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the Speaking Sequences: Exploring Secondary School
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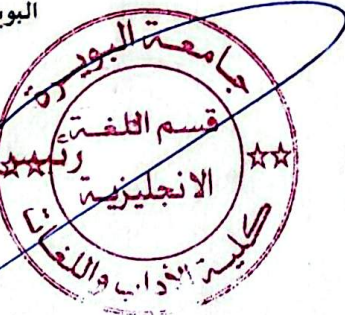
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Department of English Language and Literature



**Implementing the Differentiated Instruction
Approach in the Speaking Sequences:
Exploring Secondary School English Teachers'
Perspectives and Challenges**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature - University
of Bouira – in Partial Fulfilment for the Requirement of Master's Degree in
Didactics and Applied Languages**

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Dedication

To my treasured parents, whose unconditional love, endless support, and constant encouragement have been my greatest strength.

To my beloved siblings and nieces, who have been motivating me every step of this path, whose strong belief in me has led me to where I am today.

To my closest friends, Assia and Asma, who have reached me each time I was about to collapse during this demanding journey

My heartfelt gratitude and appreciation are for you.

This work is for you.



Allaa MERZOUK

Dedication

To my dear parents, precious siblings, nieces and nephew; the sweet and warm family that has been my support and positive push through days and nights,

To my soulmate, my beloved Looo, my future husband; for his purest and most patient love that he has wrapped around me like a second home-your devotion is never forgotten,

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To Allaa, my dear binôme, for her kind companionship,

To Bichou & Zain, my two missing pieces,

To the rest of my friends and family members,

To all of you who love me unconditionally and wish me well,

To me, Myself, & I,

Words cannot thank you enough,

And this work is for you

~♡~

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Abstract

The Algerian educational system's persistent overemphasis on written assessments and grammar-focused instruction fails to address learners' diverse needs and undermines their communicative competence. In response to this concern, the present study explores Algerian secondary school EFL teachers' perspectives on Differentiated Instruction (DI) and the challenges they face when implementing it in speaking sequences in the educational context. The main objective is to explore how teachers perceive DI, how they apply it in their speaking sequences, and what obstacles hinder its effective and consistent implementation. A qualitative research approach was adopted, with a teacher questionnaire serving as the primary data collection tool and an interview as a complementary data collection tool, aiming to provide a broader institutional perspective on the challenges identified. The gathered data were analysed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to teachers' perspectives, practices, and challenges. The findings revealed a significant gap between teachers' positive beliefs about DI and their actual implementation of it in speaking sequences, due to considerable systemic challenges including large class sizes, curriculum constraints, insufficient professional training, and limited institutional support. These results suggest that an effective DI implementation requires coordinated action at both the institutional and policy levels, including curriculum reform, reduced class sizes, and practical and sustained professional development opportunities for teachers.

Keywords: Algerian secondary education, Differentiated Instruction, EFL teachers, implementation challenges, speaking skill development

ملخص البحث

يركز النظام التعليمي الجزائري بدرجة كبيرة على تدريس القواعد اللغوية والامتحانات الكتابية، وهو ما يأتي غالبًا على حساب تنمية الكفاءات التواصلية لدى التلاميذ والاستجابة لاختلاف احتياجاتهم التعليمية. وانطلاقًا من هذه الإشكالية، تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف تصورات أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في التعليم الثانوي بالجزائر حول التدريس المتميز، مع التركيز على كيفية توظيفه في حصص التعبير الشفهي، إضافة إلى الكشف عن أبرز الصعوبات التي تعيق تطبيقه بفعالية داخل القسم. اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج النوعي، باستخدام استبيان ومقابلة بهدف تعميق الفهم حول التحديات الميدانية المرتبطة بهذا النمط من التدريس. وقد أظهرت نتائج الدراسة وجود وعي إيجابي لدى الأساتذة بأهمية التدريس المتميز ودوره في تطوير مهارات التحدث لدى التلاميذ، غير أن التطبيق الفعلي له يبقى محدودًا بسبب جملة من العوائق، أبرزها الاكتظاظ داخل الأقسام، وضيق الوقت الدراسي، وقيود المناهج، إضافة إلى نقص التكوين المهني والدعم المؤسسي. وتؤكد هذه النتائج أن تفعيل التدريس المتميز في التعليم الثانوي الجزائري يتطلب تدخلات عملية على المستويين البيداغوجي والمؤسسي، تشمل مراجعة المناهج، وتقليص عدد التلاميذ داخل الأقسام، وتوفير تكوين مستمر وفعال للأساتذة بما يساعدهم على تبني ممارسات تعليمية أكثر مرونة وملاءمة لاحتياجات المتعلمين المختلفة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعليم الثانوي الجزائري، التدريس المتميز، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مهارة التعبير الشفهي، تحديات التطبيق، التكوين المهني.

List of Abbreviations

DI: Differentiated Instruction

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ENSB : Ecole Normale Supérieure Bouzaréaa

ENSO : Ecole Normale Supérieure Oran

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General Introduction

1. Research Background

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on “learner-centred approaches” in education, particularly in language learning, where recognising the diverse needs, learning styles, and interests of learners is crucial. Traditional teaching methods often fail to address these individual differences, resulting in gaps in learner engagements and proficiency. In this regard, Tomlinson (2017) argues against the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach in education, emphasising that effective differentiation is necessary to meet the diverse needs of learners. This shift in perspective has encouraged educators to explore more responsive teaching strategies, such as Differentiated Instruction (DI), which adapts teaching methods and materials to accommodate learners’ variability. By recognising that each learner may require different types of support and levels of challenges, DI promotes a more inclusive classroom environment. Research indicates that DI can enhance learner motivation and academic performance across various subjects. However, despite its recognised benefits, there remains a remarkable lack of research focusing specifically on teacher’s perspectives and the challenges they encounter when implementing DI, particularly in speaking sequences within the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. This gap highlights the need for further research into how teachers perceive and apply DI in practice. Therefore, this study aims to explore secondary school teachers’ perspectives on DI and the challenges they face when implementing it in speaking sequences.

2. Statement of the Problem

Developing learners' language proficiency in English remains a significant challenge within the Algerian educational system. As Taleb-Ibrahimi (1997, as cited in Lakehal-Ayat, 2008) observes, the Algerian school does not produce fully bilingual individuals but rather semilinguals without a strong command of either language. Learners consequently enter university carrying considerable gaps in their English language knowledge (Lakehal-Ayat, 2008), a situation that reflects deeper systemic issues embedded within the educational structure itself.

At a curricular level, Omari (2017, as cited in Belit & Aliouchouche, 2022) concluded that the guiding principles of the English curriculum, namely maintaining a balance between written and oral forms of language and between building accuracy and fluency, are not reflected in teachers' actual classroom practices. In the Algerian secondary school EFL context, most instructional attention is devoted to reading, writing, and grammar, while speaking remains largely marginalised. This observation is further reinforced by Belit and Aliouchouche (2021, as cited in Belit & Aliouchouche, 2022), who found that the teaching of speaking is not accorded its due

attention in the classroom. More broadly, Guendouzi and Babou Sekkal (2025) state that teaching methods and assessment practices in Algeria revolve predominantly around written examinations, and that this orientation toward the written mode leads to the systematic neglect of spoken discourse. They add that teachers give little attention to discourse markers and oral fluency strategies, which further contributes to weak speaking abilities among learners.

