



THE IMPACT OF APPLYING AN INDIVIDUAL APPROACH IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING ON READING STRATEGIES AND SPEECH DEVELOPMENT

Israilova Shabnam Juraboyevna

Doctoral Student, Chirchik State Pedagogical University

Abstract

This article analyzes methods of developing students' oral skills through differentiated tasks in English classes. It emphasizes the effectiveness of interactive techniques, texts of different complexity, and the use of digital technologies.

Keywords: Differentiated tasks, oral speech, English language, reading, interactive methods.

Аннотация:

В статье анализируются методы развития устной речи студентов посредством дифференцированных заданий на занятиях по английскому языку. Освещается эффективность применения интерактивных методов, текстов различной сложности и цифровых технологий.

Ключевые слова: дифференцированные задания, устная речь, английский язык, чтение, интерактивные методы.

Introduction

Nowadays, learning a foreign language and being able to express one's thoughts through this language is extremely important. In particular, the ability to speak freely and fluently in a foreign language — “speaking” — is considered one of the main components of the entire language learning process. However, each student may face different challenges in mastering the language, and their



abilities, levels of comprehension, and interests also vary. Therefore, applying an individual approach is one of the essential strategies in language teaching.

An individual approach implies organizing the educational process in accordance with the needs and unique characteristics of each student. Every learner develops at a different pace and learns effectively through different methods. This approach is especially significant in the process of learning to speak in a foreign language, since each student has different pronunciation abilities, levels of confidence in speaking, and attitudes toward the language.

Therefore, in language teaching, effective learning can be achieved by understanding the needs of each student and selecting methods that suit them. An **individual approach** refers to organizing the educational process while taking into account students' unique characteristics. The main principle of this approach is to consider each learner's abilities, level of knowledge, interests, personal traits, and attitude toward language learning. For example, some students quickly memorize new words and strive to use them in speech, while others may struggle with vocabulary retention. One learner may feel comfortable during conversations, whereas another may become nervous when speaking with others. Thus, finding the right approach for each student is of great importance.

In language teaching—especially in developing *speaking skills*—the significance of an individual approach increases even further. This is because speaking is the practical component of language, and it plays a crucial role in developing learners' ability to communicate fluently in a foreign language. To foster speaking skills, teachers need to use methods that encourage active participation and enhance learners' abilities. Relying on an individual approach helps students engage more actively in the classroom and feel more confident in their learning process.

When an individual approach is applied in developing oral communication skills, it allows for a more comprehensive understanding and improvement of students' abilities. As Blackburn and Pennell (2018) emphasize, the idea of differentiated instruction is based on recognizing that learners differ in various aspects, including “abilities, interests, learning styles, talents, strengths, and weaknesses.” Therefore, the teacher's task is to create a classroom environment where speaking skills are prioritized and students are given opportunities to practice speaking.



This approach has several key advantages in foreign language learning, particularly in teaching speaking:

1. Increasing Motivation: When lessons are aligned with students' interests, their motivation to learn a language grows. For example, if a learner is interested in technology and is given opportunities to engage in conversations on this topic, they will feel more comfortable and approach language learning with greater enthusiasm.

2. Adapting to Ability Levels: Each learner differs in pronunciation, vocabulary range, and speaking speed. Through an individual approach, the pace and complexity of activities can be adjusted to suit each student's capacity. For instance, some learners prefer to speak slowly, while others can speak more quickly. Teachers can design exercises tailored to these differences.

3. Personalized Instruction: Since each learner is unique, using customized teaching methods enables teachers to meet individual needs effectively. Conducting one-on-one conversations with certain students, for example, can boost their self-confidence and encourage them to speak more.

Moreover, as Noviska and Anastasia (2023) note, kinesthetic learners—those who learn better through practical experiences and movement—benefit from activities such as experiments, simulations, role-plays, or physical exercises. For auditory learners, who prefer learning through listening and speaking, strategies such as debates, oral presentations, discussions, or audio recordings can be effective.

