

Investigating The Benefits Of Task Diffeentiated Strategies In Writing: The Case For Mixed Ability Students

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Abstract

Mastering writing skills, especially for second language learners (ESL), is often considered one of the most challenging. Due to the diversity of learning abilities and styles, teachers have difficulty in teaching writing. In 2013, the Cambridge Baseline Study underscored the significance of Differentiated Instruction (DI) in Malaysian schools, catering to students with varying abilities. In response to this, the Ministry of Education's Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum introduced eight diverse strategies, including task differentiation, in the English Language Scheme of Work (SOW) for Form 3. This qualitative study explores how the implementation of Task Differentiated Strategies affect students and benefit them in their writing activities. The study utilized semi-structured interviews and classroom observations involving four secondary school ESL teachers based in Kuala Lumpur. It aimed to identify and assess the impact of task differentiated strategies on student learning. The findings highlighted the multifaceted ways in which these strategies positively influenced and benefited students' writing activities, such as completing work on time, promoting a sense of achievement and confidence, and increasing motivation and engagement. These results indicate that task differentiated strategies have proven effective in facilitating students' writing activity. The study suggests to further explore the benefits of task differentiation strategies for different language skills.

Keywords: Benefits, Task Differentiated Strategies, Writing Skills, Mixed Ability Students, Motivation, Engagement

Introduction**Background of Study**

The purpose of this study is to identify how using task differentiation strategies during writing activities will benefit students in completing the assigned writing tasks given in class. One of the goals of English language education is to provide access to high-quality English language instruction by reducing the gaps between students with low and high levels of competence in the language, regardless of their varied backgrounds, including socioeconomic status and geographical area. In an effort to ensure that no student is left behind in their learning, differentiated instruction has attracted the attention of many educators around the world. Differentiated instruction enables teachers to become more skilled at designing lessons that are relevant for every student in their classroom, regardless of readiness level (Dahlman et al. 2008). Ireh and Ibeneme (2010) further mentioned that Differentiated Instruction helps teachers to meet students where they are and provide challenging and suitable alternatives for success. Tomlinson (2017) mentions that students' differences are also important components of teaching and learning. Due to the fact that each student in a class has a different level of proficiency in understanding the English language, this diversity of students influences how well they are able to complete a task. Thus, there appears to be a general desire for the teacher to use strategies that would engage all of the students in the same degree, despite the fact that each learner has their own distinctive manner of learning English along with various linguistic expertise and the particular speed of learning (Al-Subaiei, 2017). To guarantee that all students have an equal exposure to knowledge, it is crucial for teachers to adopt differentiated learning in the classroom. Bardy, Holzäpfel, and Leuders (2021) emphasize that one of the numerous approaches to implementing differentiated instruction involves assigning diverse tasks to students or providing varying levels of support to distinct student groups based on their proficiency levels. According to Robinson et al., (2014) Differentiated techniques offer several advantages, including the potential to elevate students' test scores, recognition of each student's uniqueness, and the support provided for low achievers, enabling them to excel. This study is important and helpful as it contributes to a better learning environment for both students and teachers. Teachers may create a more inclusive learning environment that accommodates a wide variety of students' competency levels by implementing task differentiation strategies. Task differentiation strategies have proven to be a significant and helpful approach for improving students' writing abilities and creating a positive classroom atmosphere. Three significant benefits of task differentiated strategies in writing activities include:

1. completing work on time
2. promoting a sense of achievement and confidence
3. increasing motivation and engagement.

