



Differentiated Instruction: Integrating Content, Process, Product, and Learning Environment for Diverse Learners in English Language Teaching (ELT)

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ABSTRACT

This research explores and simulates the integration of differentiated instruction elements of content, process, product, and learning environment in English Language Teaching (ELT) to accommodate the diverse readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles of students. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method. The analysis shows that differentiated instruction in English Language Teaching (ELT) involves four key components: content, process, product, and learning environment. Differentiating content means adjusting what students learn based on their readiness, interests, and language levels while keeping learning objectives consistent. For example, students may study the same topic—like daily routines or food—but use materials of varying complexity, from simple visuals to analytical texts. Differentiating the process involves varying how students engage with content, using diverse strategies that suit visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or interpersonal learners. This might include activities like acting, using images, or role-playing. Differentiating the product means giving students choices in how they demonstrate their learning—through writing, drawing, presenting, or creating digital content—allowing them to use their strengths while meeting the same goals. Lastly, differentiating the learning environment focuses on modifying the physical, emotional, and social classroom setting to support all learners. This could involve flexible seating, sensory-friendly spaces, and inclusive practices that reduce anxiety and promote engagement. Overall, these components help ELT more inclusive, engaging, and responsive to the diverse needs of students.

Keywords: Differentiated Instruction, Differentiated Instruction (Content, Process, Product, and Learning Environment), Diverse Learners, English Instruction, English Language Teaching (ELT)



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1. Introduction

In today's English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms, diversity is a defining feature. Students vary significantly in their levels of readiness, interests, learning profiles, cultural backgrounds, and learning paces. These differences create a complex learning environment in which a uniform instructional approach is often inadequate. As a result, teachers encounter increasing challenges in effectively engaging all learners, particularly in mixed-ability or large classroom settings. Addressing such diversity requires innovative instructional strategies that are flexible, inclusive, and student-centered.

Furthermore, in multilingual and multicultural settings, such as in many Indonesian schools, students' exposure to and use of English outside the classroom is also varied. Some may have more access to English-language media or private tutoring, while others rely solely on school instruction. This adds another layer of disparity that teachers must consider. If instruction fails to accommodate these differences, it can lead to disengagement, low achievement, and unequal learning outcomes. Therefore, the need for adaptive, personalized instruction becomes even more critical.

Differentiated instruction emerges as a promising approach to meet these challenges. It is a teaching philosophy and method that recognizes students' differences and systematically adjusts various aspects of the teaching and learning process. Differentiated instruction is a teaching method that emerged from a shift in educational thinking, emphasizing the significance of recognizing and addressing individual learner differences (Kamarulzaman et al., 2017). Differentiated instruction has been advocated for English classrooms that include students with varying levels of readiness, learning profiles, and backgrounds (Mirawati et al., 2022). Differentiated Instruction (DI) is a teaching method that aims to meet the different learning needs, abilities, interests, and backgrounds of students within the same classroom (often called inclusive classrooms, where students with various learning styles and abilities learn together). It recognizes that not all students learn the same way, so teachers adjust their instruction methods, materials, and assessments to better support each student. Differentiated Instruction (DI), a teaching strategy designed to address the diverse needs and characteristics of learners in inclusive classrooms, has recently gained significant attention in education (Sapan & Mede, 2022). This approach is becoming increasingly popular and widely discussed among educators and researchers as an effective way to improve teaching and learning.

Differentiated Instruction has become a prominent focus in education today, requiring teachers to adapt to ongoing changes within the educational system (Moreno, 2015). Teachers can apply differentiated instruction (DI) to effectively address students' diverse learning needs and language abilities. DI involves adapting elements of the classroom environment to better support and optimize student learning (Sullivan & Weeks, 2018). The traditional one-size-fits-all method is no longer effective in meeting the diverse needs, preferences, and learning styles of students. To enhance the learning experience, educators must implement varied instructional strategies that offer multiple pathways for students to engage with and understand the material. Differentiated Instruction (DI) has recently gained considerable attention from both scholars and educators due to its critical importance and its potential to significantly improve student learning outcomes (Mardhatillah & Suharyadi, 2023).

Carol Ann Tomlinson, a pioneer in this field, identifies four key elements that can be differentiated: content (what students learn), process (how they learn), product (how they demonstrate what they've learned), and the learning environment (the atmosphere and physical setup of the classroom) (Tomlinson, 2001). By intentionally modifying these components, teachers can create a more equitable and responsive learning experience. According to Tomlinson (2001), differentiated instruction is a way of thinking about teaching and learning that recognizes the differences in students' readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles — and responds to those differences in planning curriculum and instruction. Therefore, teachers need to design curricula and learning processes that can accommodate this diversity. This approach is not merely a technical strategy, but a student-centered teaching philosophy, in which the teacher proactively adapts the content, process, and product of learning to meet the unique needs of each learner. Thus, differentiated instruction aims to ensure that all students, with their differences, have equal opportunities to achieve learning goals optimally.

Each of these components serves a specific purpose in addressing student diversity. Differentiating content allows students to access material at an appropriate level of challenge; differentiating the process gives learners multiple paths to acquire knowledge; differentiating the product enables them to demonstrate understanding in various forms; and differentiating the learning environment supports psychological comfort and engagement. Together, these strategies build a foundation for inclusive education that acknowledges and values learner differences rather than treating them as obstacles.

In the context of English Language Teaching, differentiation plays a crucial role in helping learners with varying English proficiencies succeed. English classrooms often include students who are at different stages of language development and who come with distinct cultural and academic experiences. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to scaffold learning in ways that are appropriate for each student, ensuring that learning tasks are both accessible and challenging. Moreover, it encourages student agency by providing choices and adapting instruction to match learners' preferences and strengths.

Differentiated instruction is relevant and essential to the context of English Language Teaching (ELT) because ELT classrooms are typically filled with students who differ widely in their language proficiency, learning styles, interests, motivation, and cultural backgrounds. These variations create a need for flexible teaching approaches that can address and support all learners effectively. In ELT, students often come with

different levels of vocabulary knowledge, grammar understanding, listening skills, and speaking fluency. For example, one student may excel at reading comprehension but struggle to express themselves in speaking tasks, while another might be confident in oral communication but weak in writing. Differentiated instruction helps teachers tailor their lessons based on these individual readiness levels by adjusting the content (what is taught), process (how it is taught), product (how students demonstrate learning), and learning environment (the atmosphere and conditions of the classroom).