4. Developing Strengths and Addressing Weaknesses: An individual approach allows teachers to analyze each student's strengths and weaknesses and use targeted methods for improvement. For example, a student with good pronunciation but limited vocabulary needs different support compared to one with a broad vocabulary but poor pronunciation. Teachers can design tasks tailored to these needs for individuals or small groups.



5. Considering Learners' Specific Needs: An individual approach requires fully accounting for students' goals. Some may focus on fluent spoken communication, while others may prioritize academic writing. Therefore, teachers must design activities aligned with each learner's objectives.

To successfully implement an individual approach, teachers should employ several practical strategies, adapted to students' needs and aimed at fostering their development:

1. Studying and Analyzing Learners: Before teaching, teachers must carefully assess each student's level, abilities, and interests. This helps identify learners' strengths and weaknesses, enabling the design of suitable teaching methods. For example, holding individual interviews can reveal areas where students face challenges and provide a basis for solutions. According to Andini, differentiated instruction involves adapting the curriculum so that children of varying abilities can learn together in the same classroom.

2. Developing Individual Learning Plans: Teachers should prepare personalized learning plans for each student, tailored to their knowledge level and needs. For instance, a learner with weak pronunciation might require special pronunciation exercises, while another aiming to improve fluency might need speed-focused activities. As Tomlinson (2005) successful implementation of individualized instruction requires comprehensive and well-structured professional development programs in educational institutions.

3. Using Active and Interactive Methods: Engaging students in discussions and interactive activities during lessons is crucial. Role-plays, problem-solving debates, and group activities encourage learners to communicate more, enhance interest in learning, and strengthen speaking skills.

4. Incorporating Interactive Technologies and Multimedia Tools: Multimedia and interactive technologies are highly effective for individual approaches. Online platforms or mobile applications can offer exercises adapted to learners'



styles, while virtual collaboration spaces and online discussion rooms allow students to practice communication in real-life contexts.

5. Reflection and Outcome Analysis: At the end of lessons, discussing results with students and analyzing progress is essential. Reflection helps students identify weaknesses, set goals, and gain a clearer understanding of how to further develop their speaking abilities. According to Marlina (2019), the main purpose of differentiated instruction is to support all learners in their educational journey. Thus, by better understanding students' capabilities, teachers can help them achieve their learning objectives.

Applying an individual approach in teaching oral communication holds great significance. Since each learner possesses distinct abilities and needs, choosing appropriate methods increases the effectiveness of the educational process. An individual approach enhances students' motivation, strengthens their interest in mastering the language, and creates conditions for developing their speaking abilities effectively.

Encouraging learners to be independent and responsible in language learning, while considering their needs and abilities, leads to higher outcomes. An individual approach serves as a fundamental tool for providing personalized instruction, helping students acquire a language more quickly and effectively, with reading skills playing an integral role in this process.

Therefore, strategies aimed at developing oral communication through an individual approach and reading skills must be adapted to each student, ensuring active participation in the learning process. By fostering reading competence, the individual approach can significantly improve learners' oral communication abilities. Through reading, students acquire new vocabulary and grammatical structures, which they later apply in speaking. The individual approach, in turn, ensures that reading materials are selected according to learners' abilities, making comprehension and processing more effective.

Reading is one of the most efficient means of expanding vocabulary. Teachers must select reading materials suited to learners' abilities and needs. For example, one student may easily understand literary texts, while another may struggle with



scientific articles. An individual approach ensures that appropriate materials are chosen for each learner.

Reading strategies (such as predicting, visualizing, summarizing, and retelling) help learners understand texts more deeply and apply knowledge in oral communication. Retelling or expressing opinions based on what they have read contributes to developing speaking skills. Within an individual approach, learners can adopt and apply the strategies most suited to their needs.

Finally, considering students' interests when selecting learning materials not only increases their motivation for language learning but also supports oral communication development. Learners are more eager to speak about topics they find engaging, making their language learning experience more effective and meaningful.

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