# Differentiated Learning in Diverse Students to Meet Curriculum Targets

**Intan Putri Nur Zulaikha[1], Anita Fatimatul Laeli[2]***

[1]Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember; intanputri414@gmail.com
[2]Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember; anitafatimatul@unmuhjember.ac.id

**Abstract:** The diversity of students in the classroom also indicates the diversity of their needs. Recognizing the needs of different student's curriculum targets are adjusted based on developmental phases. To accommodate the diverse needs of students differentiated learning needs to be done in the classroom. Differentiated learning is an effort to adjust the learning process according to the readiness of students, interests, and student profiles obtained by educators from the results of diagnostic assessments. The objective of this paper is to compile a range of literature pertaining to how the practice of differentiated learning can align with the objectives set by the curriculum. The literature cited in this paper, which focuses on differentiated learning, comprises works that were published between 2018 and 2022. The findings from a review of several pieces of literature on differentiated learning indicate that differentiated learning can be done in one aspect or four aspects, there are content, process, product, and learning environment. Additionally, differentiated learning can increase students' motivation and engagement in the learning process. However, the effective implementation of differentiated learning requires a planned approach that is tailored to the context and characteristics of the class as well as the abilities and needs of the students.

**Keywords:** Differentiated learning, curriculum fulfillment

## INTRODUCTION

Indeed, each individual is different from one another. In the view of Islam, contained in surat Al-Hujurat mentioned that humans are created differently. "O, people! We have created you from a male and a female, then made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most honorable of you in the sight of Allah is the most God-fearing. Indeed, Allah Is All-Knowing, All-Knowing". Although each of them is different in its nature and background, God created man in the best form (Kajian Al-Qur et al., n.d.). This verse gives the information that every human being is born perfect and has a uniqueness that is different from other humans depending on the experience and maturity of thought that he has. In the education context, teachers must understand this diversity. Because every student in the class must be different from one another. Looking at the diversity that exists in the classroom a teacher should understand that every child is unique, they have different dreams, intelligence, talents, and abilities.

This is in line with the vision of Ki Hadjar Dewantara on the basis of education related to the nature of human nature. The nature of human nature according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara is the natural environment where humans live (geography), tribe, and culture that they have, and includes the basic character of students who are attached to it such as discipline, responsible, diligence, honest, lazy, shy, timid, passive and so on (Gusti Agung Made Gede Mudana Jurusan Pendidikan Agama dan Bahasa Bali & Mpu Kuturan Singaraja, 2019). Ki Hadjar Dewantara expressed his thought on education that should pay attention to the nature of human nature so it will lead to freedom of education. Which include the freedom to develop ideas, think creatively, and develop talents or interests of each human being (Marisyah et al., 2019). The same thing was revealed by scientist Urie Bronfenbrenner said that every child has different interests, talents, and cognitive abilities depending on the cultural background in which they grew up (Faiz et al., 2022). Minister of education and culture Muhadjir Effendi in his speech (2018) revealed: "a child who is not good at mathematics, does not mean he does not have expertise in other fields, this is where the role of teachers to be able to direct students

to explore their potential and talent because they have uniqueness, then teachers should not be judges of their inability".

Indonesian education is currently intensifying the learning of a new paradigm. That is, the practice of student-centered learning, in which each student learns according to their needs and phase of development. In the new paradigm, the learning development framework is a continuous cycle. Namely mapping of competency standards, independent learning, and minimal competency assessment. Thus, it provides flexibility for teachers to design teaching and assessment tools following the characteristics and needs of students (Asesmen dan Pembelajaran Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan dan Perbukuan Kementerian Pendidikan & Teknologi Jakarta, 2021). The reference standard for competence in learning the new paradigm is learning achievement (CP). CP is a learning competency that must be achieved by students at each stage of development for each subject in early childhood education, primary education, and Secondary Education. Learning outcomes contain a set of competencies and a scope of material that is compiled comprehensively in the form of narration. Mapping learning outcomes are divided into age phases to adjust the stage of development of learners (Dasar & Menengah, n.d.).