For instance: Content differentiation in ELT may involve giving beginner students simpler texts while providing advanced learners with more complex materials. Process differentiation might include using group work, multimedia, or role-play for some learners while others might benefit from guided reading or one-on-one support. Product differentiation can allow students to choose whether to submit a written report, a recorded presentation, or a creative project to show their understanding. Learning environment differentiation could mean allowing quiet study spaces for introverted learners and interactive zones for those who learn better through discussion and movement.

In multilingual and multicultural ELT classrooms, particularly in countries like Indonesia, where students' exposure to English outside of school varies greatly, differentiated instruction is not just a strategy—it is a necessity. By applying it, teachers can ensure that all students, regardless of their starting point, have equitable opportunities to engage with and succeed in learning English. In summary, differentiated instruction provides a practical and inclusive framework for ELT teachers to address learner diversity, improve engagement, and foster better language acquisition outcomes. It transforms the ELT classroom into a dynamic environment where every student can grow at their own pace and style, which is the core of effective language education.

There are several previous studies related to differentiated instruction. Naka (2018) examines the implementation of differentiated instruction in EFL classes at the University of Gjakova, Kosovo. The study revealed that mixed-ability classrooms are a common challenge, yet differentiated instruction is not adequately practiced. Teachers struggle to accommodate students' diverse needs and learning styles, which affects the overall effectiveness of English language learning. The research emphasizes the importance of differentiated instruction in addressing individual learner differences to create a more effective and inclusive EFL environment. Kotob & Abadi (2019) explore the effects of differentiated instruction on students with varying achievement levels in a mixed-ability English classroom. The study found that differentiated instruction notably boosted the academic performance of low-achieving students, as evidenced by their improved post-test scores. Meanwhile, high-achieving students maintained consistent performance across both pre-and post-tests. This indicates that differentiation particularly benefits students who need more academic support without negatively impacting higher performers. Kupchyk & Litvinchuk (2020) conducted a study to improve foreign language proficiency among non-language major students in higher education by exploring the use of differentiated instruction. Their research found that fostering a positive and motivating learning environment, supported by appropriate teaching strategies and assessment tools, significantly enhanced student performance. In an experiment with 116 first-year students, grouping learners by English proficiency levels (A1 to B2 CEFR) and using level-appropriate materials resulted in increased motivation and improved learning outcomes. Magableh & Abdullah (2020) investigated the impact of differentiated instruction (DI) on students' English learning outcomes and identified challenges in its implementation. The study found that students taught through DI strategies—such as flexible grouping and tiered instruction—performed significantly better than those taught using traditional methods. However, teachers reported challenges in planning differentiated activities, limited teaching resources, and a lack of support from school administrators. Majcic (2020) examined how differentiated instruction is perceived and implemented in Norwegian EFL classrooms. The study revealed that many teachers misunderstood differentiation, often equating it with individualized learning plans instead of providing varied learning opportunities. Differentiation was mostly applied to content through ability grouping, while the process, product, and learning environment received little attention. Additionally, the approach mainly benefited lower-performing students, leaving higher-performing students with insufficiently challenging instruction. Güvenç (2021) explored both students' and teacher's perceptions of virtual differentiated instruction (DI) practices in online language teaching. It aims to assess how DI strategies, integrated with digital teaching platforms, support diverse learner profiles and enhance student engagement and success. The study found that students perceived virtual DI activities as more engaging, enjoyable, effective, and collaborative than traditional methods. From the teacher's perspective, while DI offered meaningful benefits, it posed challenges such as time constraints, the need for careful activity planning, and promoting learner agency. Lavania & Nor (2021) found that English teachers in Malaysian schools consider several key factors when implementing Differentiated Instruction (DI) in English language teaching, including curriculum demands, instructional strategies, knowledge of DI, school context, student diversity, time

constraints, and workload. Despite the differences in school settings, there were no significant differences in the influencing factors between rural and urban schools. Sapan & Mede (2022) investigates the impact of DI on English learners' foreign language achievement (FLA), foreign language motivation (FLM), and learner autonomy (LA) at a state secondary school in Istanbul Turkey. The results showed that DI positively influenced students' FLA, FLM, and LA. Both the teacher and students viewed DI as effective and beneficial in English language learning, and the study offers practical recommendations for integrating DI into secondary-level English classes. Nyoman et al. (2022) investigate the application of differentiated instruction and the challenges faced by teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic at the senior high school level. The study found that differentiation was only partially implemented—teachers adapted content, process, and product based on students' interests and learning styles, but not readiness levels. Instructional delivery relied on standard online tools like eLearning, Zoom, and WhatsApp. Major challenges included low student engagement, large class sizes, limited planning time, and difficulty managing group activities in virtual settings. Mirawati et al. (2022) explored the implementation of differentiated instruction, highlighting both its benefits and challenges. The approach was found to motivate low-achieving students, increase classroom participation, promote collaboration, and improve teacher-student relationships. However, it posed challenges, including time-consuming preparation, perceptions of unfairness, and difficulties in managing large classes. Satyarini (2022) examines the implementation of differentiated instruction (DI) and the challenges teachers faced during the COVID-19 pandemic at SMAN 1 Ubud. Although teachers used students' pre-assessment data and differentiated content, processes, and products based on interests and learning profiles, they did not address differences in student readiness. The use of standard technologies like eLearning, Zoom, and WhatsApp lacked innovative approaches. Key challenges included low student participation, large class sizes, limited time for planning, and difficulty managing differentiated group work in virtual settings. Talain & Mercado (2023) investigate teachers' perceptions of differentiated instruction in English Language Teaching (ELT). The study found that teachers commonly implemented differentiation in content, process, product, and learning environment. They regarded it as an effective approach for addressing diverse learner needs. Additionally, there was a strong correlation between teachers' positive perceptions and their actual classroom practices across all four dimensions. Abdillah et al. (2022) investigated the implementation of Differentiated Instruction (DI) lesson plans by student-teachers in a Teaching English for Adult Learners (TEAL) course at Satya Wacana Christian University. The results showed that the student-teachers effectively incorporated all key lesson plan components and applied differentiation based on students' readiness, learning profiles, and interests. While most participants demonstrated notable improvement in teaching performance, challenges remained in formulating clear learning objectives. The study concluded that DI lesson plans were beneficial in supporting diverse learners and fostering a positive environment in mixed-ability classrooms. Irawan et al. (2024) investigated the application of differentiated instruction (DI) in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classrooms at vocational high schools in Palembang using a systematic literature review (SLR) of 15 studies. The findings revealed inconsistent DI implementation due to challenges such as large class sizes, limited teacher training, and insufficient resources. However, when effectively applied, DI enhanced student engagement and learning outcomes. Widayanti et al. (2024) examine how individualized instruction was implemented and how it influenced student engagement in English learning at SMPN Hindu 3 Blahbatuh. The results indicated that 75% of the students felt more motivated and involved in learning following the implementation of individualized instruction. The study demonstrated that this approach effectively addressed students' developmental stages, learning preferences, and interests, leading to notable improvements in engagement across emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects in the English classroom. Ningtyas & Lestari (2024) examined the implementation of differentiated instruction in teaching English to seventh-grade students and the challenges teachers face. The study found that the teacher understood and applied differentiated instruction by using diagnostic assessments, adjusting content and processes, grouping students by ability and learning styles, and providing meaningful feedback. However, challenges included limited planning time and difficulty adapting materials to diverse needs.

