden biri olan durum çalışması olarak tasarlanmıştır. Çalışma, yalnızca Ankara’daki özel bir ortaokulun İngilizce zümresinde çalışan öğretmenlerle birlikte yürütüldüğü için, veri toplama süreci tek bir yerle sınırlandırılmıştır.

Durum çalışması metoduna dair farklı kategoriler bulunmaktadır. Yin (1994) durum çalışmalarını keşfetmeye dayalı, tanımlayıcı ve açıklayıcı olarak sınıflandırır. McDonough ve McDonough (1997), yorumlayıcı ve değerlendirici gibi diğer durum çalışması türlerini önerir.

Yin’in (1994) durum çalışması kategorilerini düşünerek, bu araştırma çalışması açıklayıcı durum çalışması olarak planlanmıştır. Ayrıca, açıklayıcı durum çalışması, güncel bir olgunun analizine olanak sağlar ve araştırmacının araştırılan olgu üzerinde herhangi bir kontrolü olmaz (Yin, 2014). Bu araştırma çalışması, katılımcı öğretmenlerin farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair algı durumunu araştırıp öğretmenlerin bu süreci nasıl deneyimlediğini araştırdığı için açıklayıcı durum çalışması yöntemi uygun olarak görülmüştür.

Verilerin toplandığı İngilizce zümresi, araştırmacının kendisi de dahil olmak üzere yirmi üç öğretmenden oluşmaktadır. On beş öğretmen çalışmaya katılmaya gönüllü olmuştur. On beş öğretmenle yapılan röportajlara ek olarak, ders planı analizi de veri toplama sürecine dahil edilmiştir. Bunun sebebi, ders planlarının farklılaştırılmış öğretim stratejilerini içeren bir şekilde katılımcılar tarafından hazırlanmış olmasıdır.

Bu süreçte, araştırmaya katılan öğretmenlerin en sık çalıştıkları seviye gruplarına göre analiz edilecek planlar seçilmiştir.

Röportajlarda yöneltilen sorular ise şu şekildedir:

A. Demografik/Temel Bilgiler:

1. Yaşınız ve eğitim seviyeniz hakkında bilgi verebilir misiniz?
2. Ne kadar süredir öğretmen olarak çalışıyorsunuz?
3. Şu anda hangi seviye ya da seviyelerle çalışıyorsunuz?
4. Daha önceki yıllarınızda hangi seviyelerle çalıştınız?
5. Şu anda çalıştığınız kurumda en çok hangi seviye ile çalıştınız?
6. Öğretmenlik sertifikanızı aldığınız kurum ya da program hakkında bilgi verebilir misiniz?

B. Öğretmenlerin Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimi Anlayış Şekilleri ve Farklılaştırılmış Öğretime Karşı Yaklaşımları

7. İngilizce öğretimine karşı nasıl bir yaklaşımınız var? Sizin için önemli noktalar neler?
8. Farklılaştırılmış öğretim kavramına aşina mısınız? Farklılaştırılmış öğretim kavramına ne kadar süredir aşinasınız?
9. Farklılaştırmayı siz nasıl tanımlarsınız?
10. Öğretmenlik uygulamasını yaptığınız programda “farklılaştırılmış öğretim” ile ilgili bir bilgi sahibi oldunuz mu? Eğer bilgi sahibi olduysanız, farklılaştırılmış öğretimle ilgili ne hatırladığınızdan bahsedebilir misiniz?
11. Farklılaştırılmış öğretim ile ilgili sahip olduğunuz bilginin çoğunu nerede ve nasıl öğrendiniz?
12. Derslerinizde farklılaştırılmış öğretimi ne kadar süredir kullanıyorsunuz?

