



## **UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLES OF DIFFERENTIATE LEARNING: OPTIMIZING THE POTENTIAL OF EVERY STUDENT IN CLASS**

Ernati<sup>1</sup>, Siti Mayang Sari<sup>2</sup>, Akmaluddin<sup>3</sup>, Lili Kasmini<sup>4</sup>  
<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> University Bina Bangsa Getsempena , Banda Aceh, Indonesia

\* Corresponding email: [erniati0107@gmail.com](mailto:erniati0107@gmail.com)

### **ABSTRACT**

There are differences in each individual student, so different learning is needed to meet different learning needs. The purpose of this study is to explain differentiation learning in optimizing students' potential. This study uses the historical research method with data sources in the form of research journals that have been published and have relevance to the title of this article. Literature study data collection techniques by searching online related to relevant journals. Data analysis was carried out in a qualitative descriptive manner. Differentiated learning is an attempt to condition the learning process in the classroom so that it meets the individual learning needs of each student. The teacher must adapt the needs of students to the learning process. There are three strategies for implementing differentiated learning, namely content differentiation, process differentiation and product differentiation. These three strategies must be adapted to aspects of learning readiness, interests and student learning profiles. The application of differentiated learning results in an increase in student learning activities, both activeness and the level of student participation during the learning process. Some of the obstacles to the implementation of differentiated learning are when grouping students according to learning interests, profiles and learning readiness, the application of content differentiation in learning, and in the assessment process, and time management in the learning product projects that are made.

**Keywords:** *Differentiated Learning, Potential, Students*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System Chapter 1 Article 1 states that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential, to have a spiritual spirit of religion, self-control, personality, noble character, as well as the skills needed by himself, society, nation and state. To achieve the goals of national education, a curriculum is developed. In the latest curriculum compiled by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, namely the independent curriculum which is used in 2,500 schools in 34 provinces and 111 districts/cities which has started in the 2021/2022 school year. One of the differences between the independent curriculum and the previous curriculum is that the independent curriculum does not set a Minimum Completeness Standard (SKM) score.

The effectiveness of the success of learning objectives depends on various factors, including the involvement of an educator in the teaching process, because an educator can directly influence, develop and improve the intelligence and skills of his students. Teachers are expected to have appropriate learning methods and meet teaching requirements. Various cases in the field found that teachers have good mastery of subject matter but are unable to carry out learning activities properly. This happens because these activities are not based on selecting the right learning model so that the learning outcomes achieved by students are still low (Husni et al., n.d.).

In essence the learning process is an interaction between teachers and students in a learning environment. The task of a teacher is to condition the learning environment so that it can support changes in behavior in students. There are six things that affect the activeness of students in the classroom, namely: students, teachers, material, place, time, and facilities. The role of a teacher is needed in the process of activities in a class, activities in the class can be designed by the teacher according to the desired learning objectives. The activeness of students makes the learning process run smoothly according to the lesson plan that has been prepared by the teacher.

The teacher's efforts in developing the activeness of the learning process of students in the classroom are by arousing students' learning motivation, increasing students' interests and talents, planning learning activities that involve students, and using appropriate media in the learning process. This is important for teachers to pay attention to because the activeness of students affects the development of students' thinking, social, and emotional abilities. For independent curriculum learning there is no longer teacher centered, but instead of being student centered all learning patterns refer to the activeness of

students in achieving learning goals. Therefore, teachers are advised to always provide motivation to students so that they can be interactive in the classroom during the learning process.

The inactivity of students in the class can be influenced by several factors, including internal factors and external factors. Internal factors, namely the state of students that causes a lack of activity in the learning process, for example: lack of persistence, tenacity; the health conditions of students who are disturbed during the learning process; the pleasure and habit of the students' interest in learning have not yet appeared; and the teacher's enthusiasm in providing learning motivation to students who have not been significantly felt by students.

As for external factors, for example: the relationship between the teacher and the students, the lack of the teacher's habit of giving praise to good activities carried out by students, too often giving punishments, or appropriate reprimands to students, students who do not show interest in the learning media used by the teacher during the learning process, as well as the methods used are less fun and do not increase students' interest in learning, besides that learning is applied monotonously so that it can make students quickly appear bored and bored with students, inadequate educational facilities and infrastructure so that students cannot maximize learning abilities so that students cannot explore all their potential.