Although numerous studies have explored the implementation of differentiated instruction (DI) in English language classrooms, several research gaps remain. Many previous studies, such as those by Naka (2018) and Majcic (2020), revealed that while DI is widely recognized as beneficial in mixed-ability classrooms, its implementation is often partial and limited primarily to content differentiation, with less emphasis on process, product, and learning environment. Other studies, including Kotob & Abadi (2019) and Kupchyk & Litvinchuk (2020), focused on the effects of DI on student performance and motivation but did not deeply investigate the integration of all four DI elements simultaneously or simulate their classroom application comprehensively. Moreover, some studies, such as Güvenç (2021), Lavania & Nor (2021), and Satyarini (2022), highlight the challenges teachers face in implementing DI, especially during the COVID-19

pandemic, such as limited planning time, large class sizes, lack of resources, and inadequate professional support. These challenges have often led to incomplete or inconsistent DI practices, with little innovation in technology integration or attention to readiness levels. Meanwhile, research by Abdillah et al. (2022) and Talain & Mercado (2023) emphasized teacher perceptions and planning, yet there is limited exploration of how DI can be holistically simulated to support real classroom application, particularly in a way that integrates content, process, product, and learning environment cohesively and practically.

This current study offers a novel contribution by simulating and modeling the integrated application of all four elements of differentiated instruction—content, process, product, and learning environment—specifically in the context of English Language Teaching (ELT). Rather than merely evaluating current practices or reporting teacher perceptions, this research constructs and demonstrates how DI can be systematically designed and applied to accommodate students' diverse readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles. The simulation model aims to serve as a practical framework or prototype that educators can replicate or adapt in their classrooms. In doing so, this study fills the gap in actionable instructional design and offers a more complete picture of differentiated instruction's implementation in ELT settings. Furthermore, unlike most previous studies that concentrate on a single educational level or context, this study synthesizes strategies from various research and applies them through a simulated lesson approach—thereby bridging theory and practice. By doing so, the research contributes not only to theoretical understanding but also to practical pedagogy in ELT, especially in diverse classrooms where differentiation is essential for equitable and effective instruction.

2. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method because it aligns with the primary objective, which is to explore and simulate how the elements of differentiated instruction—namely content, process, product, and learning environment—can be integrated into English Language Teaching (ELT). This method enables the researcher to describe in depth the instructional simulations designed to respond to student's diverse needs within the context of English language instruction. The descriptive qualitative approach aims to understand phenomena naturally and deeply without manipulating variables. It focuses on meaning, processes, and the context of the phenomenon under study (Fitria, 2024). In this research, the phenomenon being examined is the planning and design process of instructional simulations based on differentiated instruction in English teaching that cater to students' varying readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles.

The data collection method used in this study is document analysis. Document analysis is a technique used to gather data by reviewing written sources relevant to the research topic. In this case, the documents analyzed include reference books on differentiated instruction, and national and international journal articles (Fitria, 2023). The reason for using document analysis is that this research is exploratory and conceptual, relying more on literature reviews, policies, and existing instructional materials. These documents serve as the primary sources for understanding the principles, approaches, and applications of differentiated instruction and form the foundation for designing a contextual and applicable English teaching simulation. Through document analysis, the researcher can identify key elements from both theory and practice related to differentiated instruction and adapt them into an instructional design for English teaching that is relevant and implementable.

The data obtained from the documents is analyzed using content analysis. This analysis is conducted by identifying key themes from the contents of the documents, and then categorizing them according to the elements of differentiated instruction, such as content, process, product, and learning environment. Content analysis allows the researcher to interpret the meaning contained in the documents systematically, which then supports the development of an English teaching simulation that reflects the application of differentiated instruction. In addition, this technique helps uncover effective and appropriate approaches for diverse learner needs in the classroom. By applying content analysis, this study produces conceptual understanding and concrete examples that teachers can use to implement differentiated instruction in English language classrooms, whether directly or as inspiration for designing lesson plans or teaching modules.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Result

This research explores and simulates how the elements of differentiated instruction—content, process, product, and learning environment—can be integrated into English Language Teaching (ELT). Below are examples of Differentiated Instruction in ELT, categorized by the four key areas of differentiation: content, process, product, and learning environment. These are especially useful for diverse classrooms, including mixed-proficiency learners or students from different academic disciplines. These examples are also suitable for EFL/ESL and multilingual or multidisciplinary higher education contexts.

a. Differentiating Content

Differentiating content in English Language Teaching (ELT) involves adjusting what students learn by varying the complexity, format, or delivery of materials based on their language proficiency, background knowledge, and interests. Although all students work toward the same learning objectives, the content is tailored to match their readiness levels, ensuring that each learner can access the curriculum meaningfully and effectively. Here are simple examples of differentiating content in English language teaching:

1) Topic: Daily Routines (Reading Practice)

This topic teaches students how to talk about everyday activities. All students learn about daily routines, but the text complexity matches their language proficiency. The content is adapted to match student levels:

Beginner: Students read short, simple sentences with pictures for support (e.g., “The man wakes up at 6 a.m.”). This helps them understand basic sentence structure and time expressions.

