

Differentiation by Design: Optimizing Learning for All!
 Betsy Parrish; Hamline University (bparrish@hamline.edu)
 LINC S Webinar
 April 5, 2022

What do learners bring to the classroom?

1 Experiences with Education	Factors to Consider
Prior formal and/or informal education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of years of schooling (formal or informal) • Experience learning other languages • Comfort with sitting in a classroom
Expectations about learning/teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content, e.g., work readiness, citizenship • Language focus, e.g., grammar, reading, writing, listening, speaking • Approaches to teaching; group/pair work • Willingness, comfort, and ability to speak up in class • Views of teacher as expert • Student-teacher roles; differing norms of student-teacher interactions, inside and outside of class
Literacy skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First and second language literacy • Pre-literate, non-literate, or low-literate (Table 5.1) • Ease with digital literacy
2 Cultural Background	Factors to Consider
Classroom behaviors and expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View of teacher as expert • Differing norms regarding pair/group work • Differing norms of student-teacher interactions, inside and outside of class • Roles related to gender and age
Tensions among groups in the class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political unrest between students' countries of origin • Tension between different clans from the same culture • Status within country of origin
First/primary language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similarities or differences with English or other first languages in class, e.g., Spanish has far more in common with English than does Chinese
3 Individual Factors	Factors to Consider
Identity and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of sense of belonging in the new country, community, and in the class
Obstacles to learning <i>Another box for presence, ability to attend to learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Dis)abilities • Health and mental health • Un/employment status • Experiences of trauma, violence or abuse • Worries, concerns, stressors beyond classroom
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for learning English: personal, professional or academic • Voluntary learning vs. compulsory learning • Vision learners have for themselves; self-concept as learners
Personality/ways of being in the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introverted vs. extroverted • Analytical vs. intuitive • Degree of flexibility with trying new ways of learning
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on attention span, eye sight, hearing • Physical stamina: ability to sit, stand, move about
Preferred approach to learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preference for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - saying and doing things - writing everything down - observing demonstrations - individual vs. group work
4 Situational Factors	Factors to Consider
Situation in the new country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of time in the country • Workload, family demands • Part-time or full-time student • Socioeconomic condition • Housing conditions and food security • Racism, xenophobia • Discrimination based on sexual orientation
Access to English outside of class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time and effort devoted and available to learning English outside of class • Amount of input in English from online sources, television, radio, family, friends, or coworkers • Opportunities for meaningful interaction in English outside of class • Facility with and availability of technologies for learning (e.g., high-speed Internet for accessing learning tools or videos)

Parrish (2019) pp. 215-216

Dimensions of Differentiation

What we need to modify . . .	Based on learner . . .
<p>Content: What do learners need to know and understand? This can include content knowledge such as economics or numeracy, as well as the language learners need to be successful in a lesson/unit.</p> <p>Process: What approach allows learners to make sense of the content?</p> <p>Product: How do learners demonstrate what they have learned?</p>	<p>Readiness: How well prepared are learners for the content, skills, and language demands of classroom tasks?</p> <p>Interest: What content, knowledge, and skills will be of most interest to learners and, by extension, motivate them?</p> <p>Affect: How might learner attitudes, emotions, or feelings affect learning?</p> <p>Learning profile: How do learners approach learning? How might learning preferences or cultural expectations about teaching and learning roles vary among learners?</p>

(Tomlinson and Imbeau 2010: 15–17)

Community Involvement lesson from *Teaching the Skills that Matter in Adult Education* toolkit

<https://lincs.ed.gov/sites/default/files/TSTM-CivEdIntContLearn-508.pdf>

References

Bell, J. (2012). Teaching mixed level classes. In Burns, A. & Richards, J. C. (Eds.). *The Cambridge guide to pedagogy and practice in second language teaching* (pp. 86-94). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Bell, J. (2004). *Teaching multilevel classes in ESL, 2nd Edition*. Toronto, Ontario: Pippin Publishing and Dominie Press.

Parrish, B. (2019) *Teaching adult English language learners: A practical introduction*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tomlinson, C. (2014). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners, 2nd Edition*. Alexandria: ASCD.

Tomlinson, C., & Imbeau, M. (2010). *Leading and managing a differentiated classroom*. Alexandria: ASCD.