The developmental needs of each individual are different from the needs of other individuals, so different learning is needed to meet different learning needs. According to Jenyana differentiated learning is learning in favor of students (Sutrisno, 2023). Differentiated learning is not individual learning but classical learning but in its activities prioritizes differentiation in class, pays attention to existing differences, carries out all supporting activities to achieve maximum learning goals without changing the individual student personality.

Differentiated learning is a process or philosophy for effective teaching by providing a variety of ways to understand new information for all students in their diverse classroom community, including ways to: acquire content; processing, building, or reasoning ideas; and developing learning products and assessment measures so that all students in a classroom of diverse abilities can learn effectively. The process of differentiating lessons is carried out to answer the learning needs, styles, or interests of each student.

innovation is motivated by differences in students' learning needs. The philosophy put forward by Kihajar Dewantara that the aim of education is to guide all the natures that exist in children so that they can achieve the highest safety and happiness, as human beings and members of society. Based on this

philosophy, the teacher's duty is to guide the growth of the natural strength that exists in students so that they can improve their behavior (Qulsum, 2022).

Differentiation learning means combining all heterogeneity to obtain information, form ideas and express the things that are learned. Differentiation learning creates a diverse classroom by providing opportunities to get content, process an idea and improve the results of each student, so that students will learn more effectively. Differentiation learning is done in a variety of ways to make sense of new information for all students in its diverse classroom community, including ways to: acquire content, process, construct, or reason ideas; and developing learning products and evaluation measures so that all students in a classroom of diverse abilities can learn effectively. Apart from that, it also ensures that every student in the class knows that there will always be support for them throughout the process.

Differentiated learning is an innovation in itself because it accommodates all student differences, is open to all and meets the needs of each individual. The diversity of each individual student must always be considered, because each student grows in a different environment and culture according to the geographical conditions where they live. (Sasmito, 2022) Tomlinson stated that the learning needs of students are categorized based on at least 3 aspects, namely

- 1) Readiness of students;
- 2) Student interest;
- 3) Student learning profile.

As teachers, we all know that students will perform better if the tasks given are in accordance with the skills and understanding they previously had (readiness to learn). Then if these tasks trigger curiosity or desire in a student.

There are 3 differentiated learning strategies, namely: content differentiation, process differentiation, and product differentiation.

a. Content Differentiation

Related to what is taught to students by considering the mapping of student learning needs both in aspects of learning readiness, aspects of student interest and aspects of student learning profiles or a combination of the three.

b. Process Differentiation

In this activity the teacher needs to understand whether students will study in groups or independently. The teacher determines the amount of assistance to be given to students. Who are the students who need help and who are the students who need guiding questions

that can then be studied independently. All of these things must be considered in the learning scenarios that will be designed.

c. Product Differentiation

The product is the result of work or performance that must be shown to the teacher. A product is something that exists in the form of essays, writings, test results, performances, presentations, speeches, recordings, diagrams, and so on. The most important thing is that this product must reflect students' understanding related to the expected learning objectives

Learning models using traditional and progressive methods, it is time to be shifted and replaced with existing learning methods in modern education. This is due to the awareness that the learning process carried out by students and teaching carried out by the teacher will be more successful and effective if students can play an active role when learning takes place. This study aims to obtain information about the principle of differentiated learning in optimizing students' potential.

## **METHODS**

This study uses historical research/documentary study methods with data sources in the form of research journals that have been published and have relevance to the title of this article. Literature study data collection techniques by searching online for relevant journals. Data analysis was carried out in a qualitative descriptive manner, namely providing an explanation of the results of the research that had been carried out.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The development of new innovations in the world of education requires concrete efforts to encourage reform in education, curriculum, teaching methods, and organization (Priatmoko, 2018). The results of the class action research by (Eviana, 2023) by applying differentiated learning show there is a satisfactory increase in learning outcomes where all students have completed learning, which means there is an increase in student activity in discussing expressing opinions and understanding the material well studied. Teachers have been able to carry out learning well, creating a lively classroom atmosphere that is no longer monotonous, creating fun learning for students.

Learning practices using differentiated learning methods through the Problem Based Learning learning model can optimize student learning activities and outcomes. The application of differentiated learning results in an increase in student learning activities, both activeness and the level of student participation during the learning process. Students following the learning

process well work well together in completing LKPD. Students are happy and enthusiastic about participating in differentiation learning . Differentiated learning is applied , namely paying attention to students' learning needs based on learning styles so that students are very motivated and really like learning with media such as videos, pictures and objects around them (Muslimin & Aprianto, 2023).