Intermediate: Students read a short diary entry that includes familiar vocabulary and full sentences using past or present tense.

Advanced: Students read a blog post or longer article that uses more complex language and describes routines in detail. They might also analyze opinions or habits.

2) Topic: Food and Drinks (Vocabulary Practice)

Students learn vocabulary related to food, but the material is tailored. The depth and format of vocabulary learning change according to student readiness.

Beginner: Students match words like “apple,” “bread,” and “water” with pictures. This builds basic vocabulary.

Intermediate: Students categorize food into groups and write simple sentences, such as “I like apples. Apples are fruits.”

Advanced: Students read a real restaurant menu and analyze or compare food choices, possibly writing about healthy diets.

3) Topic: Hobbies (Listening and Speaking)

This lesson helps students talk about and understand hobbies. The type of listening material and speaking tasks vary in difficulty but stay on the same topic.

Beginner: Students listen to short, slow audio clips naming hobbies (e.g., “I like swimming.”), often with pictures or repetition.

Intermediate: Students watch a short video or slideshow showing people doing different hobbies and describing them.

Advanced: Students listen to a podcast or real interview and then summarize or share their opinions about hobbies.

4) Topic: Weather (Reading and Vocabulary)

Students learn to talk about the weather. Each group reads about the weather but through different levels of language and text types.

Beginner: Students read and match words like “sunny,” “cloudy,” or “rainy” to pictures. This introduces basic vocabulary.

Intermediate: Students read short weather reports and identify forecast information.

Advanced: Students read a real news article about extreme weather and discuss causes or effects.

5) Topic: People’s Appearance (Descriptive Writing)

Students describe people physically and personally. Students develop descriptive language in a way that suits their reading and writing ability.

Beginner: Students view images and read simple descriptions (e.g., “The woman has black hair. She is tall.”).

Intermediate: Students read character profiles with appearance and personality traits (e.g., “He is friendly and helpful.”).

Advanced: Students read a literary character description and analyze word choice, tone, or implications.

6) Topic: Jobs and Occupations (Vocabulary & Reading)

All students learn job-related words, but the material varies in complexity and context.

Beginner: Match job names to pictures (e.g., teacher, doctor, chef).

Intermediate: Read short descriptions of jobs and answer simple comprehension questions (e.g., “What does a nurse do?”).

Advanced: Read a newspaper article about job trends and analyze the vocabulary used in job advertisements.

7) Topic: Travel (Reading & Listening)

The same theme is explored using varied input types and levels of detail.

Beginner: Read a postcard or listen to a short audio: “I am in Bali. The beach is beautiful.”

Intermediate: Read a travel blog or listen to a travel story with some new vocabulary.

Advanced: Read a travel guide or listen to a travel podcast and summarize the main points or compare two destinations.

8) Topic: Health and Illness (Vocabulary & Speaking)

All students build healthy vocabulary but at different levels of depth and use.

Beginner: Learn basic health words (e.g., headache, fever) with flashcards or images.

Intermediate: Read and role-play a doctor-patient dialogue (e.g., “What’s the matter?” – “I have a cold.”).

Advanced: Read an article on healthy lifestyles and discuss health habits using complex sentences.

9) Topic: Technology (Reading & Vocabulary)

Focus is on the same topic, but texts are adjusted for comprehension level.

Beginner: Identify common gadgets (e.g., phone, laptop) and match them with simple definitions or icons.

Intermediate: Read a short article about how people use technology in daily life.

Advanced: Read a news article or infographic about the impact of AI and discuss its pros and cons.

10) Topic: Emotions and Feelings (Vocabulary & Listening)

Content is delivered at increasing levels of language and emotional complexity.

Beginner: Match feelings (happy, sad, angry) with emoticons or pictures.

Intermediate: Listen to conversations where people describe their feelings and choose the correct emotion.

Advanced: Read a short story or diary entry and analyze how the character feels and why.

b. Differentiating Process

Differentiating the process in English Language Teaching (ELT) involves varying how students engage with and make sense of the content by using diverse learning activities and strategies tailored to their learning styles—such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or interpersonal preferences. While all students aim to achieve the same learning goals, they take different paths to get there. This approach ensures that each learner can interact with the material in a way that supports their understanding, promotes deeper engagement, and enhances overall learning outcomes. Here are examples of Differentiating Processes in English Language Teaching.

1) Topic: Describing People (Adjectives & Speaking)

Each student processes the same topic using different learning styles.

Objective: Use adjectives to describe physical appearance and personality.

Visual learners: Look at photos and match them with descriptive phrases.

Auditory learners: Listen to a recorded dialogue and list adjectives used.

Kinesthetic learners: Play a guessing game—describe someone while others guess.

Interpersonal learners: Interview a partner and describe them to the class.

2) Topic: Giving Directions (Imperatives & Prepositions)

All students practice the skill of giving directions but through different activities.

Objective: Practice giving and following directions.

Kinesthetic learners: Follow real-life directions around the classroom or school.

Visual learners: Use color-coded maps to plan and explain routes.

Auditory learners: Listen to direction-giving dialogues and repeat.

Linguistic learners: Write out step-by-step directions before reading them aloud.

3) Topic: Making Suggestions (Speaking & Listening)

Students engage with the same phrases through different processes suited to how they learn best.

Objective: Use expressions like “Let’s...”, “Why don’t we...?”, etc.

Auditory learners: Listen to a conversation and identify suggestion phrases.

Visual learners: Watch a video clip and highlight useful expressions.

Kinesthetic learners: Act out situations (e.g., planning an event).

Group learners: Collaborate on a role-play dialogue.