C. Öğretmenlerin Farklılaştırılmış Öğretim Uygulamaları

13. Öğrencilerinizi ön bilgi, beceri ve ilgi alanları yönlerinden tanımak için okul yılının başında özel bir metot kullanıyor musunuz? Ne tarz yöntemler kullanıyorsunuz?
14. Öğrencilerinizin beceri ve ilgi alanlarıyla ilgili aldığımız bilgileri daha sonra nasıl kullanıyorsunuz? Sizce sahip olduğunuz bilgiler verdiğiniz eğitimde bir farklılık yaratıyor mu?
15. Farklılaştırılmış öğretimin bir öncüsü olarak görülen Tomlinson'a göre (1999), öğretmenler içeriği, süreci, ürünü ve sınıf iklimini öğrencilerin hazır bulunuşluluğu, ilgi alanları ve profillerine göre farklılaştırabilir (Tomlinson (1999)). Siz bunlardan hangilerini farklılaştırıyorsunuz? Karar verme sürecinizi etkileyen sebepler nelerdir ve nasıl farklılaştırma yapıyorsunuz?
16. Sizce bunlardan biri ya da birkaçı diğerlerinden daha önemli ya da etkili olabilir mi? Neden olabilir ya da neden olamaz?
17. Derslerinize hazırlanırken neyi farklılaştıracağınıza nasıl karar veriyorsunuz?
18. Öğretiminizi farklılaştırırken kullandığınız strateji, metot ve/ ya da kaynaklar hakkında bilgi verebilir misiniz?
19. Derslerinizde farklılaştırılmış öğretimi planlarken düşündüğünüz spesifik bir öğrenci grubu var mı? O spesifik öğrenci grubuna neye göre karar veriyorsunuz?
20. Derslerden önce planladığınız farklılaştırma dışında, ders esnasında anlık olarak da öğretiminizi farklılaştırıyor musunuz? Eğer bunu yapıyorsanız, sizi buna sevk eden sebepler nelerdir?
21. Derslerinizin sonunda biçimlendirici değerlendirme kullanıyor musunuz? Biçimlendirici değerlendirmede de farklılaştırma yapıyor musunuz? Biçimlendirici değerlendirmede farklılaştırma uyguladığımızda ne gibi sonuçlar gözlemliyorsunuz?
22. Farklılaştırılmış öğretiminizin öğrencileriniz üzerinde işe yaradığını nasıl anlıyorsunuz?

D. Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimin Avantaj ve Dezavantajları

23. Farklılaştırılmış öğretimin ne gibi avantajlarını gözlemliyorsunuz? Sizce öğrenciler bundan bir fayda sağlayabiliyorlar mı?
24. Farklılaştırılmış öğretimin gözlemlediğiniz herhangi bir dezavantajı var mı? Varsa örneklerle açıklayabilir misiniz?
25. Farklılaştırılmış öğretim uygulamaları sizi teşvik eden ya da destekleyen herhangi bir unsur var mı? Eğer varsa, örneklerle açıklayabilir misiniz? Eğer yoksa, sebeplerini açıklayabilir misiniz?

E. Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimi Uygulama Esnasında Karşılaşılan Engeller

26. Bir öğretmen olarak öğretiminizi farklılaştırırken deneyimlediğiniz en büyük zorluk nedir? Bir öğretmen olarak öğretiminizi farklılaştırırken ne gibi engellerle karşılaşıyorsunuz?
27. Karşılaştığınız zorlukların üstesinden nasıl geliyorsunuz?
28. Sizce kurumunuzdaki eğitim sistemi karşılaştığınız zorlukların üstesinden gelebilmek adına sizi nasıl destekleyebilir? Bu noktada idareden ya da iş arkadaşlarınızdan herhangi bir destek alıyor musunuz? Eğer alıyorsanız nasıl bir destek aldığınızı açıklayabilir misiniz?
29. Farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair güncel ve gelecek öğretmenlik eğitimi veren programlar için herhangi bir tavsiyeniz olur mu?
30. Eklemek istediğiniz herhangi başka bir şey var mı?

Röportaj sorularında da görüldüğü üzere, katılımcıların farklılaştırılmış öğretimi nasıl algıladıklarını detaylı bir şekilde anlayabilmek adına veri toplama süreci gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Röportajlar yapıldıktan sonra, ses kayıtlarının transkriptleri çıkarılmış ve MAXQDA programı kullanılarak kodlama yapılmıştır. Kodlama yapıldıktan sonra, tümevarımsal analiz yöntemi kullanılarak toplanan veriler incelenmiştir.

Bulgular

Bu kısımda sonuçlar araştırma sorularına göre analiz edilip kategorize edilerek paylaşılmıştır.