Statement of Problem

Although writing is a crucial skill, many ESL students lack enthusiasm in learning it because it is perceived to be the most challenging skill to learn in the English language. Berman and Cheng (2010) observed that students perceive writing as a more demanding task compared to listening and reading. Furthermore, when acquiring a new language, writing appears to be the skill that presents the greatest difficulties for most students, as noted by Nesamalar et al. (2001). Differentiated Instruction is a widespread educational method that is used in a number of educational settings. It has been demonstrated to be beneficial in general education settings, with research suggesting that students who are exposed to differentiated

strategies frequently outperform other students in academics (Tomlinson, 2001). While differentiated strategy is new to the Malaysian educational system, little is known about its phenomenon from a variety of viewpoints. Santisteban (2014) discovered that when learners are exposed to a differentiated strategy, their language literacy improves. There is no evidence of an influence on writing productivity or vocabulary learning, however there is greater evidence of a higher frequency in reading comprehension abilities (Ismail et al., 2019). Having said that, there is a considerable gap in professional literature discussing the use of differentiated strategies in Malaysian ESL. The goal of this qualitative study is to look at the task differentiation strategies used by teachers who have effectively adopted this method in mixed-ability classrooms.

Objectives and Research Questions

- 1.1 How does Task Differentiated Strategies influence time management among students in the writing class?
- 1.2 How does Task Differentiated Strategies influence confidence among students in the writing class?
- 1.3 How does Task Differentiated Strategies influence motivation among students in the writing class?

Literature Review

The Importance of Task Differentiated Strategies in The Writing Classroom

Task Differentiated Strategies is a well-known strategy used by teachers to support a varied group of students in a classroom setting. The Cambridge Baseline Study (CBS) (2013) conducted prior to the school reform, underlined the importance of Differentiated Instruction (DI) since Malaysian classrooms include mixed-ability students. Differentiated instruction, often known as differentiation, is a method used by teachers to improve learning by matching student characteristics to instruction and evaluation. With the implementation of the differentiation strategies, it is expected that all teachers would adhere to the guidelines provided by the curriculum syllabus that aligns with differentiated teaching and carry out their own differentiated assessments in accordance with the needs of their students. Teachers must recognize that students in a differentiated classroom have varying interests, learning styles, and levels of readiness for learning and take those variables into consideration while designing lessons (Coubergs et al., 2017). Differentiated Instruction (DI) is gaining prominence for its effectiveness and potential to improve students' academic outcomes through intentional and responsive teaching practices (Yavuz, 2020).

Past studies on Task Differentiated Strategies in Mixed Ability Classroom

Morgan (2014) suggested that if students grow irritated because the topic is too challenging, it will lead to disengagement or improper behaviour. Yet, if the instruction delivered to them is below the students' average or below the students' competence, it will have an adverse impact, leading many above-average students to a less motivated classroom setting (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Consequently, in order to successfully apply DL, teachers must be aware of the disparities among their students. Teachers have the chance to provide their students alternatives in their learning, to modify the evaluations, and to keep track of their academic development throughout DL practices. The use of this strategy will increase student engagement and academic success. A few studies provided evidence for the effectiveness of the differentiated strategy, which is gaining worldwide traction. Although empirical data is

still being gathered, it has been established that differentiation boosted student involvement in learning and accomplishment levels, as well as reducing the achievement gap. Aliakbari and Haghighi (2014) acknowledged the usefulness of the approach in a study concentrating on reading comprehension among Iranian learners. As comparison to the other group, the learner group that used the differentiation strategy performed better. In a research on the use of the DL in science classrooms, Pablico et al., (2017) found that teachers believed the differentiated approach to be a successful teaching strategy for enhancing students' engagement and academic achievement. According to the data, the method had a favourable impact on student learning outcomes and participation in class. Additionally, Karadag and Yasar (2010) noted that differentiation also positively benefited students' interest and attitude in Turkish courses as it improved the students' academic interest, learning level, and engagement in the courses. Also, the effectiveness of DL practice to boost student enthusiasm and improve how they access the lesson has been reaffirmed in recent research by AlHashmi and Elyas (2018). As such, in differentiated teaching method practices, it was shown that the employment of student-centred strategies had a beneficial impact on students' achievement, motivation, and effective engagement in the process, as well as on increasing their interest in the lesson. Another research, done by Joseph et al. (2013), investigated the impact of a differentiated instructional strategy on second-year students. According to this study, students do better academically and are more engaged and understanding in a differentiated learning environment. 90% of those who responded to the study said that a differentiated educational approach aroused their interest in the subjects. Educators acknowledge the advantages it offers in optimizing student learning experiences. Given the diverse array of learning styles, paces, abilities, and interests present in today's classrooms, teachers are increasingly compelled to adopt differentiated instruction as a means to address varying student needs and ensure instructional effectiveness (Lavania & Nor, 2021). Robinson et al. (2014) conducted a study on the effects of differentiated strategies with the participation of nine teachers. Remarkably, the participants unanimously agreed that differentiated instruction is advantageous since they think every student is unique. One of the benefits and advantages of differentiated techniques, according to Robinson et al. (2014), is that they can improve students' test performance.