With the adjustments that must be made to the new paradigm of learning, to achieve the target curriculum, differentiated learning is carried out. Differentiated learning is an important learning process in today's 21st century. Where learning activities in the classroom are differentiated and adjusted to each characteristic of learners. Characteristics of learners can be mapped from 3 aspects, namely readiness of learning, the profile of learners, and the interest of learners. Differentiated learning is not individualized learning. However, more inclined to learn that accommodate the strengths and needs of students with independent learning strategies (*View of Optimalisasi Kebutuhan Murid Dan Hasil Belajar Dengan Pembelajaran Berdiferensiasi*, n.d.). Differentiated learning is not something new in the field of World Education. Unfortunately, in Indonesia, there are still many teachers who do not understand the importance and practice of the application of differentiated learning. Research related to differentiation learning is still limited, hence this paper aims to collect various literature related to how differentiation learning can meet curriculum targets.

## METHOD

The method used is a literature review. Authors collect data or sources obtained from books, journals, the internet, and other literature into a literature review. The author uses literature published in 2018-2022 that contains the theme of differentiated learning. Literature Review this is written narratively by grouping similar extraction data according to the results measured to answer the purpose. Research journals that match the theme are then collected and made Journal summaries.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Differentiated learning is an attempt to adjust the learning process in the classroom to meet the learning needs of learners as individuals (Tomlinson, 2001). Or it can be said that differentiated learning is learning that is customized to facilitate the learning needs of diverse learners to explore and strengthen their potential following learning readiness, interests, and learning profiles of each learner.

Differentiated learning is very student-centered because teachers will create a learning environment that supports learners to learn and work hard to achieve high learning goals. Students will also clearly know their learning objectives. On assessment, will be conducted sustainably. Teachers will respond to the results of learning needs from previous achievements and adjust further learning activities. Whether a slow learner needs to use different sources, different means, and different assignments and assessments. In differentiated learning, effective classroom management will be created by creating procedures, routines, and methods that allow flexibility. But also a clear structure, so that although it is possible to carry out different activities, classes can still run effectively.

According To Tomlinson (2001) (Tomlinson, 2001): differentiated learning has four characteristics, namely:

1. Learning focuses on key concepts and principles. Must focus on basic learning competencies.
2. Evaluation of student's readiness and learning development is accommodated into the curriculum; here, it is necessary to map the needs of students and then incorporated them into learning strategies.
3. The grouping of learners is done flexibly; for example, it can be independent, grouped by intelligence level, grouped by learning modality, etc.

4. Students actively explore under the guidance and direction of teachers. This differentiated learning is student-centered.

**Mapping Student Needs**

Mapping of learning readiness of learners can be done by conducting a diagnostic assessment at the beginning of learning. According To Tomlinson, there are three aspects to mapping the learning needs of learners (Tomlinson, 2001).

1. Learning Readiness of Learners

Learning readiness is the capacity to learn new material (Pratama, 2022). A task that takes into account the student's level of preparedness will take the student out of their comfort zone, but with the right learning environment, and adequate support, they can still master the new material (Marlina et al., n.d.). mentioned that readiness can see how far students understand the material to be delivered by the teacher.

Tomlinson adopted a tool called an equalizer to measure the level of readiness of learners. (Tomlinson, 2001)

a. Fundamental-transformative

If learners are in the stage where it still takes time to implement a new idea, then the materials they use and the tasks they perform should be fundamental and presented in a way that helps them build a solid foundation of understanding. When learners can face new ideas and he can connect with other ideas then learners like this need materials and tasks that are more transformative.

b. Concrete-Abstract

On other occasions, teachers may be able to measure students learning readiness to learn by seeing if they are still at the level they need to learn concretely or are ready to move on to learn something more abstract.

c. Simple-Complex

Some learners may need to work with simpler material with one abstraction at a time; others may be able to handle the complexity of various abstractions.