Öğretimi Farklılaştırma Yolları

Toplanan verilerin analizi sonucunda katılımcıların derslerini en çok içerik ve ürünlerinde farklılaştırdıkları ortaya çıkmıştır. Katılımcılar, özellikle derslerinin ürün aşamasında farklılaştırma yaptıklarında, öğrencilerinin daha çok ilgi ve dikkatini topladıklarını gözlemlediklerini paylaşmışlardır. Bu durum öğrencilerinin derse katılımındaki artış, derse karşı artan bir motivasyon ve kendilerini değerli hissetme gibi avantajlarla katılımcılar tarafından değerlendirilmiştir.

Öğretmenler, derslerinin ürünlerini genel olarak farklı ürün türü verip öğrencilerden kendi istek ve tercihlerine göre istedikleri ürün türünü seçebilmeleri olarak

planladıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bu ürün türlerini belirlerken de öğrencilerin farklı ilgi alanlarını, hobilerini ya da yeteneklerini baz aldıklarını ifade etmişlerdir.

Öğretmenlerin Kararlarını Etkileyen Faktörler

Genel olarak katılımcılar, öğretimlerini farklılaştırırken öğrencilerinin hazır bulunuşluluk seviyelerini, çalışma tercihlerini ve ilgi alanlarını baz aldıklarını belirtmişlerdir.

Öğrencilerin hazır bulunuşluluk seviyelerini düşünürken, öğrencilerin akademik olarak hangi seviyede olduklarını düşündüklerini belirtmişlerdir. Ders esnasında herhangi bir aktivite ya da çalışma kâğıdı üzerinde çalışırken, akademik olarak çok iyi, ortalama ya da çok zayıf seviyede olan öğrencilerle seviyelerine göre farklılaştırılmış çalışma kağıtlarını verdiklerini paylaşmışlardır.

Öğrencilerin çalışma tercihlerini düşündüklerinde ise katılımcılar, bazı öğrencilerin tek başlarına, bazı öğrencilerin ise ikili ya da daha kalabalık olabilecek şekilde gruplar halinde çalışmayı tercih edebildiklerinden bahsetmişlerdir. Katılımcılar da çoğunlukla öğrencilerin bu tercihlerini dikkate alıp, onlara saygı duyduklarını paylaşmışlardır. Katılımcılar bu duruma, öğrencilerin öğrenme ortamına kendilerini ait hissetme ve dışlanma gibi olumsuz duyguların oluşumundan kaçınabilmeleri için dikkat ettiklerini ifade etmişlerdir.

Diğer bir yandan, katılımcılar, derslerini ve ders içerisindeki süreçlerini planlarken öğrencilerinin ilgi alanlarını da yapabildikleri en üst seviyede dahil ettiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Derslerinin özellikle ürün aşamasında, yani öğrencilerin kendi kendilerine bir üretimde buldukları kısımda, öğrencilerin ilgi alanlarına hitap edebilecek farklı ürün türleri ve içerikleri koymaları, öğrencilerin İngilizce derslerine karşı olumlu bir tutum geliştirmesine katkıda bulunduğunun da altını çizmişlerdir. Buna ek olarak, ders dışında kullanılan online okuma platformlarında kitap ya da makale ödevi verirken de katılımcılar öğrencilerin ilgi alanlarına göre farklı kitap ya da makale vermeye dikkat ettiklerini de paylaşmışlardır.

Öğretmenlerin Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimi Algılayış Şekilleri

Öğretmenlerin farklılaştırılmış öğretimi nasıl kavradıklarını anlayabilmek adına, katılımcılara farklılaştırılmış öğretimi hangi avantaj ve dezavantajlarla değerlendirdiklerine dair sorulan sorular ışığında aşağıdaki sonuçlar elde edilmiştir.