4) Topic: Food and Cooking (Vocabulary & Speaking)
 Same vocabulary, but students interact with it differently based on learning preferences.
 Objective: Learn and use cooking verbs and food vocabulary.
 Visual learners: Watch a cooking video and label actions.
 Kinesthetic learners: Mimic cooking actions while naming verbs (e.g., chop, stir).
 Linguistic learners: Write a short recipe using the vocabulary.
 Social learners: Create a group cooking dialogue (e.g., a cooking show).

5) Topic: Daily Routines (Simple Present Tense)
 The same grammar topic is taught through diverse methods that support different learning styles.
 Objective: Talk about daily activities using simple present verbs.
 Auditory learners: Listen to an audio diary and identify verbs.
 Visual learners: Use a picture sequence to describe a daily routine.
 Kinesthetic learners: Act out their routine while classmates guess the activity.
 Interpersonal learners: Interview a classmate about their routine and present findings.

6) Topic: Telling Time (Listening & Speaking)
 This is differentiated by learning style and activity type.
 Objective: Practice telling time in English using analog and digital clocks.
 Visual learners: Match clock images with the correct time written in words.
 Auditory learners: Listen to a recording of someone saying the time and write what they hear.
 Kinesthetic learners: Use clock manipulatives to set and tell the time physically.
 Interpersonal learners: Ask and answer time-related questions in pairs.

7) Topic: Weather and Seasons (Vocabulary & Speaking)
 This is differentiated by the input method and output expression.
 Objective: Identify and describe weather conditions.
 Visual learners: Sort weather flashcards into seasons.
 Auditory learners: Listen to weather reports and answer questions.
 Kinesthetic learners: Act out different weather conditions (e.g., pretend to shiver for "cold").
 Social learners: Conduct a mini weather forecast in pairs or small groups.

8) Topic: Likes and Dislikes (Speaking & Writing)
 This is differentiated by the format of engagement and interaction type.
 Objective: Express personal preferences using "like," "don't like," "love," and "hate."
 Linguistic learners: Write five sentences about personal likes and dislikes.
 Visual learners: Use emojis or images to match feelings with activities (e.g., – pizza).
 Auditory learners: Listen to classmates' likes/dislikes and respond.
 Interpersonal learners: Interview a classmate and create a Venn diagram comparing preferences.

9) Topic: Modal Verbs for Advice (Should, Ought to)
 This is differentiated by the type of cognitive and physical engagement.
 Objective: Use modals to give advice.
 Auditory learners: Listen to problem-solution dialogues and identify modal verbs.
 Visual learners: Read comics or short problem scenarios and highlight models.
 Kinesthetic learners: Act out advising a "help booth" role-play.
 Analytical learners: Sort advice statements based on formality or tone.

10) Topic: Storytelling (Past Tense)
 This is differentiated by: Tools used and pathway to comprehension.
 Objective: Use past tense verbs to narrate a short story.
 Visual learners: Sequence picture cards and tell a story based on them.
 Auditory learners: Listen to a story and retell it in their own words.
 Kinesthetic learners: Use props or simple drama to act out a story.
 Logical learners: Fill in blanks in a written story using correct past tense verbs.

c. Differentiating Product

Differentiating the product in English Language Teaching means giving students multiple ways to demonstrate what they've learned, rather than relying on a single assessment format. Teachers provide choices based on students' strengths, interests, and preferred forms of expression—such as writing, speaking, drawing, or creating digital content. This approach fosters creativity, increases motivation, and ensures a fairer, more inclusive evaluation of each student's understanding and abilities. Here are examples of Differentiating Products in English Language Teaching.

- 1) Topic: Daily Routines (Speaking/Writing)
Students choose how to show what they know—through drawing, writing, speaking, or visuals.
Objective: Describe daily activities using simple present tense.
Option 1: Draw and label a comic strip showing your daily routine.
Option 2: Write a paragraph describing your daily routine.
Option 3: Record a short video or voice note explaining your daily routine.
Option 4: Create a slideshow with pictures and sentences about your routine.
- 2) Topic: My Favorite Food (Writing/Presentation)
Same content, different formats of expression based on student strengths.
Objective: Use descriptive language to talk about food.
Option 1: Write a short paragraph about your favorite food.
Option 2: Create a menu and describe 3 dishes.
Option 3: Make a video “cooking show” describing how to make your favorite food.
Option 4: Prepare a short oral presentation with pictures.
- 3) Topic: Giving Directions (Speaking/Project)
Students meet the same learning goal but demonstrate it in diverse ways.
Objective: Give directions using imperative verbs and prepositions of place.
Option 1: Create a map and write a set of directions.
Option 2: Make a mini video giving directions to a place.
Option 3: Pair up and perform a dialogue (e.g., tourist and local).
Option 4: Write a blog-style post about how to get to your favorite place.
- 4) Topic: Famous People (Reading & Speaking Integration)
All students show their understanding of the biography but in creative and personal ways.
Objective: Research and describe a famous person’s life using the past tense.
Option 1: Create a fact sheet or mini-poster.
Option 2: Write a short biography.
Option 3: Role-play and present as the famous person.
Option 4: Create a short quiz or crossword for peers.
- 5) Topic: My City (Descriptive Writing & Speaking)
Students choose how to present place-related vocabulary and grammar meaningfully.
Objective: Describe a place using adjectives and spatial language.
Option 1: Write a postcard from your city.
Option 2: Create a brochure with pictures and descriptions.
Option 3: Give a tour-guide-style oral presentation.
Option 4: Design a simple website or digital poster.
- 6) Topic: Daily Routines (Speaking/Writing)
Students choose how to show what they know—through drawing, writing, speaking, or visuals.
Objective: Describe daily activities using simple present tense.
Option 1: Draw and label a comic strip showing your daily routine.
Option 2: Write a paragraph describing your daily routine.
Option 3: Record a short video or voice note explaining your daily routine.
Option 4: Create a slideshow with pictures and sentences about your routine.
- 7) Topic: My Favorite Food (Writing/Presentation)
Same content, different formats of expression based on student strengths.
Objective: Use descriptive language to talk about food.
Option 1: Write a short paragraph about your favorite food.
Option 2: Create a menu and describe 3 dishes.
Option 3: Make a video “cooking show” describing how to make your favorite food.
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Students meet the same learning goal but demonstrate it in diverse ways.
Objective: Give directions using imperative verbs and prepositions of place.
Option 1: Create a map and write a set of directions.
Option 2: Make a mini video giving directions to a place.
Option 3: Pair up and perform a dialogue (e.g., tourist and local).
Option 4: Write a blog-style post about how to get to your favorite place.