As a result of this neglect, many Algerian EFL learners struggle to achieve speaking fluency despite years of language study (Arab, 2016). This is made worse by the current educational system at middle and secondary school levels, which not only prioritises grammar-focused instruction but entirely omits the assessment of learners' speaking abilities (Bensemmane et al., 2021). This systematic marginalisation of speaking skills, combined with a one-size-fits-all instructional approach, fails to account for diverse learning needs and individual differences, creating significant barriers to effective language acquisition and undermining learners' overall proficiency and confidence in oral communication. This pervasive issue therefore calls for exploring how DI can be implemented in speaking sequences, particularly by exploring secondary school English teachers' perspective and the challenges they face, in order to identify areas for improvement and enhance learners' communicative competence.

3. Objectives of the Study

The present study aims to achieve the following objectives:

Exploring secondary school EFL teachers' perspectives on DI in speaking sequences, and how they perceive its value, effectiveness, and feasibility within the Algerian secondary school context.

Identifying the challenges secondary school EFL teachers face when implementing DI in speaking sequences to highlight areas for pedagogical improvement that could enhance learners' communicative competence in the Algerian educational context.

4. Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- What perspectives do secondary school English teachers express towards DI implementation in speaking sequences?
- What are the challenges that secondary school English teachers face when implementing the DI approach?

- What suggestions can be made to improve the implementation of DI to enhance learners' speaking skills in the Algerian context?

5. Research Methodology

This research is an attempt to explore secondary school English teachers' perspectives on DI and the challenges they face when implementing it in speaking sequences. To address the research problem, answer the research questions, and achieve the stated objectives, a qualitative research methodology is adopted. As Pathak et al. (2013, p. 192) explain, "Qualitative method is used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviour, and interactions," which makes it particularly suitable for the purposes of this study. Within this qualitative framework, a questionnaire will be used as the primary data collection tool, administered to a sample of secondary school EFL teachers who are already familiar with and have experience in implementing DI, as verified through a pilot phase. In addition, a structured interview will be conducted with a secondary school inspector as a complementary data collection tool, aiming to provide a broader institutional perspective on the challenges identified and to suggest possible ways of addressing them to improve the teaching of speaking skill. Finally, the collected data will be analysed using thematic analysis.

6. Structure of the Study

The present study is organised into two chapters, preceded by a general introduction and followed by a general conclusion. The comprehensive structure is designed to provide a systematic and coherent exploration of research on DI and speaking skill development. Serving as a foundational section, the introduction presents the research problem, research question, aims of the study, methodology, structure of the dissertation, and concludes with the significance of the study. The first chapter delves into the comprehensive theoretical and conceptual landscape of DI and speaking skill, including a review of existing literature, critical analysis of previous studies, and identification of research gaps and theoretical implications. The second chapter describes the research approach, design, participant selection, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods, as well as the validity and reliability of the study and ethical concerns. It also presents and analyses the study's findings along with their interpretations. Finally, the conclusion offers an overview of the entire study, along with its limitations and recommendations for future research.

7. Significance of the Study

The present study holds significance on several levels. First, it draws attention to the persistent neglect of speaking skill instruction in Algerian secondary school EFL classrooms, where teaching and assessment practices continue to favour written over oral expression. By exploring how DI can be applied to speaking sequences, the study contributes to a growing body of research advocating for a more learner-centred and responsive pedagogical approaches in the Algerian EFL context. Second, given that learners within the same classroom inevitably differ in terms of proficiency level, learning needs, interests, and abilities, this study highlights DI as a practical and flexible approach that enables teachers to adapt their strategies and activities accordingly, fostering more equitable participation and meaningful communication among learners. Third, the findings offer valuable insights for curriculum designers, educational authorities, inspectors, and teacher trainers by shedding light on the real challenges teachers face when attempting to implement DI in speaking contexts. It is hoped that these findings will inform practical, policy-level decisions aimed at improving the conditions under which English language teaching, and speaking instruction, takes place in Algerian secondary schools.

Chapter One:

Literature Review

Chapter One: Literature Review

Section One: Differentiated Instruction

Introduction

Over the last three decades, growing attention has been given to the shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred teaching methods to improve academic achievement. However, the implementation of these methods remains challenging, particularly in the development of learners' language skills. Recognising that one-size-fits-all instruction is ineffective due to individual differences and preferences, differentiated instruction (DI) has been introduced as a responsive pedagogical approach aimed at accommodating this diversity. Therefore, this section seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of DI by mainly exploring its definitions, theoretical foundations, and main elements. It also explores its significance along with learners' characteristics. Understanding these aspects is essential for exploring teacher's perspectives and challenges, specifically in the context of teaching speaking skills in secondary school English classrooms.

1.1.1 Definition of Differentiated Instruction

The concept of DI emerged as a distinct pedagogical approach in the 1990s, although the importance of adapting teaching to individual learner strengths and weaknesses had been recognised much earlier. According to Tomlinson (2014), there is no single, fixed definition to a differentiated classroom. For many educators, DI serves as a framework for addressing learners' diversity as a central element of instructional planning (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006), thereby making the learner central to the teaching process. Researchers differ in the conceptualisation of DI, for instance, according to Levy (2008), DI is a set of strategies that enable teachers to meet each learner at their current level and support their progression toward their full potential on their educational path. For Tomlinson and Edison (2003), DI is defined as a classroom thinking centred on the two goals of respecting each learner's unique learning needs and helping them achieve their maximum educational growth. It refers to "... a way of thinking, not a formula or recipe. Educators draw on, apply, and adapt its tools with the goal of maximizing knowledge, understanding, and skill for the full range of learners" (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006, p. 6). Tomlinson (2000) also explains that DI is a representation to how educators respond to learners' needs by applying key principles such as meaningful tasks, flexible groupings, and ongoing assessment and adjustment. Within this framework, teachers can adapt what learners learn, how they engage with the content, and how they demonstrate their learning, taking into account learners' readiness levels, interests,

and individual learning styles. This definition highlights DI's variables, which are curricular elements—content, process, product, as well as learners' characteristics—readiness, interest, learning profile. These components are purposefully adjusted to address the diversity of mixed-ability classroom and therefore create an inclusive environment. Moreover, Suwastini et al. (2021) define DI as an instructional framework featuring a range of adaptive variations designed to tailor the educational process to learners' individual traits and needs. Put differently, DI represents a form of pedagogical decision-making through which educators construct multiple and diverse learning pathways that respond to learners' varied level of readiness, interests, and learning preferences. Rather than a collection of disconnected activities, DI functions as an integrated system in which the components of instruction are deeply interconnected—each classroom element reinforcing and feeding into the others, with every part deriving its strength from its relationship to the whole. Ultimately, the approach seeks to craft learning experiences that scaffold learners' progression across educational phases, guiding them from initial, foundational understanding toward deeper comprehensive mastery (Tomlinson & Moon, 2013).

In sum, DI can be understood as a learner-centred approach in which every dimension of the teaching and learning process—encompassing its underlying principles and components—is deliberately selected and adapted by the teacher to address learners' diverse needs and interests, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses. To further clarify this concept, Blaz (2006) presents a comprehensive framework that draws a clear distinction between what DI is and is not through the comparative table below (see Table 1.1).