Farklılaştırılmış Öğretim Uygularken Gözlemlenen Avantajlar ve Bu Süreçte Öğretmenleri Motive Edici Faktörler

Araştırmaya katılan öğretmenlerin çoğu, farklılaştırılmış öğretim uyguladıklarında öğrenciler üzerinde birçok avantajını gözlemlediklerini ifade etmişlerdir. Öğretmenler, genel olarak öğrenci motivasyonunda artış ve öğrencilerin akademik seviyelerinde ilerleme kaydettiklerini paylaşmışlardır. Bu noktada öğretmenler, öğrencilerden aldıkları geri bildirim onlar için önemli bir bilgi kaynağı olduğunu öne sürmüşlerdir.

Aynı zamanda öğretmenler, öğrencilerin farklılaştırılmış öğretim sayesinde kendilerini de akademik olarak daha iyi tanıdıklarını ve farkındalık kazandıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Özellikle zayıf öğrencilerin de bu süreçten olumlu bir şekilde faydalanabildiklerini ve ders içi süreçlerde akademik gelişim odaklı yaklaşabildiklerini öne sürmüşlerdir. Bunların yanında, öğrencilerin İngilizce derslerine karşı ilgi ve tutumlarının pozitif yönde geliştiğini ve ilerlediğini de paylaşmışlardır. Katılımcılar, böylelikle, öğrencilerin öğretim ortamına karşı aidiyet duygularının geliştiğini de ifade etmişlerdir.

Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimin Dezavantajları

Her ne kadar çoğu katılımcı farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair birçok avantaj ifade etse de farklılaştırılmış öğretim sürecinin bazı dezavantajlarını ifade eden öğretmenler de olmuştur.

Katılımcılara göre, bazı akademik olarak zayıf öğrenciler farklılaştırılmış çalışma kağıtları ya da aktiviteler aldıkları için, bu süreçte olumsuz geri bildirim

vermişlerdir. Verdikleri olumsuz geri bildirim de ders içi süreçlere motivasyonda azalma olarak yansımıştır. Katılımcıların ifadelerine göre, bu durum özellikle öğrencilerin hazır bulunuşluk seviyeleri baz alınarak farklılaştırma yapıldığında ortaya çıkmıştır. Katılımcılara göre, akademik olarak zayıf gruptaki öğrencilerin ve ileri düzeydeki öğrencilerin aynı zamanda farklı zorluk seviyesinde çalışma yapmaları bazı öğrenci grupları tarafından karmaşa yaratmış ve öğretmenlerle bu noktada olumsuz geri bildirim paylaşmışlardır.

Ek olarak, sınıf içerisinde farklılaştırılmış öğretim stratejilerini uygulamanın sınıf yönetimini öğretmenler açısından zorlaştırabildiği ortaya çıkmıştır. Katılımcılar, aynı anda farklı çalışmalar yapan öğrenci gruplarını kontrol ve idare etmenin onlar için zor olabildiğinden bahsetmişlerdir. Bu noktada, farklı çalışmalar için farklı yönergelerin ve açıklamaların yapılması gerektiği bazı katılımcılar tarafından paylaşılmış ve bu durumun da ders içi süreçlerde öğretmenin işini zorlaştırdığı ya da zaman zaman gereksiz zaman alabildiği belirtilmiştir.

Öğretmenler Tarafından Deneyimlenen Zorluk ve Engeller

Öğretmenler, farklılaştırılmış öğretimi uygulama süreçlerinde karşılaştıkları zorluk ve engelleri aşağıdaki sonuçlar ile ifade etmişlerdir.

Destek Eksikliği

Katılımcılardan bazıları, farklılaştırılmış öğretim uygulama süreçlerinde çalıştıkları kurumdan yeterli destek alamadıklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Bu noktada, bahsettikleri destek, hizmet içi eğitim, materyal ve kaynak paylaşımı ve farklılaştırılmış öğretim süreçlerinde ailelerden alınabilecek destek olmuştur.

Hizmet içi eğitim noktasında, katılımcılar farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair kurum tarafından daha çok seminer ya da webinar paylaşılması gerektiğini vurgulamışlardır. Bu gerekliliğin arkasındaki sebebi de farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair daha çok bilgi edinmeleri gerekliliği olarak belirtmişlerdir.