Theoretical Framework

Differentiated instruction strategies are grounded in several prominent educational theories, each contributing unique perspectives to enhance teaching and learning experiences. One such theoretical foundation is derived from Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (1978). In the context of differentiated instruction, educators identify and address individual students' ZPD, tailoring learning activities to match their developmental level, thereby fostering optimal learning outcomes. Vygotsky's social constructivist theory is strongly related to differentiated strategies. While a learner is in the ZPD for a certain activity, Vygotsky thought that providing the required assistance will give the student enough of a "boost" to complete the task. Vygotsky proposed that two students with the same degree of autonomous success, but entirely different instructional conditions might have a larger proximal growth zone (Vygotsky, 1978). This displays that teachers teach students who are struggling to complete a task by guiding them through the process so that, after receiving assistance from the teacher, the students may work independently. It is considered that effective learning occurs when students can venture outside of their comfort zone. Differentiated instruction based on ZPD serves students of all levels since it adjusts and

modifies instruction to make it more challenging. As a result, all groups, including above-average kids, will be on the right level. The integration of Bloom's Taxonomy further enriches differentiated instruction. Bloom's Taxonomy categorizes cognitive learning objectives into six levels, starting from basic knowledge recall to higher-order thinking skills like analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In a differentiated classroom, teachers can scaffold learning experiences across these cognitive levels, catering to learners' varying abilities and cognitive development. This allows students to progress through Bloom's Taxonomy at their own pace, promoting a more personalized and effective learning journey. By drawing upon these theoretical frameworks, differentiated instruction aims to create inclusive and student-centred learning environments that honour individual differences and foster academic growth

Methodology

For this study, the researcher used a qualitative research methodology. This study adopts a qualitative inquiry approach, which emphasizes rich and descriptive. By employing this approach, the study gains a deeper understanding of the teaching styles employed by ESL teachers and the effectiveness of task differentiated strategies in catering to students with varying abilities. Four English teachers at a public secondary school in Malaysia were purposefully selected. The participants have had experience using task differentiation strategies when conducting writing activities in the ESL classrooms. Moreover, they have expertise teaching mixed-ability classes with diverse learners, and they have used differentiated instruction in their ESL classes to help students learn the language more effectively. Two instruments are used, which are semi-structured interview, and classroom observation checklist. Holistic content analysis was chosen since it produces the main themes in texts, as opposed to form or categorical analysis. After transcribing the participants' responses in Microsoft Word, their answers underwent rigorous post-observation evaluation. The analysis aimed to detect any changes in their responses due to classroom observations. Notably, some post-observation interview questions mirrored the initial ones, facilitating cross-case analysis. Additionally, the study incorporated the assessment of instructional resources within each case and conducted cross-case analysis of teaching materials using established categories and thematic codes.

Findings

Accomplishing Writing Tasks within Allocated Time

The findings of this study substantiate the effectiveness of task differentiated strategies in bolstering students' performance in terms of writing task completion efficiency. These findings are strongly corroborated by all four participating teachers, who emphasize the significant benefits derived from the implementation of task differentiated strategies, particularly in expediting the completion of writing tasks. Consequently, these strategies not only enhance students' writing skills but also contribute to better time management for both students and teachers during the lesson. By employing task differentiated strategies, teachers can tailor writing tasks to suit the individual proficiency levels and learning needs of their students. This approach allows for targeted support and scaffolding, ensuring that students are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to successfully complete the assigned tasks within the designated time frame. By focusing on specific areas of improvement, students are able to develop their writing abilities more effectively, resulting in enhanced task completion efficiency. The following excerpts provide additional insights into how the

implementation of task differentiated strategies has effectively supported and benefited students in each teacher's classroom.