What Differentiated Instruction Is	What Differentiated Instruction Is Not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learner centered ▪ For all learners ▪ For heterogeneous groups ▪ A change in philosophy about how learning should take place ▪ Multiple approaches or options for content, process, and product ▪ A mix of whole-class, group, and independent learning ▪ More about quality than quantity ▪ Flexible and varied ▪ Proactive in the planning stage ▪ Rooted in assessment ▪ Based on continual reflection and adjustment to help learners learn well ▪ A belief system that says all learners come to the classroom with potential ready to be accessed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Class centered ▪ Mainly for learners with learning problems ▪ A tracking system by abilities ▪ A recipe for learning (it is how to teach, not what to teach) ▪ A different lesson plan for every learner (individualized instruction) ▪ Whole-group drill and practice or any single structure or activity ▪ Fact-based learning alone ▪ Unmanageable or undisciplined ▪ Modifying the instruction up or down in difficulty ▪ A method that you will need all new materials for ▪ Cost free ▪ Just about learning styles ▪ Just a set of strategies and activities

Table 1.1
Defining Differentiated Instruction

Note. From *Differentiated Instruction: A guide for Foreign Language Teachers* (1st ed., p. 5), by Blaz Deborah, 2006, Copyright © 2006 Taylor & Francis

This table emphasises that DI is what is centred around all the learners, with them all being given chances.

1.1.2 Theoretical Background of Differentiated Instruction

Reflecting on traditional education, Lombarkia (2023) notes that teachers historically paid limited attention to individual differences and did not link learners' failure to the absence of specific learner characteristics. However, with the emergence of learning and scientific theories, awareness of learner diversity increased, leading to the development of DI. DI, particularly in heterogeneous classrooms, evolved alongside major pedagogical shifts during the 1970s and 1980s, influenced by constructivist theorists such as Piaget and Vygotsky (Marks et al., 2021). It is further grounded in Vygotsky's (1978) constructivism, Gardner's (1989) theory of multiple intelligences, and Bloom's taxonomy (Kojak, 2008). These theoretical contributions aim to help learners reach their full potential while ensuring balanced cognitive and personal development (Kojak, 2008, as cited in Al-Shaboul et al., 2021). Vygotsky (1978) argues that cognitive development occurs through engagement with challenging experiences that extend learners' thinking. When faced with new or conflicting contexts, learners construct knowledge by integrating new information with prior understanding (Tomlinson, 2000). Central to this view is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which refers to tasks learners cannot complete independently but can achieve with guidance or scaffolding (Tomlinson et al., 2003). Additionally, Krashen's (1992) Input Hypothesis supports DI by emphasising that language acquisition occurs through exposure to comprehensible input slightly above the learner's level ($i+1$). This process requires a low affective filter, meaning that emotional and psychological barriers must be minimised to facilitate effective learning (Dulay et al., 1982, as cited in Krashen, 1992). This idea resonates closely with Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, which posits that an individual's belief in their own capacity to execute the actions required to achieve a given task plays a pivotal role in determining their academic engagement and performance. Rooted in social cognitive theory, self-efficacy refers to the judgments learners hold regarding their ability to organise and carry out tasks necessary to attain designated levels of performance (Bandura, 1977, as cited in Bhati & Sethy, 2022). Learners with high self-efficacy tend to invest greater effort, persist longer in the face of challenges, and set more ambitious goals, whereas those with low self-efficacy are more likely to disengage and avoid task completion altogether. Crucially, self-efficacy beliefs are shaped by four primary sources: mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional and psychological states (Bhati & Sethy, 2022). Since learners inevitably differ in the degree to which each of these sources influences their confidence, their self-efficacy profiles are

inherently varied. This individual variation in efficacy belief constitutes yet another dimension of learner diversity that DI seeks to address—by tailoring instructional tasks, providing differentiated feedback, and creating learning conditions that nurture each learner's sense of academic competence and self-belief. Consequently, DI employs multiple teaching strategies, diverse educational activities, and varied instructional tasks. It also integrates both individual and group learning, incorporating small-group collaboration and cooperative learning (Bayoumi & Al-Jundi, 2018, as cited in Al-Shaboul et al., 2021). By integrating these diverse theories, DI provides a dynamic and flexible approach to teaching that accommodates learners' unique needs, fostering both academic success and personal growth.

1.1.3 Elements of Differentiated Instruction

To respond effectively to learner diversity, curriculum adaptations are essential. Tomlinson and Edison (2003) identify five key classroom elements that should be considered: content, process, product, affect, and learning environment. Likewise, Renzulli (1997, as cited in Blaz, 2006), focusing primarily on gifted and talented learners, proposes five dimensions of differentiation: content, process, product, classroom, and teacher. However, the first three—content, process, and product—remain the central components of differentiation.

1.1.3.1 Content

Content is defined by Tomlinson and Strickland (2005) as the knowledge, understanding, and skills that learners are expected to acquire during a segment of study; in other words, it is the “stuff” teachers teach. Given that learners differ in readiness, interest and learning profile, it is necessary to adapt content to address these differences. The purpose of differentiating content is to offer varied approaches to input – including information, ideas, and skills—that meet learners individually where they are and actively support their progress (Tomlinson, 2017).

1.1.3.2 Process

Due to individual differences, not all learners acquire knowledge in the same way. For learning to be effective, teachers need to adapt not only the content but also the process. According to Levy (2008), process refers to the way teachers instruct and how learners learn. Tomlinson and Strickland (2005) suggest that process is often used synonymously with “activities.” However, not all activities are created equal. They must be tailored to accommodate differences in readiness, learning styles, and interests to ensure an effective teaching-learning process. To address readiness, learners should be matched with tasks that appropriately challenge and stretch their abilities. Catering to learners' interests involves providing them with choices in topic selection,

allowing them to connect their personal interests with the content and learning objectives. Finally, adapting instruction to learners' profiles allows them to engage in their preferred learning styles, emphasising their strengths rather than their weaknesses.

1.1.3.3 Product

Product refers to the ways learners demonstrate what they have learned (Levy, 2008; Tomlinson & Strickland, 2005). It is a long-term endeavour, designed to help learners—individually or in groups—rethink, apply, and extend their learning over an extended period, such as a unit, a semester, or even a year (Tomlinson, 2001). In this regard, Levy (2008) highlights summative assessments including standardised tests, teacher-made tests, quizzes, projects, and performance assessments that can be objectively graded based on the curriculum. These assessments help determine whether learners have successfully mastered the content taught during that period. Since learners vary in readiness, interest, and learning profile, it is not necessary to use the same assessment for all learners. Differentiating assessments allows educators to measure learners' understanding in ways that align with their strengths and learning needs. To provide readers with a more comprehensive understanding of the context of Tomlinson's key work, a visual representation of Tomlinson's DI model is incorporated (see Figure 1.1 below).