The use of differentiated learning has an immediate impact when the teacher pays attention to three learning styles. The achievement of the material for each student tends to be the same and has implications for increasing student activity in the classroom. Three types of learning styles in differentiated learning are: Kinesthetic (Kinesthetic Learners), Visual (Visual Learner), and Auditory (Auditory Learners). The visual learning style focuses on visual acuity, namely by presenting concrete evidence so that students understand. Auditory learning style relies on the student's hearing aspect to be able to understand and remember the information conveyed by the teacher, meaning that students must hear the material conveyed by the teacher well to be able to understand and remember it optimally. Kinesthetic learning style wants students touch something concretely that provides certain information so that he can remember it. Each individual student in the learning process is not only in one learning style, but the tendency is only one that stands out from the three. The direct impact if the teacher pays attention to the three learning styles for each student will make the achievement of the material for each student tend to be the same and have implications for increasing the activity of students in class based on five indicators, namely: focus, collaboration (teamwork), expressing opinions or ideas, problem solving, and discipline.

Stated that in differentiated learning there are 4 aspects that can be controlled by the teacher in the classroom, namely Content, Process, Product, and Environment and Learning Climate.

a. Content

Content is material that will be delivered by the teacher in class or material that will be learned by students. There are 2 ways to create content in differentiation learning, namely:

- 1) The suitability of the material is based on the level of readiness and interest of students
- 2) The suitability of the content is based on the learning profile of each student.

b. Process

Process is the ongoing learning activities meaning by students in the class. Meaningful learning activities for students as learning experiences in the classroom because activities correlate with what is being learned. The assessment of differentiated learning is not carried out quantitatively (numbers), but qualitatively in the form of feedback notes regarding what

attitudes, knowledge and skills are lacking and need to be improved/improved by students.

c. Product

The product is a learning output that shows the ability of knowledge, skills, and understanding after students have completed one unit of study or even after discussing subject matter for 1 semester. Products are summative and therefore assigned a value. Products take longer to complete is a broader and deeper understanding of students.

d. Learning environment

The learning environment includes personal, social, and physical class arrangements , which must be adjusted to the readiness, interests, and learning profiles of students in order to have high motivation in learning .

(Aminuriyah et al., 2022) said there were several obstacles encountered in implementing differentiated learning, namely

- a. When grouping students according to learning interests, profiles and learning readiness,
- b. Application of content differentiation in learning,
- c. In the assessment process, especially in knowledge competence, the teacher has difficulty in making questions that are used for assessment and
- d. Time management in created learning product projects.

The principle of differentiated learning , namely the teacher assumes that each child can grow and develop optimally according to their respective capacities. State that there are five basic principles in implementing differentiation learning, namely:

a. Learning Environment

The learning environment includes the physical environment of the school and classroom , classroom climate such as situations and conditions when learning, relationships, and interactions with fellow students and with teachers . The teacher during learning must respond to students according to their readiness, interests, and learning profile so that their learning needs are met.

b. Quality curriculum

A quality curriculum has clear objectives so that the teacher knows what the learning objectives are . The focus of the teacher in teaching is students' understanding , not memorization .

c. Continuous assessment

assessment is the teacher continuously conducting formative assessments in learning in order to improve their teaching and also find out whether students understand the subject matter being discussed. Formative assessment is only a diagnostic test or knowing what problems students face so that it is difficult to understand, what is not understood, and what can be done by the teacher to help students improve their understanding.

Feedback and dialogic reflection between teachers and students can continue during the learning process, so that teachers and students both know what has been learned, understood and able to do.

d. Responsive teaching

The teacher must respond to the learning outcomes that have been carried out. The response from the teacher is to adjust the next lesson according to readiness, interest, and also the learning profile of students which is known through an assessment at the end of the lesson.

e. Leadership and Routines in the classroom

Teacher leadership towards students so that they can follow the learning properly and comply with the rules that have been set. Routine in class refers to the teacher's skills in managing or managing the class properly so that learning can run effectively and efficiently.

## CONCLUSION

Differentiated learning is learning that accommodates the learning needs of each student who has a different background and characteristics. In differentiated learning, the teacher acts rationally for each student and has implications for increasing the activeness of students in class. The application of differentiated learning has a positive impact on students, classes and schools.

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