Teacher A

“most of the students, they are weak students that when I ask them to write for example, 80 words essay...like email, they could not do it so when I ask them to even write three sentences also they can't do it. So that's where I make the decision that I must give them different activities according to their proficiency levels. So umm, that's the main reason...of why I implement task differentiated strategies, because I know that each student, they have different capabilities in completing and finishing the task..... So...what I noticed, from the weaker students, umm...they finally could complete the tasks given to them.”

(Excerpt 17)

“Because the students will focus on completing the tasks that they are given. Hmm...and most of the times, they manage to complete the tasks within the time provided. The weaker students are given quite easy tasks, the intermediate will get slightly difficult, but they still get necessary help, and then...umm for the high achiever, they won't be bored with their tasks because it is quite challenging and appropriate for their level.”

(Excerpt 18)

Teacher B

“I think, so far...it has been beneficial in the sense that my students are able to complete their tasks within the time, because normally I try to finish my lesson within one hour...if we are doing writing, we have to finish the essay in one hour. Because to me, this is also one of the ways to prepare them for the exams, so I don't normally give them homework. We will just do it in class. If they need extra time, we will extend the lesson to another one period for the next day, but we will always try to finish everything within the one-hour lesson because I want to achieve my learning objectives. So, task differentiated strategies is the best for this,”

(Excerpt 19)

Teacher C

“And then I also see, there is...very good peer assisted, or student-centred lesson where...when I paired them up like the least proficient students get the moderately proficient students or most proficient students, they tend to help their friends more. Otherwise, if it is individual writing task, they would just be minding their work, and they would submit. They wouldn't mind helping their friends. But when I do it this way, I see the...peer assisted is very much incorporated to help their pair finish up their work. So, both of them are done. So, when they do that in the class, 32 of my students in this particular lesson, they finished the work that I gave...with my guidance. Because some of my students need my guidance so when I go around giving them assistance, they managed to finish it up.”

(Excerpt 20)

Teacher D

“...as I have mentioned before that this strategy is effective for my students, so it actually improved my students’ performance, my students’ focus in my class. And at the same time, it doesn’t drag my lesson. You know when my students’ performance improved, it lessens the time for me to conduct the activity because the different groups of my students are able to finish the tasks within the time given because they feel comfortable to work with the same group of people within their capabilities.”

(Excerpt 21)

Based on the provided excerpts, it is evident that the implementation of task differentiated strategies has been unanimously recognized by the teachers as a means to enhance students' performance during writing activities. The research findings further reveal that writing lessons often require more time and can be challenging for students, particularly those with lower proficiency levels. In the interviews conducted with the teachers, it was acknowledged that low proficient students tend to struggle more with completing writing tasks, as they typically need additional time and support. On the other hand, more advanced students are able to complete the tasks quickly and may become disengaged or seek more challenging assignments. Recognizing the need to create a learning environment that addresses the varying needs and abilities of students, the teachers sought to implement task differentiated strategies. By implementing these strategies, teachers aim to ensure that every student, regardless of their proficiency level, can actively engage in the writing process at an appropriate pace. This approach enables teachers to effectively manage instructional time and support students in developing crucial time-management skills. By carefully designing tasks that align with students' capabilities, teachers create a sense of purpose and urgency, motivating students to allocate their time efficiently and prioritize task completion.