9) Topic: Famous People (Reading & Speaking Integration)
 All students show their understanding of the biography but in creative and personal ways.
 Objective: Research and describe a famous person's life using the past tense.
 Option 1: Create a fact sheet or mini-poster.
 Option 2: Write a short biography.
 Option 3: Role-play and present as the famous person.
 Option 4: Create a short quiz or crossword for peers.

10) Topic: My City (Descriptive Writing & Speaking)
 Students choose how to present place-related vocabulary and grammar meaningfully.
 Objective: Describe a place using adjectives and spatial language.
 Option 1: Write a postcard from your city.
 Option 2: Create a brochure with pictures and descriptions.
 Option 3: Give a tour-guide-style oral presentation.
 Option 4: Design a simple website or digital poster.

d. Differentiating Learning Environment

Differentiating the learning environment involves adjusting the physical and emotional aspects of the classroom to support all learners. This includes modifying seating arrangements, classroom layout, sensory elements, and overall atmosphere to create a flexible, inclusive, and supportive space. By doing so, teachers help reduce anxiety, boost student comfort, and foster a sense of belonging, which encourages active participation and effective learning. Here are examples of Differentiating Learning Environments in English Language Teaching.

- 1) Flexible Seating Areas
 Purpose: Supports different preferences for physical comfort and focus.
 A quiet corner with pillows and soft lighting for students who prefer silent reading.
 A group table for collaborative speaking activities.
 Standing desks or floor space for students who focus better on movement.
- 2) Learning Zones with Tools
 Purpose: Gives students a choice in how and where they learn.
 Tech zone: Laptops or tablets for grammar games, digital storytelling, or listening tasks.
 Writing zone: Journals, dictionaries, and graphic organizers for writing practice.
- 3) Grouping by Preference or Readiness
 Purpose: Builds comfort, confidence, and motivation in social learning.
 Let students choose partners for a discussion task based on shared interests.
 Group students by confidence level for peer feedback or practice (e.g., shy students in smaller groups).
 Rotate groups so everyone has a chance to work with various peers over time.
- 4) Safe and Supportive Atmosphere
 Purpose: Reduces fear of failure and supports emotional well-being.
 Display positive affirmations on the wall ("Mistakes help us learn").
 Use language like "Let's try again together" instead of "That's wrong."
 Encourage risk-taking by praising effort, not just correct answers.
- 5) Online/Hybrid Environment Adjustments
 Purpose: Creates flexibility in virtual settings for different comfort zones.
 Let students choose to join breakout rooms or complete tasks independently.
 Offer discussion forums for shy students who prefer writing to speaking.
 Provide written instructions and visual aids along with spoken directions.
- 6) Lighting and Noise Level Choices
 Purpose: Supports students with sensory sensitivities and helps improve focus.
 Use lamps or natural light for a softer, calming atmosphere during writing tasks.
 Allow students to use headphones during listening tasks to reduce distraction.
 Offer noise-reducing headphones or silent timers for students who are sensitive to sound.
- 7) Personalized Learning Spaces
 Purpose: Increases ownership of learning space and builds motivation.
 Let students decorate a small corner of their desk or wall with vocabulary cards, motivational quotes, or language goals.
 Provide name tags or folders for student-created resources (e.g., grammar reference sheets, flashcards).

8) Choice of Interaction Mode

Purpose: Supports shy students or those with speaking anxiety.

Give students the option to answer questions aloud, type responses in a chat (for online), or write them on sticky notes.

Allow some learners to record audio messages instead of speaking live in front of the class.

9) Cultural Inclusion in the Environment

Purpose: Build cultural identity and inclusivity in a multilingual classroom.

Display posters with greetings, proverbs, or flags from students' home countries.

Celebrate international days and use multicultural examples in lessons.

10) Physical Movement Options

Purpose: Helps kinesthetic learners and prevents fatigue in long lessons.

Set up a "stretch station" for short physical breaks between activities.

Use "walk and talk" discussions where students move around while practicing conversation prompts.

11) Safe Error-Friendly Culture

Purpose: Builds a growth mindset and reduces fear of making mistakes.

Designate a "Mistake of the Day" where students learn from common errors.

12) Tech-Friendly & Tech-Free Zones

Purpose: Accommodates different preferences and reduces screen fatigue.

Create a "Tech Table" for students who enjoy language apps or digital tools.

Provide a "No Screen" zone with traditional paper-based materials for those who prefer it.

3.2. Discussion

Differentiated instruction is a teaching approach that acknowledges students' diverse abilities, interests, and learning needs. In the context of English language teaching (ELT), differentiation becomes essential to ensure that all students—regardless of their language level, learning style, or background—can access the material, engage meaningfully, and demonstrate their progress. This instructional method is organized into four key dimensions: content, process, product, and environment. Each plays a critical role in supporting effective and inclusive English language learning.

1. Differentiating Content: What Students Learn

Differentiating content in English Language Teaching (ELT) involves adjusting what students learn based on their language proficiency, background knowledge, and interests. This means providing materials such as texts, audio, or visuals at varying levels of complexity to ensure all learners can engage with the same topic meaningfully. For example, beginners might use simplified passages with images, while advanced students work with authentic texts or literature. This approach supports individual learning needs, keeps students appropriately challenged, and fosters motivation and a sense of accomplishment by making lessons accessible and stimulating for everyone.