Figure 2.1
Differentiation of Instruction

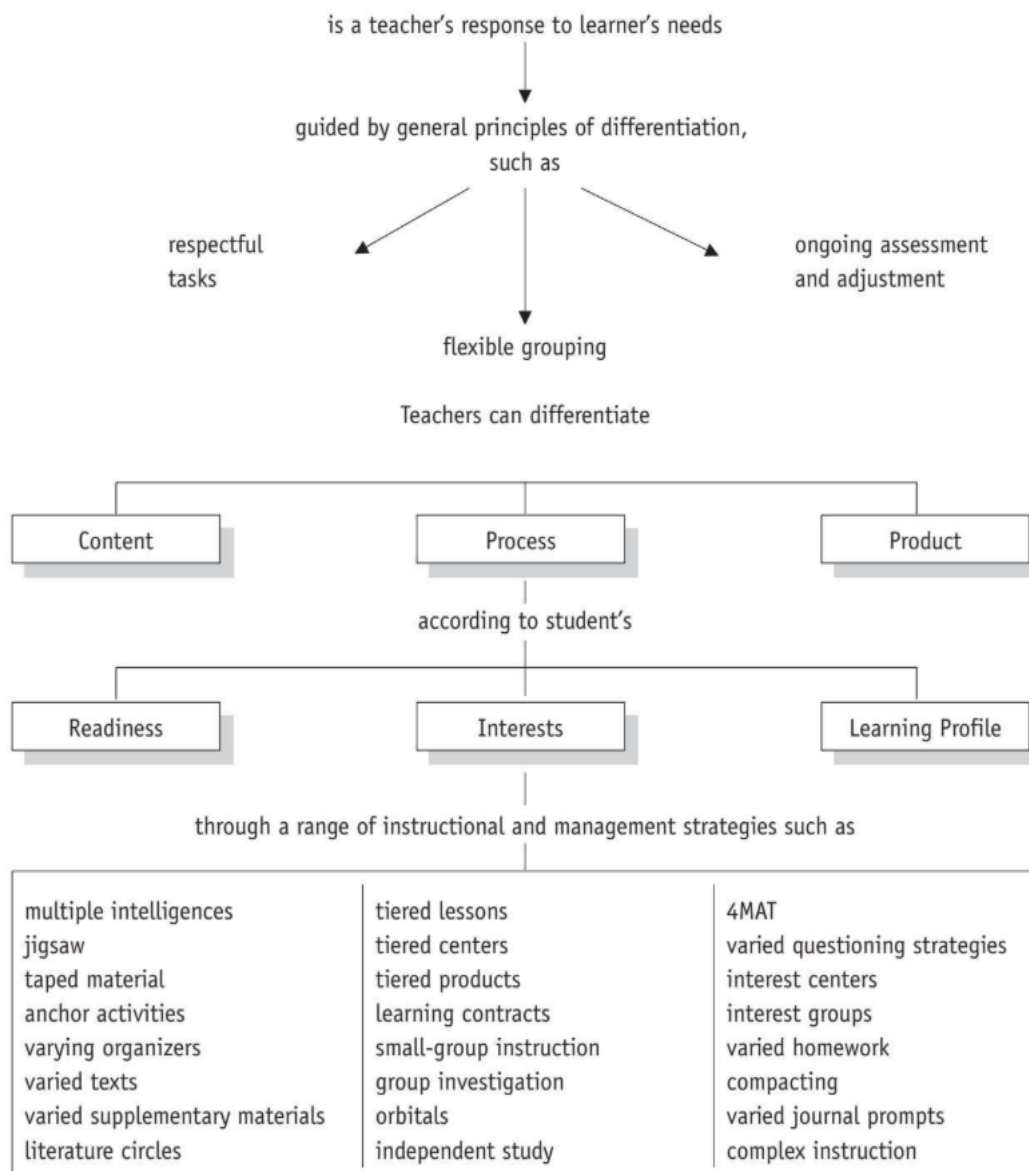


Figure 1.1
Differentiation of Instruction

Note. From: *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of All Learners* (p. 15), Tomlinson, C.A., 1999, Copyright © 1999 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

This figure also highlights some main strategies that DI can be implemented with.

1.1.4 Significance of Differentiated Instruction

The importance of DI lies in its recognition that learners have diverse backgrounds, abilities, and needs. A single approach to teaching can therefore limit many learners' potential. As highlighted by Tomlinson (2017), diversity is a natural characteristic of all classrooms, which makes it crucial for teachers to adjust their instruction accordingly. DI enables learners to progress from their own starting points, encouraging both independence and active engagement (Tomlinson, 2001). It also supports the creation of an inclusive learning environment where all learners are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential (Levy, 2008). Furthermore, it encourages learners to push their personal boundaries through the principle of "teaching up," which involves presenting challenging content for advanced learners while simultaneously offering appropriate support to others. In this way, DI ensures that the greatest number of learners can access essential curriculum content and participate in meaningful learning experiences (Tomlinson, 2017).

1.1.5 Learners' Characteristics

Differentiating instruction allows educators to create learning environments that align with the diverse needs of learners while still meeting the curriculum requirements (Tomlinson, 2017). Therefore, there are three learners' characteristics to consider when differentiating the instructions: readiness, interest, and learning profile.

1.1.5.1 Readiness

As defined by Tomlinson and Strickland (2005), readiness is not synonymous with ability; rather, it reflects what a learner knows, understands, and can do in relation to the content currently being taught. According to them, it is difficult to maximise some learners' potential if we are unaware of their current level and learning gaps. Additionally, ignoring the fact that other learners have already mastered the material we plan to teach next can hinder effective learning. The goal of readiness differentiation is to make the work slightly challenging for learners at their current stage of development while providing the necessary support—scaffolding—to help them succeed at the new level of difficulty, thereby engaging them within their zone of proximal development. When responding to learners' readiness, DI does not suggest abandoning the curriculum; instead, it advocates adapting teaching strategies to ensure the material remains suitably challenging for all learners.

1.1.5.2 Interest

Considering learners' interests when designing lessons is essential for effective engagement and sustained involvement. Tomlinson and Imbeau (2010) define interest as "that which engages the attention, curiosity, and involvement of a learner" (p. 33). A qualified teacher actively seeks to discover and understand the diverse interests that learners bring into the classroom, using this knowledge to connect the content at hand with what genuinely engages them. By integrating learners' interests, gathered through observation, discussions, and various assessment strategies, learning becomes more meaningful and enjoyable. Learners remain most engaged and motivated to learn effectively when their interests are actively woven into the learning process. Tomlinson (2017) adds:

Dynamic teachers also try to create new interests in their learners. When a teacher is passionate about a topic and shares the passion with his or her classes, similar interests often emerge in some of the learners. A teacher who raises intriguing questions, introduces ideas that make content vibrant, and supports learners in learning more about those elements also helps to generate new learner interests (p. 97).

This highlights that instruction that captures learners' interest not only draws on their existing passions but also helps them discover new ones.

1.1.5.3 Learning Profile

Incorporating learners' learning profiles into instructional planning is equally important. Tomlinson (2017) explains that a learning profile refers to the ways in which individuals learn best. Each person has certain learning methods that are highly effective for them, while others may hinder progress or feel unnatural. There are four key factors that shape a learner's learning profile, which teachers can use to design curriculum and instruction that align with learners' needs. According to Tomlinson (2001), these factors include learning style, intelligence preferences,

gender, and culture. Firstly, the learning styles theory, as explained by Tomlinson et al. (2003), suggest that factors such as environment, emotions, interactions, and physical needs affect learning and that aligning teaching methods with learners' learning styles can enhance achievement across cultural groups. Moreover, in terms of intelligence preference, Sternberg (1985, 1996, as cited in Tomlinson et al., 2003), propose three thinking modes: analytical, practical, and creative. Research indicates that learners perform better when instruction aligns with their preferred thinking mode. Additionally, culture shapes learning and thinking preferences in areas like communication style, need for affiliation vs. achievement, and task orientation. These cultural differences are contextual and can be addressed by educators. Lastly, research suggests that gender influences learning preferences in areas such as collaboration vs. competition and feeling-based vs. thinking-based approaches. While gender differences in learning preferences have been observed, research on whether addressing these differences significantly impacts achievement remains limited (Tomlinson et al., 2003).