Fostering a Sense of Achievement and Confidence

The implementation of task differentiated strategies in mixed-ability ESL classrooms aims to ensure equitable learning experiences for all students, regardless of their proficiency levels. This approach seeks to create an inclusive environment where students receive equal exposure to knowledge and progress at their own pace. By tailoring tasks to individual needs, task differentiation ensures that no student is left behind, particularly those with lower proficiency levels. The findings of this study highlight the positive impact of implementing task differentiated strategies during writing activities. One significant outcome is the fostering of a sense of achievement among students. Regardless of their proficiency level, students feel a sense of accomplishment when they are able to successfully complete tasks that are tailored to their capabilities. This is particularly important in writing lessons as students often perceive the tasks as challenging and daunting, leading to a lack of interest and motivation, particularly among low proficient students who may feel overwhelmed by the complexity of the tasks. However, with the implementation of task differentiated strategies, students' feelings of insecurity and intimidation are reduced as they are provided with tasks tailored to their proficiency level. However, with the implementation of task differentiated strategies, students' insecurities and feelings of intimidation are reduced. They begin to believe in their ability to produce quality written work, as they are provided with tasks that align with their proficiency level. Writing lessons, with their complex requirements such as essay writing, article composition, or paragraph development, can be perceived as tedious by both teachers and students. Students may struggle with the perceived difficulty of these tasks, especially low proficient students who may compare themselves to their more advanced peers.

Nevertheless, with task differentiation, students are given tasks that are appropriate for their proficiency level, thus alleviating their concerns and boosting their confidence. By providing tasks that are attainable and tailored to their needs, students feel a sense of inclusion and competence, which contributes to their overall engagement and motivation in writing activities. The following excerpts from the interviews with the teachers further highlight the impact of task differentiated strategies on students' learning experiences. These first-hand accounts provide valuable insights into the positive changes observed in students as a result of task differentiation in writing activities.

Teacher A

“from the weaker students, umm...they finally could complete the tasks given to them. So, it gives a sense of achievement for them. They feel that something has been achieved and they could do the tasks. While for the higher achievers, I could see that they wanted more. The students are improving well in their learning. Umm...in the future, they would probably become better. The weaker students most probably move to intermediate level and the intermediate ones could become high achievers if this strategy is constantly implemented.”

(Excerpt 22)

Teacher B

“I think that, one thing I noticed is that, they feel that they are good. They get the sense of that they can actually do work...and they can finish things within the given time frame. I think that’s really important because that can boost their confidence when doing tasks, and so far...after a few months school started, I noticed now that the students want something a bit more challenging, because I always give them the easy tasks, so now they want something that is little bit hard. They want to try. So it means that, they have developed their confidence.”

(Excerpt 23)

Teacher C

“However, when I see the positive results from my students, I think I’ll just do it because it makes the students also feel “oh, I could also write the essay”, it makes them feel that way.”

(Excerpt 24)

Teacher D

“And if I may add, when I do this separation of groups based on the students’ capabilities, the lower achievers...they are more confident. It’s like they feel less insecure when they do the task. So, it’s like I give them motivation for them complete the tasks even more.”

(Excerpt 25)

The positive attitudes demonstrated by the participating teachers towards the implementation of task differentiated strategies underscore their dedication and perseverance in overcoming the challenges associated with planning and preparing the

writing activities. This commitment yields significant benefits for students, particularly in terms of boosting their confidence and self-belief. Given the inherent difficulty often associated with writing tasks, the ability to instill a sense of accomplishment and achievement in students is crucial. As indicated in the excerpts, students exhibit increased engagement and active participation in their learning process when they perceive themselves as capable of successfully completing writing tasks. This positive response is a direct result of the implementation of task differentiated strategies, which provide students with tasks that are appropriate to their proficiency levels and learning needs. When students are able to effectively complete these tasks within the allocated time, they develop a sense of accomplishment and a desire for more challenging assignments in subsequent lessons. This continuous cycle of challenge and achievement contributes to the overall growth and development of students' writing abilities.