Differentiating content refers to tailoring what students learn based on their readiness, interests, and learning profiles. In English Language Teaching, this means adjusting the complexity, format, or type of material while maintaining the same learning objectives. The goal is to ensure that all students access the curriculum in a way that suits their language proficiency and background knowledge. Practical examples include adjusting reading materials on a topic such as daily routines, where beginners read short sentences with pictures, intermediates read diary entries, and advanced students analyze blog posts. In vocabulary topics like food and drinks, beginners match words with pictures, intermediates write simple categorized sentences, and advanced students analyze restaurant menus. Listening and speaking lessons on hobbies are adapted with beginners listening to short audios, intermediates describing visuals, and advanced learners engaging with podcasts. Reading tasks on weather vary from matching words to images for beginners, reading weather reports for intermediates, and analyzing news articles for advanced students. Descriptive writing on people's appearance is differentiated by using pictures and simple sentences for beginners, character profiles for intermediates, and literary analysis for advanced students. Similarly, the topic of jobs and occupations ranges from picture matching to analyzing job trends and vocabulary in advertisements. Reading and listening about travel is customized from reading postcards to summarizing travel podcasts. The health and illness topic ranges from learning basic vocabulary with flashcards to discussing healthy lifestyles in detail. In technology, content spans from identifying gadgets to discussing AI's impact. For emotions and feelings, students work from matching feelings with pictures to analyzing character emotions in stories. In conclusion, differentiating content allows all learners to engage with the same topic in ways

that are appropriate to their individual levels, enhancing comprehension, motivation, and participation in English learning.

2. Differentiating Process: How Students Learn

Differentiating the process in English Language Teaching (ELT) means varying how students engage with and internalize content, recognizing that learners have different styles—visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or social. By offering diverse activities such as role-plays, map tasks, podcasts, dialogues, or visual aids, teachers allow students to process language in ways that suit their preferences. This approach enhances engagement, supports deeper understanding, and ensures equitable learning opportunities. Whether students learn best independently or through interaction, process differentiation fosters meaningful participation and helps all learners succeed through paths that match their strengths.

Differentiating the process in ELT involves varying how students engage with and make sense of the content. While the learning objective remains the same for all students, teachers provide a range of instructional strategies that align with students' learning preferences—such as visual, auditory, kinesthetic, interpersonal, or logical styles. This helps students process information in ways that are most effective and meaningful for them. In practice, process differentiation includes designing activities where students interact with the same concept through different modes. For instance, in a lesson on describing people, visual learners may use images, auditory learners may focus on recorded dialogues, and kinesthetic learners may participate in guessing games. Likewise, a giving directions lesson can involve map-based planning, physical classroom movement, or scripted instructions depending on learners' styles. Further examples include students learning making suggestions through video clips, role-plays, or group discussions; and engaging with food and cooking vocabulary by watching, mimicking, or writing recipes. Topics like daily routines, telling time, and weather and seasons are similarly approached with diverse tasks—such as interviews, flashcard sorting, or acting out conditions—to match varied learning modalities. In lessons on likes and dislikes, students may write sentences, use emojis, or create comparison diagrams with peers. For modal verbs, learners might listen to dialogues, read comics, role-play advice booths, or categorize statements. In storytelling, differentiation may include sequencing pictures, retelling from audio, acting out, or filling blanks in a narrative. Overall, differentiating the process in ELT promotes inclusive learning by allowing students to reach common goals through paths that fit their unique learning profiles, fostering better engagement, comprehension, and retention.

3. Differentiating Product: How Students Show What They Know

Differentiating the product in English Language Teaching (ELT) involves offering students various ways to demonstrate their understanding and language skills. Instead of relying solely on traditional tests, teachers can allow students to choose formats like presentations, posters, podcasts, essays, or videos that align with their strengths and learning styles. For example, after studying cultural celebrations, learners might write a report, create a digital infographic, or give an oral presentation. This approach encourages creativity, boosts motivation and confidence, and ensures assessments are more personalized and reflective of each student's abilities, while still aligning with the same learning objectives.

Differentiating the product refers to offering students various options for demonstrating what they have learned. Instead of assigning a one-size-fits-all test or project, teachers provide multiple ways for students to express their understanding. These options may include writing, speaking, drawing, designing, recording videos, or creating digital content. This approach values student choice, supports diverse talents, and recognizes that learners demonstrate knowledge in different ways. The goal of product differentiation is to assess the same learning objectives through varied output formats that match students' individual strengths, learning styles, and interests. This method not only enhances student engagement and creativity but also promotes a more inclusive and meaningful learning environment. When students are allowed to choose how they present what they know, they often take more ownership of their learning and feel more motivated to do their best. In English Language Teaching, product differentiation can be applied to many topics. For example, in a lesson on daily routines, students may choose to draw a comic strip, write a paragraph, record a short video, or create a slideshow presentation. For a unit on favorite foods, they might write a descriptive paragraph, design a menu, make a video cooking show, or give an oral presentation with pictures. When learning to give directions, students can write step-by-step directions on a map, act out a dialogue, or create a blog-style post. Other examples include describing famous people, where students can create a fact sheet, write a biography, role-play, or develop a quiz. In a project about my city, learners may choose to write a postcard, design a brochure, give a spoken tour guide-style presentation, or

make a digital poster. In summary, differentiating the product in ELT empowers students to demonstrate understanding through their preferred modes of expression. This approach encourages creativity, increases motivation, and ensures that assessments are fair and responsive to diverse learning needs—all while achieving the same educational goals.

4. Differentiating Learning Environment: Where and With Whom Students Learn

Differentiating the learning environment in English Language Teaching (ELT) means creating a flexible, supportive, and inclusive classroom—both physically and emotionally—to meet students' diverse needs. This can involve setting up various learning zones such as quiet corners, tech stations, or group discussion areas, and offering multiple participation options in online settings. Emotionally, it includes fostering a safe space where students feel respected, encouraged to take risks, and recognized for their cultural identities. When students feel comfortable and valued, they are more engaged, confident, and better able to develop their language skills effectively.