Conclusion

In conclusion DI, rooted in learner-centred pedagogy, provides a flexible framework for addressing the diverse needs of learners in today's heterogeneous classrooms. By adopting key elements such as, content, process, product, and the learning environment, teachers can respond effectively to differences in readiness, interest, and learning profiles. This responsiveness allows educators to design more inclusive and supportive learning experiences that are meaningful and relevant to learners. Ultimately, DI not only fosters equity in education but also increases learners' motivation, participation, and the achievement of desired learning outcomes.

Section Two: Speaking Skill

Introduction

In everyday life, people share their ideas, express their feelings and build relationships with each other through the act of speaking. The latter, allows us to communicate effectively with those around us, whether at school, at work, or various social situations. Even if someone knows many words and grammar rules of a language, they still need to develop their speaking skill to use it in different real-life settings. Consequently, acknowledging the importance of speaking, understanding its components, and recognising the common challenges faced by its EFL learners are essential for creating a more engaging and productive environment.

1.2.1 Definition of Speaking Skill

Speaking is the main tool for communication with others. It is defined by Guralnik (1970) as saying things aloud, communicating by talking, making requests and giving speeches (Nunan, 2003). Speaking, in the words of Chaney (1998), is the act of creating and conveying meaning in various circumstances using both verbal and non-verbal symbols. It is an interactive process of meaning-making that involves the production, reception, and processing of information. Bygate (1987) describes speaking skill as the ability to make the appropriate choices of language forms, organise them in the correct order, communicate effectively like native speakers, and convey meanings that the audience can understand. Thus, speaking is considered as a critical ability that learners must develop in order to communicate successfully both inside and outside the classroom.

Speaking skill has been explored and defined in depth by numerous scholars, which makes it challenging to determine a single accurate definition. Therefore, to gain a deeper understanding, several definitions proposed by different authors are presented to provide broader perspectives.

According to Nation & Newton (2009), speaking is the process of converting thoughts or feelings into words in the form of meaningful linguistic sounds. This implies that, to communicate what people feel and think they need to produce meaningful words aloud. Brown and Yule (1983) assert this idea by stating that self-expression occurs through the use of language sounds. This leads to the conclusion that speaking is an indispensable skill, as without it, people would struggle to express themselves effectively.

Furthermore, Widdowson (1978) states that "...speaking is active, or productive. An act of communication through speaking is commonly performed in face-to-face interaction and occurs

as part of a dialogue or other form of verbal exchange” (p. 58). In other terms, speaking is about creating meaning and actively producing language in different ways. When people communicate, it often takes place face-to-face, representing a back-and-forth exchange of information in a real conversation.

In light of the definitions mentioned earlier, it can be concluded that speaking is an essential and interactive process of communication, that transforms abstract thoughts and feelings into meaningful speech units. It involves delivering messages in a clear and accurate manner so that mutual understanding can occur effectively.

1.2.2 Significance of Speaking

Humans are naturally able to speak even before they learn how to read or write. People interact verbally with one another far more often than they communicate through written forms such as reading and writing (Charles, 2024). However, speaking does not revolve solely around casual conversations with friends and family; speaking skills extend beyond simple communication, particularly in the field of education. These skills help develop learners’ critical thinking, personal growth, and engagement in collaborative social tasks. The more learners improve their speaking skills, the easier it becomes for teachers to prepare them for their future academic careers and to enhance their abilities and performance.

1.2.3 Components of Speaking

Being able to speak well in a foreign language is one of the most important aspects of using it in the first place. Hence, many EFL learners aim to develop their speaking skills in order to communicate successfully with others (Luoma, 2004). However, speaking is a complex language skill that requires the integration of different abilities simultaneously. This complexity is due to the need to express ideas clearly so that speakers can be understood while also interpreting and responding to others’ feedback. For better comprehension, it is important to recognise that speaking involves five key components: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension (Harris, 1969).

1.2.3.1 Pronunciation

According to Kline (1989), pronunciation refers to the clarity in which individuals articulate the words of a language when they speak. He also adds that “Pronunciation refers to the traditional or customary utterance of words” (p. 69). This definition suggests that pronunciation is

not only about saying words, but also about saying them in a way that aligns with conventional and accepted language use. It includes segmental features (vowels and consonants), as well as suprasegmental features such as stress patterns and intonation (Harris 1969). For Omari (2015, p. 29, as cited in Bousmaha & Chadli, 2021), “pronunciation is a critical speaking sub-skill and by far the starting point for every oral engagement since the success of any communication process is intimately related to the mastery of the sound system.” Therefore, learners who aim to improve their communicative skills should focus on practicing pronunciation, in addition to planning their speech, controlling voice projection, and rehearsing before speaking. To sum up, it can be deduced that individuals with accurate pronunciation are able to communicate more effectively than those with poor communication.

1.2.3.2 Grammar

Grammar is defined as a set of rules that specify the correct ordering of words at the sentence level (Nunan, 2003). This definition highlights that grammar involves not only the arrangement of words, but more significantly, the rules that govern their use at both sentence and phrase levels. Without respecting these rules, it becomes difficult to produce coherent and meaningful communication. Richards and Schmidt (2013) also defines grammar as the way in which words and phrases are combined to form sentences in a language. This suggests that sentences are considered acceptable only when they follow grammatical conventions. Thus, understanding grammatical structures is essential for effective communication and interaction.

1.2.3.3 Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the words people use when speaking about any topic in everyday conversation. Hornby (2006) states that vocabulary is all words a person knows or uses, the total words in a particular language, the words people use in communication, and a list of words with their meanings, especially in a foreign language context. This indicates that vocabulary primarily involves the selection and use of words to convey thoughts and feeling effectively. According to Graves (2000, as cited in Mukoroli, 2011), vocabulary represents the total collection of words that form an individual’s knowledge. It is an indispensable component of any language. That is why a limited vocabulary can hinder clear comprehension and negatively affect a speaker’s performance.

1.2.3.4 Fluency

Fluency refers to the ability to speak and write effortlessly and smoothly. According to Richards and Schmidt (2013), fluency describes a level of proficiency in communication,

including the ability to produce written or spoken language with ease. In other words, it is the ability to maintain continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties or breakdown in communication. In sum, fluency involves more than speaking smoothly; it is the ability to sustain a conversation by understanding and responding appropriately in different contexts.

1.2.3.5 Comprehension

According to Harris (1974), comprehension refers to the listener-oriented ability to understand spoken language and to respond appropriately during interaction. In simpler terms, it is the capacity to understand the lexis of a language and construct meaning from sentences. That is to say, the listener is able to grasp the meaning of messages conveyed by a speaker easily despite of any challenges. This understanding is of high importance between any speaker and listener; without it, communication cannot take place.

1.2.4 Challenges Faced by EFL Learners in Developing Speaking Skills

According to a study on EFL learners' speaking challenges at a Vietnamese university, learners' academic performance in speaking is often weakened by linguistic problems such as limited vocabulary, insufficient control of grammar, and low fluency (Du et al., 2025). The authors also report affective barriers such as language anxiety and embarrassment, which discourage learners from participating in oral tasks when speaking in front of peers, further undermining their confidence and willingness to practice.