Enhancing Motivation and Promoting Engagement

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that the implementation of task differentiated strategies significantly enhances students' motivation and promotes their overall engagement during writing lessons. The ability to tap into students' intrinsic motivation by offering choices and autonomy in writing tasks is a key advantage of task differentiation. When students have the freedom to select topics, genres, or approaches that align with their interests, they are more likely to be intrinsically motivated to actively engage in the writing process. As highlighted in the previous section, the teachers in this study demonstrated a thoughtful and strategic implementation of task differentiated strategies, taking into consideration their students' preferences and interests. By tailoring the writing topics to match students' interests or providing them with the freedom to choose their own topics, teachers created a learning environment that fosters increased creativity, enjoyment, and a sense of ownership over their written work. These elements are crucial for sustaining students' motivation and engagement throughout the writing process. However, it is important to address concerns raised by some teachers regarding potential demotivation among students who perceive task differentiation as unequal treatment. To mitigate such concerns, effective implementation strategies can be employed. Incorporating gamification elements, such as turning writing tasks into interactive games or competitions, can add a sense of challenge and excitement to the process. Pairing or grouping students with different proficiency levels can create a supportive and collaborative environment, where students can learn from and inspire each other. Moreover, providing a variety of tasks that cater to students' diverse interests, preferences, and abilities ensures that all students are actively involved and feel a sense of purpose in their writing tasks. The following excerpts from interviews with the teachers shed light on the positive implications of task differentiated strategies in enhancing students' motivation and engagement. These examples illustrate how the approach has inspired students to take ownership of their writing, express their creativity, and actively participate in the learning process. By nurturing a supportive and stimulating environment through task differentiation, teachers can foster a deep sense of motivation and engagement among their students, leading to improved writing outcomes.

Teacher A

“What I realized is...the students, like for those who are quiet in class, when they do collaborative writing tasks, they are able to give their ideas, their

opinions to their friends, and they discuss together. So that's one small change that I could see from the quiet students. And also, I think that it increased their motivation a little bit because when they do individual activity, some of them...they don't do the work. for example, they maybe just write one word, or one sentence. But when they do in groups, or collaborative, they become very motivated to do the work because they like to be with the friends."

(Excerpt 26)

Teacher B

"...one thing that was very apparent is that after that lesson, I told you that I did another lesson on writing an article, so before I started the lesson, they asked me "teacher, are we going to do the game again?" so I was like "okay..." but I actually I didn't do that because I wanted them to do individual writing. Because last time we already did the game so this time I wanted them to be dealing with the question themselves. So, when I give them they were like "oh come one teacher, why not do the game again, let's play", so that means they are not happy yet they still want more..."

(Excerpt 27)

"So yeah it shows that they are getting more interested in terms of writing lesson, I think that what matters to me the most. What I want at the end of the day is for them to enjoy the learning process and to see that writing as a skill that they can master, it's not something that's going to burden them. I think with this game that I've done, I think I'm on the right track to reshape their mindset, so I think I will continue doing this."

(Excerpt 28)

Teacher C

"And the last one is they are more motivated when I give task. Those who are proficient students, they complained about them not getting the guided words worksheet or picture worksheet, but then they are also motivated when I give them the reason being of why I am giving them different worksheet, and they would say "okay, I can do this, I will try teacher" and then...they are motivated to do the task compared to when I asked them to open up Pulse and then write down the essay question in the book, and then they do the essay. So, instead of that, they get pictures, worksheets, it is the same as Pulse...it's just that I put them in a worksheet and then I adapt my way of giving them the writing task and then they are more motivated."

(Excerpt 29)

Teacher D

"...because they feel comfortable to work with the same group of people within their capabilities. So, I believe, first would be to enhance their engagement. So, when the students get to engage in the activity, their performance also increased. And it also increases their motivation to learn and to participate in completing the task. This is because, maybe my activity is about writing a review of a restaurant, so they are familiar and they feel "oh this is something that I have experienced before, I have bad experience with this restaurant before so I can review about the place. So, somehow the topic relates to them...so it motivates them more to do the tasks."