Ek olarak, farklılaştırılmış öğretim yaklaşımı ile hazırlanmış materyal ve kaynak eksikliği de katılımcılar tarafından yaşanan bir zorluk olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Katılımcılara göre, hazır farklılaştırılmış kaynak olmaması ya da bu materyallerin sayısının yetersiz olması öğretmenler için olması gereğinden fazla iş yüküyle sonuçlanıp; kendi içlerinde gergin ve olumsuz hissetmelerine yol açmıştır. Bu sebeple de farklılaştırılmış öğretim yöntem ve teknikleriyle bir ders hazırlayabilmek için, öğretmenler ekstra zaman ayırıp efor sarf etmeleri gerektiğini paylaşmışlardır.

Son olarak, katılımcılar farklılaştırılmış öğretim sürecinde ailelerin de desteğinin önemli olabildiğini belirtmiştir. Bu noktada, bazı katılımcılar bazı velilerinin öğrencilerin farklı bir çalışma kâğıdı almasını hoş karşılamadıklarını belirtmiş, ve bu noktada katılımcılar veli ile fikir ve dayanışma içerisine girebildiklerini söylemişlerdir.

Farklılaştırılmış Öğretimle Birleştirilmeyen Değerlendirme

Bazı katılımcılar, sınıf içi süreçlerin farklılaştırılmış materyal ve kaynaklarla yürütülmesine rağmen, sınavların ve değerlendirme araçlarının farklılaştırılmamasının bir engel olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Örneğin, bazı katılımcılar akademik olarak zayıf bir öğrencinin farklılaştırılmış bir çalışma kâğıdı ile sınıf içi süreci yaşamasına rağmen, sınavların içeriğinin farklılaştırılmamasının kendi açılarından zorluk yaşattığını ifade etmişlerdir.

Farklı öğretmenler de sınıf içi çalışmaların ve ekstra pratik materyallerinin öğrencilerin hazır bulunuşluk düzeyine göre farklılaştırılmasına rağmen, tüm öğrencilerin standart sınava girmelerinin bazı öğrencileri duygusal olarak olumsuz yönde etkileyebileceğinden bahsetmişlerdir.

Farklılaştırılmış Öğretime Dair Bilgi Eksikliği

Birçok katılımcı, farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair yeterli düzeyde ya da nitelikli bilgiye sahip olmadığını belirtmiştir. Bu durumun da onları farklılaştırılmış öğretim

uygulama sürecinde oldukça olumsuz etkilediğini ortaya koymuşlar ve bunun önemli bir engel olduğunu paylaşmışlardır.

Örneğin, özellikle bireysel farklılıkları ve ihtiyaçları olan öğrencilerle çalışırken, bu bilgi eksikliğinin öğretim sürecini olumsuz yönde etkileyebileceğini paylaşan katılımcılar olmuştur.

Ek olarak, yeterli ve kaliteli bilgiye sahip olduğunu düşünmeyen katılımcılar, farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair araştırma yaparken ya da kendi imkanlarıyla bu süreci gerçekleştirmeye çalışırken, olması gerekenden fazla efor sarf ettiklerini ve neyin nasıl olması gerektiğini kendi kendilerine bulmaları gerektiğini paylaşmışlardır. Bunun da yine iş yükü ile sonuçlandığını ve beklenen düzeyin altında bir kalitede ürün ortaya çıkmasına sebep olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

Kurumun Var Olan Program ve Sistemi

Katılımcılardan bazıları, farklılaştırılmış öğretim sürecinde idarenin zaman zaman sınırlayıcı bir rolü olabildiğinden bahsetmişlerdir. Bu durumun da onların planladığı farklılaştırılmış öğretim süreçlerini sekteye uğratabildiği paylaşılmıştır.

Başka bir katılımcı ise, öğretim süreçlerinde öğretmenlere her zaman gerekli öncü rolünün verilmemesinin genel olarak eğitim kalitesini ve sistemini olumsuz yönde etkileyebildiğinden bahsetmiştir.

Ek olarak, kullanılan İngilizce programının da farklılaştırılmış öğretim süreçlerini yönetmede ya da öğretmenlerin kendi kararlarıyla program üzerinde değişiklik yapmasına olanak sağlamadığını belirten katılımcılar olmuştur. Katılımcılar bu durumun öğretmen olarak özgürlüklerini kısıtladığını vurgulamışlardır.