According to Tuan and Mai (2015), EFL learners' speaking performance is often constrained by a range of interrelated problems that can be classified as follows:

1. Lack of ideas and linguistic resources: learners frequently struggle to think of what to say during speaking tasks, and when they do, they often lack the vocabulary and grammatical structures needed to express themselves naturally, leading them to rely on their mother tongue or simply read directly from the textbook rather than producing spontaneous speech.
2. Mother tongue interference: a significant tendency to translate information into the mother tongue before attempting to complete speaking tasks; this disrupts the natural flow of oral production and prevents learners from developing genuine communicative fluency in English.

3. Affective barriers: such as the fear of criticism and embarrassment in front of their peers, which discourages learners from actively participating in oral activities and significantly undermines their motivation to use English for self-expression.
4. Lack of motivation: learners often show a low drive to engage in speaking tasks, with many learners choosing silence or their native language over attempting to communicate in English.
5. Uneven participation: some learners might participate actively while others do so unwillingly, which can show that that speaking tasks are not sufficiently adapted to accommodate the diverse needs, abilities, and confidence levels of all learners.

1.2.5 Teaching English in Algerian Secondary Schools

English Teaching in Algerian secondary schools has changed over time in response to educational reforms, social needs, and political influences. Different circumstances and approaches have shaped the teaching of English over time.

1.2.5.1 Main Teaching Shifts

After gaining independence, Algeria's language in-education policy has faced many changes. At first, the country focused on Arabisation to build a national identity and create unity among Algerian people, based on a common language, religion and culture. This policy was designed to strengthen the political and cultural legitimacy, announced by president Ahmed Ben Bella on October 1962 (Benrabah 2007). Later, while working on distancing Algeria from the Francophonie, the president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, chose to adopt a more pragmatic stance by saying that even if Algeria does not belong to the Francophonie, it would be inappropriate to take a rigid attitude towards the French language (Morsly, 2004). Therefore, French remained important and extensively relied on in academic and scientific fields. Then, in the early 1990s Algeria made another important move concerning the language of instruction, by permitting four grade learners to choose between English and French as their initial foreign language instruction (Bennoune, 2000), reflecting the global influence of English in the world at that time. Moreover, there was no readiness on the part of the educational system to go for the option of English since there were not a lot of trained teachers and lack of teaching materials (Benrabah, 2013). Thus, the initiative was proved to be too ambitious for its time and was postponed for the next coming years. Later, Algerian citizens have started demanding the implementation of English in Algeria as a primary foreign language instead of French to be used in the educational institutions and everyday life (Guemide, 2024).

1.2.5.2 General Objectives of Teaching English in Algerian Secondary Schools

The importance of English is emphasised by syllabus-designers, who justify its inclusion in the secondary school curriculum. English is widely regarded as the language of science and technology, and learning English enables individuals to integrate into a broader linguistic community that relies on various forms of communication. Through active participation based on the exchange of ideas and experiences, Algerian learners can develop a better understanding of themselves and others.

The syllabi of Algerian secondary schools are designed around key objectives that aim to reinforce the four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Gasmi (2020), these primary objectives include:

- ❖ Providing learners with the necessary linguistic tools (grammar, vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation) to enable successful academic study at the university level or in a professional field.
- ❖ Helping learners develop their English proficiency use it in various communication contexts.
- ❖ Fostering learners intellectual and cognitive abilities, such as analysing, synthesising, and evaluating.
- ❖ Promoting learner's capacity for autonomous learning and self-assessment so they can continue expanding their knowledge.
- ❖ Enabling learners to use language effectively, both orally and in writing, in preparation for their professional careers (particularly in second- and third year syllabi)

Nowadays, curriculum designers state that education in the meantime should cater to the needs of the learners by building an environment that encourages autonomy and responsibilities in their learning process by following the suitable approach such the Competency Based Approach.

1.2.6. Previous Related Research on Differentiated Instruction and Speaking

Conducting an educational research paper entails a crucial examination of previous studies, as well as an exploration of the key challenges identified in already existing literature. Purnamaningwulan's study (2024) 'Evaluating the Efficacy of Differentiated Instruction in EFL Speaking classes A Classroom Action Research Study,' investigated the impact of DI on the

development of speaking skills among nine adult EFL learners with mixed proficiency levels in Indonesia. Over a seven-week period, following action research framework, it applied DI strategies through the differentiation of content, process, and product. The researcher came into a conclusion saying that DI is effective in responding to the challenges of mixed ability EFL speaking sequences as it fosters an inclusive learning environment that learners' individual needs and enhances their engagement. In another study conducted by Iqbal et al. (2020) "Impact of Differentiated Instruction on Student Learning: Perception of Students and Teachers," illustrated that DI has a significant impact on the teaching and learning process. It enables teachers to develop learners' speaking skills by creating a more engaging classroom environment and strengthening learner autonomy. Consequently, the findings suggest that educators should actively promote and further integrate DI as an effective instructional strategy. Finally, the study of Aprilia et al. (2023) on "Differentiated Learning Products Viewed from Students' Learning Styles: Its Impact on Students' Speaking Ability," revealed that implementing DI in speaking classes has a positive effect on learner's speaking proficiency. By adapting tasks that suit the diverse learning styles and needs of learners. In this way, learners will be more able to enhance and develop their speaking skills more effectively.

Conclusion

In conclusion, developing oral fluency plays a major role in ensuring effective communication, fostering personal development, and attaining success across different areas of life, especially within the EFL context. Its complexity lies in the integration of multiple interconnected components, all of which are very essential for achieving clear and meaningful interaction. Although learners often face obstacles such as inhibition and low self-esteem, these difficulties can be reduced through interactive teaching approaches and differentiated instruction. Thus, by giving greater emphasis to speaking skills in EFL classrooms, teachers can better prepare learners for real life communication situations.

Chapter Two

Data Presentation and

Interpretation of the Findings

Chapter Two: Data Presentation and Interpretation of the Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological guidelines and procedures adopted to achieve the objectives of the study. It begins by detailing the methodology used by the researchers, and then presents a comprehensive, presentation, analysis, discussion, and interpretation of the qualitative data collected in this study, drawing connections to the research questions and existing literature to provide clear and insightful answers.

Section One: Research Methodology

This section outlines the methodological choices made in the present study, including the research approach, research design, participants and sampling techniques, data collection tools, and data analysis procedures adopted to address the research questions.

2.1 Research Approach

In academic research, selecting a research approach is a critical step, as it determines how the study will be conducted and interpreted. According to Creswell (2014), a research approach is defined as the plans and procedures that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. To explore teachers' perspectives and challenges when implementing DI in speaking sequences, this study adopted a qualitative framework as the most suitable research guideline. This approach was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of the problem and allows researchers to interpret participants' points of view. As Pope and Mays (2020) explain, qualitative research is a methodological approach aimed at exploring and interpreting the meanings that individuals assign to social or human phenomena, making it suitable for gaining a richer and deeper understanding of people's lived experiences, challenge, and interpretation of specific issue.

2.2 Research Design

Beyond selecting an appropriate research approach, conducting academic research necessitates adopting a suitable research design. Creswell and Creswell (2018) define research design as a type of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that indicates the specific procedures for each study. Given the limited research on secondary EFL teachers' perspectives on DI

implementation in speaking sequences, an exploratory design was adopted. According to George and Merkus (2023), exploratory research is used to explore how or why something occurs when only a small amount of information is available on the topic, making it well suited for the purposes of this study.