(Excerpt 30)

The findings from the above excerpts shed light on the innovative and resourceful approaches adopted by teachers in implementing and adapting task differentiated strategies within mixed-ability ESL classrooms. As discussed earlier, these strategies encompass a wide range of techniques, including individual tasks, pair work, group work with students of similar proficiency levels, differentiated prompts, visual aids, and elements of gamification. The utilization of such diverse strategies reflects the teachers' commitment to creating an engaging and meaningful learning experience for their students. One of the primary objectives of implementing task differentiated strategies is to establish a conducive learning environment where all students can thrive. The researcher also noted that the teachers in this study recognize the importance of motivating and engaging students through carefully crafted tasks that cater to their unique learning needs and proficiency levels. By offering differentiated writing tasks, students are more likely to feel a sense of ownership and empowerment over their learning. This approach not only enhances students' motivation but also fosters a positive attitude towards writing activities, shifting the perception from being burdensome to enjoyable and meaningful.

Conclusion

Summary of Findings and Discussion

The integration of task differentiated strategies also highlights the teachers' dedication to going beyond the confines of the textbook and traditional teaching methods. Rather than relying solely on the prescribed curriculum, the teachers took the initiative to create differentiated writing tasks that align with the content while catering to the diverse needs of their students. The long-term impact of task differentiated strategies is noteworthy, as it enables low proficient students to progress to intermediate levels and intermediate students to further enhance their proficiency. By tailoring tasks to meet students' individual needs, teachers can focus on addressing specific areas of improvement and provide targeted support for each student. Advanced students, on the other hand, can benefit from the opportunity to refine their writing skills and explore more complex elements of the writing process. While the implementation of task differentiated strategies may require more time and effort, the resulting outcomes in terms of improved student performance and increased confidence are well worth the investment. This personalized approach allows students to engage with the material at their own level and build confidence in their writing abilities. Moreover, the successful implementation of task differentiated strategies has a transformative impact on student participation. Students who may have previously been disengaged or hesitant to participate in writing activities now demonstrate active involvement. The strategies employed by the teachers, such as group work and gamification elements, foster collaboration, peer support, and healthy competition, motivating students to actively contribute to the writing process. By effectively implementing task differentiated strategies, teachers create an inclusive learning environment where students of varying proficiency levels feel valued and supported. The approach not only benefits the lower-achieving students by providing targeted support and scaffolding, but it also challenges the more advanced students to further develop their writing skills.

Pedagogical Implications

It is evident from the study that teachers adapt task differentiated strategies according to their own teaching styles and the specific characteristics of their students. This flexibility

allows for a more personalized approach, where teachers can effectively address the unique learning needs, abilities, and interests of their students. The findings also emphasize the significance of empowering teachers to make informed decisions regarding the implementation of task differentiated strategies. By providing teachers with professional development opportunities and support, educational institutions can enhance their capacity to implement these strategies effectively. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of expanding the use of task differentiated strategies in ESL classrooms. As the research indicates, this approach has the potential to improve students' engagement, motivation, and overall performance in writing activities. By adopting task differentiated strategies, teachers can create a more inclusive learning environment that accommodates the diverse range of students' proficiency levels and promotes equitable access to quality education.

Suggestions for Further Studies

As a result of the evolving nature of education and the increasing focus on catering to students with varying proficiency levels, there is a need for more comprehensive studies on differentiation strategies. Researchers could examine the effectiveness of differentiation strategies in different language skills such as reading, speaking, and listening. Understanding how these diverse approaches can be effectively employed to support specific language skills would provide valuable guidance to educators. Also, it is important to consider the context in which differentiation strategies are implemented. This study was conducted in an urban area with a limited number of participating teachers. To obtain a more comprehensive understanding of differentiation strategies, future research should include a larger number of participants from diverse settings, including schools in rural areas. This would allow for a more nuanced examination of the patterns and results of differentiation strategies across different contexts. Additionally, investigating the impact of differentiation strategies on students' motivation, self-efficacy, and academic achievement would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the benefits of these strategies. Longitudinal studies could be conducted to examine the long-term effects of differentiation strategies on students' language proficiency and overall academic performance.

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