Aynı zamanda, sınıf mevcutlarının çok olması bazı katılımcılar tarafından engelleyici bir faktör olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu durum, öğretmenlerin farklılaştırılmış öğretim süreçlerini yönetmesini ve uygulamasını zorlaştırmıştır.

Engellerin ve Zorlukların Üstesinden Gelme Şekilleri

Katılımcılar, öğretimlerini farklılaştırma sürecinde karşılaştıkları engel ve zorlukların üstesinden gelirken öncelikli olarak iş arkadaşlarından destek aldıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Bu noktada, ders planı hazırlama süreçlerinde planladıkları farklılaştırılmış öğretim strateji ve yöntemleri birbirleriyle paylaştıklarını ve fikir alışverişi ile deneyimlerinden bahsederek olası problemlere çözüm üretebildiklerinden bahsetmişlerdir.

Aynı zamanda, katılımcılar, zaman zaman iş arkadaşları ve zümre başkanları tarafından ders gözlemlerinin gerçekleştiğini belirtmişlerdir. Katılımcılara göre, bu ders gözlemleri sayesinde uyguladıkları farklılaştırma yöntemleri hakkında geri dönüt alabilme şansına sahip olup kendilerini yenileyebilme imkanına da kavuşabilmektedirler.

Ek olarak, bazı katılımcılar okuldaki rehberlik biriminin ve idarecilerin de zaman zaman farklılaştırılmış öğretim süreçlerinde karşılaştıkları sorunlar noktasında destekleyici bir rol sergilediklerini belirtmişlerdir. Bu durumun özellikle veli iletişim noktasında açığa çıktığını ifade etmişlerdir.

Engellerin Üstesinden Gelme Adına Yapılan Öneriler

Katılımcıların birçoğu, farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair öğretmenliğe başlamadan önce teorik ve pratik bilginin sağlanması gerektiğini vurgulamıştır. Katılımcıların hepsi öğretmenliğe başlamadan önce farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair bir bilgi sahibi olmadıklarını ifade etmiştir. Dolayısıyla, bunun en büyük engellerden biri olduğunu ifade ederek, öğretmenlik eğitimi veren programların öğretmen adaylarını farklılaştırılmış öğretimle ilgili hem teorik bilgiyle hem de pratikle eğitmeleri gerektiğini vurgulamışlardır.

Aynı zamanda, bazı katılımcılar yayınevlerinin de farklılaştırılmış öğretimi baz alarak kitapları ve kaynakları hazırlamaları gerektiğini vurgulamış, bu durumun onların materyal hazırlama noktasında destekleyebileceğini paylaşmışlardır.

Ek olarak, katılımcılar farklılaştırılmış öğretime dair daha fazla hizmet içi eğitim verilmesi gerektiğinin altını çizerek kendi profesyonel gelişimlerinin bu yönde desteklenmesi gerektiğini paylaşmışlardır.

Sonuç

Bu bölümde, çalışmanın sonuçları özet halinde tekrar verilmiş ve bu araştırma konusunda yapılan daha önceki çalışmalarla desteklenmiştir. Bu bilgilerden yola çıkarak, öğretmen eğitim programlarına ve kurumlara tavsiyelerde bulunulmuştur. Ayrıca, farklılaştırılmış öğretim konusunda ileride yapılabilecek araştırmalar için önerilerde bulunulmuş ve farklı veri toplama metotlarını kullanarak ne şekilde farklı çalışmalar yapılabileceği paylaşılmıştır.

Bu araştırmada, yalnızca öğretmenlerle çalışmış ve veri toplama yöntemi olarak yalnızca röportajlar ve örnek ders planları incelenmiştir. Bu konuda daha farklı boyutlarda bilgi ve veri alabilmek adına, farklı seviyelerde çalışan öğretmenlerle ya da devlet kurumlarında çalışan öğretmenler ile benzer çalışmalar yürütülebilir. Aynı zamanda sadece öğretmenlerin farklılaştırılmış öğretimi nasıl algıladıklarına odaklanmak yerine, farklılaştırma süreçlerinde öğretmenlerin etkinlik düzeyleri de araştırılabilir.

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