2.3 Data Collection Tools and Procedures

In order to collect the data necessary to answer the research questions, two data collection tools were employed: a questionnaire and a structured interview, each of which is described in detail below.

2.3.1 Questionnaire

Data were collected through a questionnaire consisting of three sections of close-ended questions, including multiple-choice items, checkboxes, and Likert scale responses, some of which offer an “other” option to allow participants to provide responses beyond the listed choices. A single open-ended question was included at the end of the questionnaire, inviting respondents to share any additional comments or suggestions regarding the study’s topic (see Appendix A).

2.3.2 Interview

According to Kumar (2011), an interview is a person-to person interaction between two or more individuals with a specific purpose in mind. It is probably the most widely employed method in qualitative research as claimed by Bryman (2012). According to Kumar (2011), a structured interview entails the pre-preparation of a set of specific questions that the interviewer follows strictly. This type was adopted in the present study, as it allowed the researchers to gather focused and comparable responses from the inspector (see Appendix B).

2.3.3 Piloting and Validation

The data collection tools went through a validation process to ensure their accuracy and validity. They were initially reviewed by the supervisor, who provided critical feedback and suggestions for improvement. The tools were then sent to two additional university professors for further review, and their feedback was incorporated to refine and finalise them. This multi-step validation process confirmed the tools’ readiness for collecting reliable data.

2.4 Data Analysis Procedures

The qualitative nature of this research implies following qualitative data analysis procedures. The collected data were subsequently analysed thematically to identify recurring themes and explain teachers' main perspectives and challenges regarding the implementation of DI in speaking sequences. As Pope et al. (2007) explain, thematic analysis comprises the identification of the main recurrent and most significant themes arising from the data. They add that it is typically the method used for

identifying, grouping, and summarising findings from included studies in literature reviews. Once the data were organised and coded, the researchers proceeded to generate themes, which later analysed in order to draw meaningful conclusions about the research questions.

2.5 Research Participants and Sampling Technique

The population for this study consists of secondary school EFL teachers and an inspector in Algeria. Only teachers with direct experience in implementing DI strategies in speaking sequences were considered for participating.

2.5.1 Questionnaire

A purposive sampling technique was adopted for the questionnaire. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling strategy in which the researcher intentionally selects individuals who are best able to help understand the research problem. The identification of participants was carried out during a piloting stage, through which the researchers reached out to potential participants via casual conversations, direct messages, and informal professional networks (see Appendix C). Teachers who confirmed prior experience with DI implementation in speaking sequences were retained, resulting in a final sample of 29 secondary school EFL teachers to whom the questionnaire was subsequently administered online.

2.5.2 Interview

Convenience sampling was used to select the interview participant. According to Nikolopoulou (2023), convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling method in which participants are selected based on their accessibility. Several inspectors were contacted via email; however, some did not reply at all while others reported unavailability later. Eventually, one experienced inspector agreed to participate, and the interview was conducted via Google Meet instead of face to face due to logistical constraints. Despite the difficulties encountered, the inspector's professional expertise provided valuable and relevant insights that contributed meaningfully to the study's qualitative data.

Section Two: Data Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Findings

This section presents, analyses, and discusses the data collected through the questionnaire and the interview, with the aim of answering the research questions and addressing the objectives of the study.

2.1 Data Presentation

After collecting the data, the researchers proceeded to present and analyse the finding as follows:

2.1.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was structured according to the three main sections: general information about the participants, teachers' perspectives on the implementation of DI in speaking sequences, and the challenges faced by teachers when implementing DI.

2.1.1.1 General information

The first part of the questionnaire was designed to collect background information about the participants. A total of 29 teachers responded to the questionnaire, three of whom were male while the remaining 26 were female. This distribution is justified by accessibility and the availability of participants within the researchers' immediate surrounding. The predominance of female teachers is consistent with findings from other studies conducted in the Algerian EFL context; for instance, Naima (2019) and Baghoussi (2021) similarly reported that women constitute the vast majority of English teachers at middle and secondary school levels.

As for teaching experience, the data show that more than half of the participants (58.6%) have between 1 and 5 years of experience, suggesting that the sample is largely composed of relatively novice teachers. Meanwhile, 20.7% reported having over 16 years of experience, 13.8% fell within the 6–10-year range, and a small proportion (6.9%) had between 11 and 15 years of experience. This distribution indicates a varied sample in terms of professional background (see Figure 2.1).

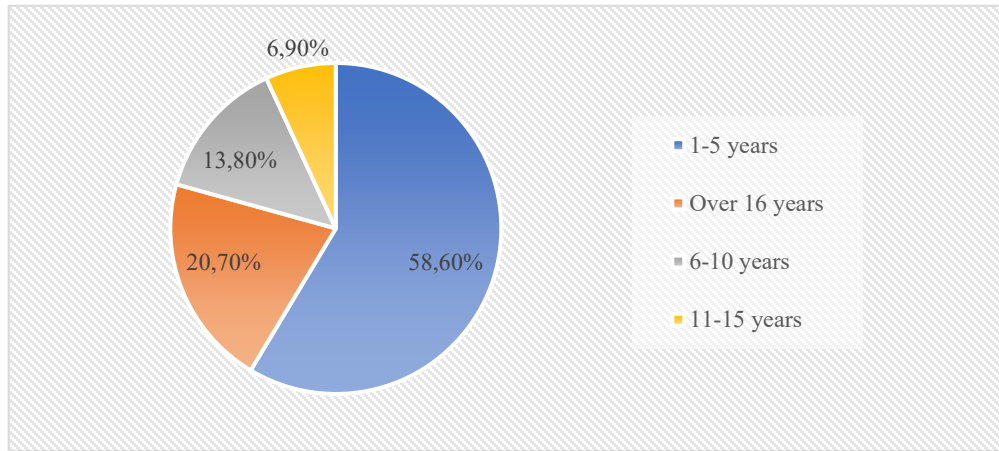


Figure 2.1

The participants' years of teaching experience

Concerning educational qualifications, the findings indicate that the majority of participants were ENSB graduates (55.2%), which reflects a relatively high level of academic preparation among the respondents. This was followed by those holding a Licence's degree (17.2%) and a Master's degree (13.8%). The remaining participants held either a PhD degree or were ENSO graduates, each representing a smaller proportion of the sample (see Figure 2.2).