d. Structured-Open Ended

Sometimes learners need to complete tasks that are laid out well enough for them, where they don't have too many decisions to make. Other times, however, learners are ready to explore and use their creativity.

e. Dependent – Independent

Although in the end, we expect that all our students can learn, think and produce work independently, just like height, maybe one child will grow taller faster than others. In other words, some learners may be ready for independence earlier than others.

f. Slow-Fast

Some learners with good proficiency in a subject may need to move quickly through the material they have mastered or challenge it a little. But at other times, the same learners will probably need more time than others to learn another topic.

2. The interest of the learners

Throughout the year, different learners will show interest in different topics. The idea of differentiating through interest is to "connect" learners to the lesson to keep their interest. A teacher who keeps the interest of students remains high is expected to improve the performance of learners. Mapping of learners from the aspect of interest can be interpreted by recognizing students by doing meaningful learning. After that stimulate new ideas that arise from individual students who are connected to the information known by the students (Trias et al., 2022). Some examples of ideas that can be done to increase and maintain interest include:

a. Asking learners to choose whether they want to demonstrate understanding by writing songs, performing or dancing, or other forms as per their interest.

b. Using Jigsaw techniques and cooperative learning.

c. Use an interest-based group investigation strategy.

d. Create a "day at work" activity. Students are asked to learn how a particular skill is applied in real life. They can choose a profession that suits their interests.

3. Learning profile of learners

The learner's learning profile is related to many factors, such as language, culture, health, family circumstances, and other specificities. It also has to do with a person's learning style. This learner's learning profile is the learner's preferred approach to learning, which is influenced by thinking style, intelligence, culture, background, gender, etc.

The purpose of identifying or mapping the learning needs of learners based on the learning profile is to provide opportunities for learners to learn naturally and efficiently. Nevertheless, as teachers, sometimes we unintentionally tend to choose a learning modality that corresponds to our learning modality. We know that every child has a learning profile. Having awareness of this is essential so that teachers can vary their teaching methods and approaches. (*GURU BERBAGI | Mengenal Keragaman Dan Keunikan Murid Melalui Pembelajaran Berdiferensiasi,* n.d.)

**Aspects of differentiated learning**

Differentiated learning not only focuses on learning products (results of assignments, exams, etc.) but also focuses on other aspects of differentiation, namely the process and also the content/material. The application of these aspects of differentiation learning can be applied to almost all subjects.

Differentiated learning has 4 (four) aspects.

1. Content/contents

The teacher will make modifications in learning, in this aspect the teacher can see the readiness of what students learn. In the content aspect in the application of differentiation learning, a teacher differentiates related to the material that will be learned by students in the learning process. Teachers can make differences or adjustments by considering the mapping of the learning needs of students in aspects of learning readiness, aspects of student interest, and aspects of student learning profile or a combination of all three.

Ways that content differentiation can be implemented well:

a. First, the context. That is content that connects learning materials with real-life contexts experienced by students.
b. Second, learning content challenges students to think critically by gathering information and then applying knowledge through discussion.
c. Third, do not deviate from the big theme. Although differentiation is done by dividing into small themes to suit the needs of students, the material must still be related to the main theme.
d. Fourth, designing learning in a content approach enhances collaboration by stimulating student inquiry and conversation with teachers.
e. Fifth, do apperception when going to start learning activities.
f. Sixth, create interactive learning experiences and easy-to-understand experiments.

2. Process

Process differentiation strategy refers to how students will understand, and interpret the information or material to be learned. How to fulfill or process that needs to be prepared. Teachers must know the readiness of students to learn independently or in groups.