Differentiating the learning environment means adjusting the physical, emotional, and social aspects of the classroom to meet diverse student needs. It involves creating flexible, supportive, and inclusive spaces where learners feel safe, respected, and motivated. This can include modifying seating, lighting, classroom layout, interaction modes, or online platforms to suit students' preferences, learning styles, and emotional comfort levels. The goal of environmental differentiation is to reduce anxiety, boost engagement, and support focus and well-being. Teachers can offer varied learning zones (e.g., tech area, writing corner, speaking station), allow choice in groupings or interaction styles, and promote a positive atmosphere through affirming language and classroom culture. In online or hybrid settings, flexibility is also key—letting students choose how they participate and providing multiple formats for instruction. Examples include flexible seating, sensory-friendly options like noise-reducing headphones or soft lighting, and choice in how students communicate (e.g., speaking, writing, or typing responses). Other strategies involve celebrating cultural diversity in the classroom decor, allowing movement during lessons, and building a "safe to make mistakes" culture to encourage risk-taking and learning from errors. In short, differentiating the learning environment means shaping the setting—physically and emotionally—to ensure every student feels comfortable, included, and empowered to learn effectively.

The findings from several recent studies strongly support the importance and practical application of differentiated instruction in English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly in the Indonesian context. For instance, (Rofiqoh, 2024) explored how SMPN 3 Bukateja implemented process and product differentiation using Tomlinson's theory and the Merdeka curriculum. Teachers tailored methods like discussions, Q&A, and peer teaching to match students' learning styles and allowed varied assessment outputs such as dialogues or videos. Similarly, (Riyanita et al., 2024) focused on sixth-grade students, including those with special needs, and highlighted content, process, and product differentiation, using worksheets, captioned videos, and inclusive assessments. Meanwhile, (Sofiana et al., 2024) emphasized that teachers were more prepared for product and environment differentiation, but faced challenges with content and process due to limited training and class sizes. In line with these findings, (Religioni et al., 2024) analyzed multiple articles and found that effective differentiation—across all four elements (content, process, product, and environment)—positively influences academic and emotional outcomes.

These findings align well with the practical applications outlined in the current study, which elaborates on differentiated content, such as adapting reading materials on topics like food or travel based on student proficiency, and differentiated processes, like using various modalities (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) for tasks like storytelling or giving directions. In terms of product differentiation, students are offered choices like creating videos, writing biographies or designing menus to demonstrate understanding. Finally, differentiating the learning environment involves creating flexible, inclusive spaces—both physical and digital—where students can choose how they interact, sit, express, and learn based on comfort and sensory needs. This comprehensive approach supports and extends prior research by showing that effective differentiation in ELT enhances engagement, inclusion, and learning outcomes, especially when tailored to the diverse readiness, interests, and learning profiles of students.

In English language teaching, the four components of differentiated instruction—Content, Process, Product, and Learning Environment—do not necessarily have to be implemented simultaneously in every lesson. However, it is ideal for teachers to consider all aspects in an integrated and flexible manner, depending on the learning objectives, classroom conditions, student profiles, and available resources. The essence of differentiated instruction lies in adjusting teaching strategies to accommodate student diversity, and this can be done in stages or selectively. In some situations, teachers may choose to focus on just one or two components, such as content and process. This is especially useful when time is limited, or when

students need more support in understanding the learning material or in how they engage with it. For instance, when teaching a procedural text, a teacher may provide texts of varying difficulty levels (content) and pair students for group activities according to their learning preferences (process). This allows learners to meet the same learning objectives through different means, without overwhelming the instructional design. On the other hand, in larger instructional units such as projects or thematic lessons, it is often more effective to incorporate all four components of differentiated instruction. The content might include materials adapted to different proficiency levels. The process could involve varied learning activities like role-plays, video analysis, or small-group discussions. For the product, students may be allowed to choose their final output—such as an essay, a slideshow presentation, or a short video. Meanwhile, the learning environment can be organized into flexible zones: a quiet corner for reading, a tech zone for digital tasks, and a collaboration space for speaking activities. This comprehensive approach ensures that diverse learners are engaged and supported at every level of the learning experience.

Ultimately, the key to effective differentiated instruction is flexibility and responsiveness to learners' needs. It doesn't mean that every lesson has to be complicated or that every component must be used every time. Rather, it involves a consistent effort to recognize and plan for individual differences so that all students have equal opportunities to succeed. By applying one or more of the four components thoughtfully and strategically, teachers create a more inclusive and dynamic English language classroom. In conclusion, while it is not mandatory to apply content, process, product, and learning environment differentiation all at once, being mindful of these four areas—and integrating them when appropriate—can significantly enhance teaching effectiveness. The ultimate goal is to design instruction that is inclusive, student-centered, and adaptable, allowing every learner to thrive.

4. Conclusion

Differentiated instruction in English Language Teaching (ELT) involves four key components: content, process, product, and learning environment. Differentiating content means tailoring what students learn based on their readiness, interests, and language proficiency, ensuring all learners can access the material in meaningful ways. For example, simpler texts may be used for beginners while advanced learners work with more complex materials, all aimed at achieving the same learning objectives. Differentiating the process focuses on how students engage with the content, using a variety of methods aligned with their learning styles—such as visual aids, audio recordings, games, or role-plays—to help them make sense of the material more effectively. This increases student participation, comprehension, and retention. Differentiating the product allows students to demonstrate their understanding in diverse ways, including writing, drawing, presenting, or using digital tools. This approach honors student choice and creativity while assessing the same goals, fostering ownership of learning, and ensuring fair, inclusive assessment. Lastly, differentiating the learning environment involves shaping the physical and emotional classroom setting to support all learners. Teachers can offer flexible seating, quiet zones, tech-friendly areas, and supportive communication to reduce anxiety and enhance comfort and engagement. This also extends to virtual classrooms, where providing multiple participation options and emotional support is essential. Altogether, these components make instruction more inclusive, responsive, and effective for diverse learners.

Differentiated instruction in English Language Teaching (ELT) is a flexible and inclusive approach that recognizes students' varying abilities, interests, and learning needs. It is structured around four key components: content, process, product, and learning environment. These elements help ensure that all students can access, engage with, and demonstrate an understanding of the material. Teachers do not need to implement all four components in every lesson; instead, they can adapt and combine them based on learning objectives, student profiles, classroom conditions, and available resources. For example, in time-limited lessons, focusing on content and process may be sufficient, while larger projects can incorporate all four components to maximize engagement and support. Ultimately, the effectiveness of differentiated instruction lies in the teacher's ability to respond to diverse learner needs and create a dynamic, student-centered classroom environment.

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