

Session A Key Input: Lecture 2
Teaching Heterogenous L2 Students: Strategies
Lecture Transcript

Hello Everyone! My name is Sari Karmina. In the previous lecture, I discussed about the definition of heterogenous class and the challenges and potentials of heterogenous class.

The last point that I will address is the strategies in dealing with heterogenous class. There are two strategies that I will discuss in this lecture: *differentiated instruction* and *cooperative learning*.

Let's discuss the first one. Differentiated instruction is an approach to teaching that allows teachers to create tasks to cater the students' needs with different learning styles and English proficiency. Bowler and Parminter (2002) proposed Tiered Tasks, which resembles a wedding cake, to be used in English class with mixed ability students. The tasks are designed to suit weak, average, and strong learners.

The bottom tier which has no pillars is for the strong students. You can give your strong students tasks that are challenging. In a reading class, for instance, you can give them additional open-ended questions about the text that require them to use critical thinking. The middle tier is for the average students. These students will need a little support from you or from the strong students. You can provide them with choices to answer the reading text questions. The top tier is for the weak students. These students full support from you and the average and strong students. You can ask them very easy questions. Alternatively, you can provide the answers for them to check.

Now, I will discuss the second strategy, cooperative learning. Cooperative Learning occurs when a heterogenous, mutual, and cooperative small group works on a structured activity to accomplish a joint goal (Dyson, 2002). To establish an effective group, you need to create a group consisting of weak, average, and strong students, different gender, motivation, and background. Cooperative learning developers have created cooperative learning techniques that will make everyone in the class an accountable student. One technique that I will share here is Jigsaw developed by Elliot Aronson and his colleagues at the University of Texas (Aronson, et al., 1978). Here is an example of how you conduct Jigsaw technique in your reading class.

- Create a heterogenous Home Group. a group consisting of weak, average, and strong students, different gender, motivation, and background.
- Divide a text into several paragraphs. One paragraph is for one group.
- Assign the group to discuss the paragraph. Ask the strong student to be the coach. Make sure that everyone understands the paragraph. The objective is to make weak students become accountable and make everyone accountable.
- After every member understands the content of the paragraph. Create an Expert Group. An expert group consists of everyone in the Home Group. Thus, there will be an expert of paragraph 1, paragraph 2, and so on.
- Assigns students to coach his/her piece of paragraph.
- After everyone in the expert group becomes an expert of the whole text, they return to their Home Group. In the home group, they can then share what they learn from the expert group.

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- Finally, to check the students' comprehension on the text, assess all students on the content.

This is the end of Lecture 1. We have covered the definition of heterogenous class, the challenges and potential of it, and the strategies to deal with heterogenous class. Thanks for watching.

References

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(EMI and EAP Teacher Development)