In the process of differentiation, teachers need to provide learning assistance to students. The teacher has to see which students need to have help in learning, it can be done with guide questions. Whether students can learn independently. This is a scenario planned by the teacher. How to do this strategy for example:

a. Activities are tiered, all students work on building the same understanding and skills. It is done with the support and challenges of different complexes.
b. Providing guiding questions or challenges, will encourage students to explore a variety of materials that are being studied according to students' interests. Guide questions are adjusted to the student's ability level.
c. Create an individual agenda for students. The teacher creates tasks for students to work on as general work for the whole class and work related to individual tasks.
d. Vary the length of time to complete the task, provide additional support, and encourage students to take advantage of the time so that students can study the topic in depth.

   e.   Develop varied activities. Accommodates learning styles. Visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.

   f.   Using flexible groupings according to readiness, ability, and interest.

3.  Products

     Product differentiation is distinguishing the products or results of student work. Its form can take the form of essays, writings, test results, performances, presentations, speeches, recordings, diagrams, and so on. Differentiating products can be done in various ways by considering the learning needs of students first before giving product assignments. Product assignments should help students individually or in groups, redefine or extend what they learn over a period (one semester or one year). The product is very important because it represents understanding and application in a broad form, the product is also an element of the curriculum that students can directly have. The teacher needs to determine the expectations of the student's product, among which determine: 1) What quality of work is desirable; 2) what content should be present in the product; 3) How to work on it; 4) What properties of the final product are expected. (*GURU BERBAGI | Mengenal Keragaman Dan Keunikan Murid Melalui Pembelajaran Berdiferensiasi*, n.d.)

4.  Learning environment

     In the learning process, the learning environment is one of the important things. The learning environment is a condition, influence, and stimuli that come from outside, which influence learners, where these things also include several things such as physical, social, and intellectual influences (Suprayogi, 2022).

The learning environment can optimize the physical and psychological condition of the class. Classroom conditions that support learning will help students to learn alone or in groups, then the teacher can also control the class to be conducive to learning, for example, such as giving the task of a topic discussion group, making students have an opinion according to their respective sources, and creating a quiet classroom. Differentiated learning must be built with a "learning community" or learning community that is a community whose members are all learners. Teachers will develop their students to acquire attitudes and practices that always support the learning environment (*GURU BERBAGI | STATEGI PELAKSANAAN PEMBELAJARAN BERDIFERENSIASI*, n.d.)

**Teaching strategies in differentiated learning**

     Teaching strategies are techniques, methods, or Educational Planning regarding classroom activities or interactions so that learning can be effective and can achieve learning targets prepared by teachers before teaching (Suprayogi, 2022). A teaching strategy is an effort or strategy undertaken by teachers to encourage learners to learn actively and have high motivation. The design of teaching strategies must be able to encourage learners to observe, analyze, create hypotheses, voice their opinions, explore their knowledge, and find solutions.

     The teaching strategy is planning to achieve learning targets prepared by teachers before teaching. One class session can consist of several learning objectives. The time for each class is limited. Therefore, in the teaching strategy, each learning activity must have more than one function and meet more than one learning objective, so teachers must combine several learning objectives into one learning activity so that all learning objectives will be able to be achieved in one class session. Teaching strategies help teachers to structure the learning process to enable the fulfillment of all learning objectives through activities in the classroom in a limited time.

## CONCLUSION

     With the existence of children's diversity, our job as educators must recognize differences and encourage students to maximize their potential to achieve curriculum targets that have been set comprehensively according to the stage of Student Development. In the classroom, each child has different characteristics, it can be seen from the readiness of learning (readiness), interests, and student profiles. To detect the diversity of students teachers can do mapping by doing a diagnostic assessment. Diverse learners have diverse needs as well. The role of educators in this case is as a facilitator to meet the learning needs of each learner according to their characteristics. To focus on each learner in one class at the same time, differentiated learning must be successfully carried out. The application of differentiation can be in one aspect between content, process, product, or learning environment. Or all four at the same time. The selection of

differentiation can be adjusted to the needs of students according to the diagnostic assessment that has been carried out. The learning strategy is chosen by paying attention to the principles of student-centered learning hence teachers and learners can cooperatively achieve curriculum targets.

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