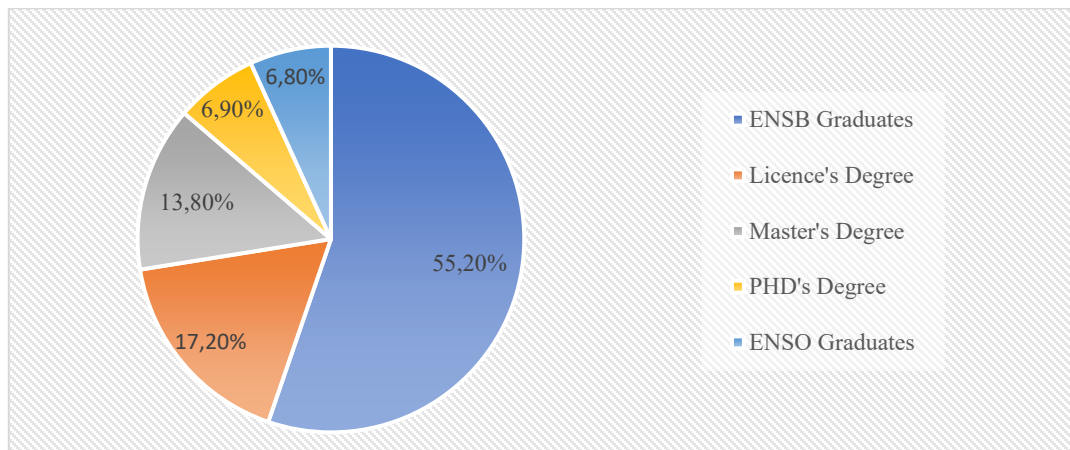


Figure 2.2

Teachers' Qualifications

With regard to class size, the data reveal that the majority of teachers (65.5%) reported managing classes of 31 to 40 learners, which points to a considerably large instructional setting. A further 24.1% indicated having classes of more than 40 learners, while only 13.8% worked with classes of 21 to 30 learners, and 10.3% reported class sizes of fewer than 20. These figures highlight

the challenging classroom conditions under which the participating teachers operate, as large class sizes are widely recognised as one of the primary obstacles to the effective implementation of DI (see Figure 2.3).

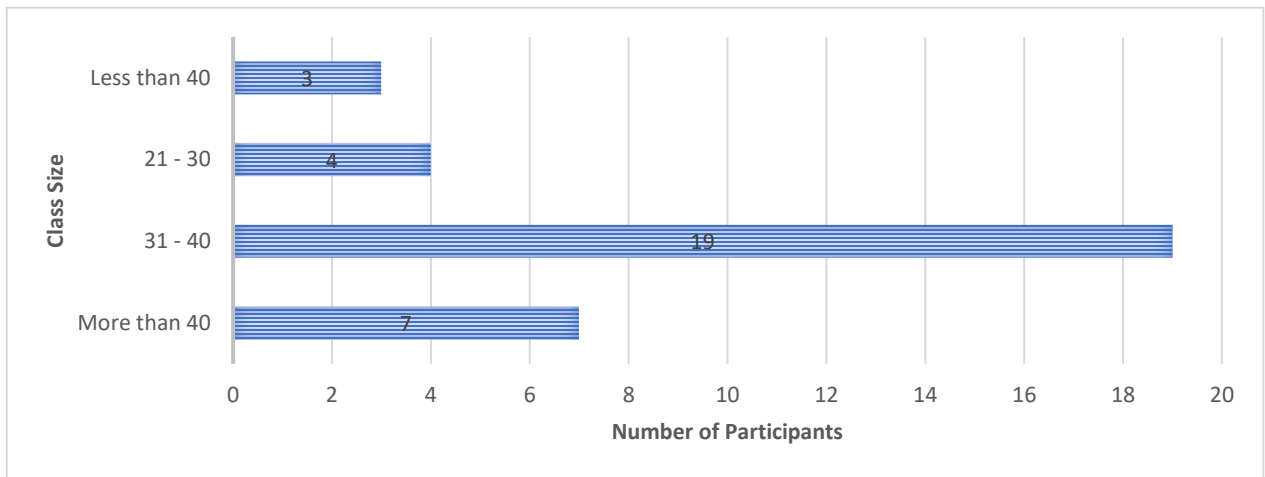


Figure 2.3

Average Class Size

2.1.1.2 Teachers' perspectives

This section presents the findings related to teachers' perceptions of DI in the Algerian context of speaking skill instruction.

When asked about how effective they consider DI to be in improving learners' speaking proficiency, the responses were overwhelmingly positive. The largest proportion of participants (41.4%) rated DI as "effective," while 37.9% considered it "very effective," together accounting for nearly 80% of the total responses. A further 20.7% described DI as "somewhat effective." Notably, none of the respondents selected "not effective" or "I don't know," which reflects teachers' strong and shared belief in DI as a valuable approach to developing speaking skills (see Figure 2.4).

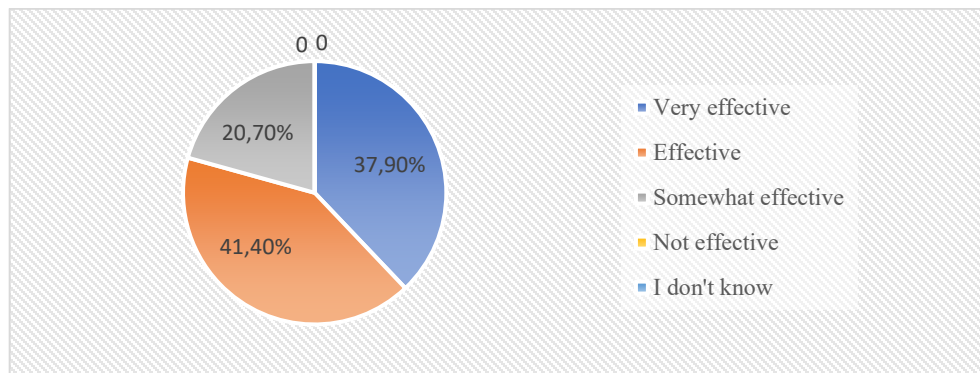


Figure 2.4

Effectiveness of Differentiated Instruction

Regarding the extent to which teachers believe DI can be applied to teaching speaking skills, the data reveal a more moderate stance. Most respondents (55.2%) indicated that applying DI to speaking instruction is "moderately possible," while 34.5% considered it "highly possible," and 10.3% viewed it as "completely possible." The absence of responses in the "slightly possible" and "not possible" categories is noteworthy, as it suggests that while teachers are broadly convinced of DI's applicability to speaking, some still have doubts- possibly because they are aware of the practical difficulties involved in its implementation (see Figure 2.5).

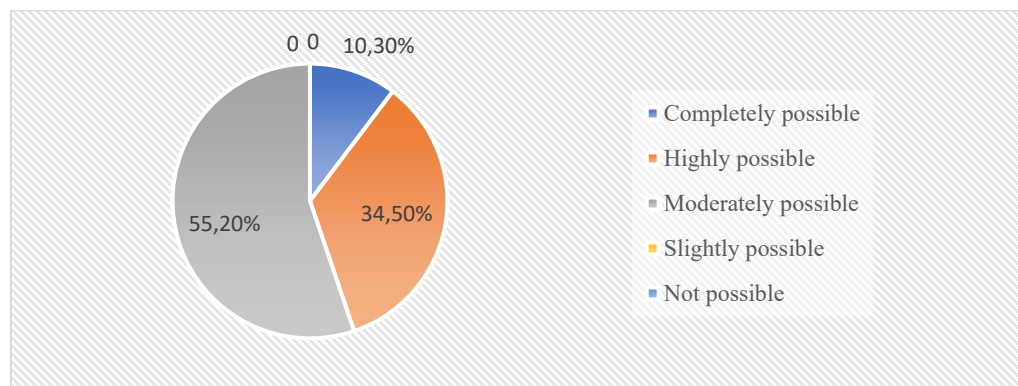


Figure 2.5
Feasibility of Differentiated Instruction

As for the frequency with which teachers currently implement DI strategies in their speaking sequences, the findings indicate that consistent and systematic application remains limited. More than half of the participants (51.7%) reported implementing DI strategies only "sometimes," while 31% indicated doing so "often." A smaller proportion (10.3%) reported "rarely" using DI strategies, and only 6.9% stated that they "always" implement them in every speaking sequence. No participant selected "never," which suggests that DI is at least nominally present in most teachers' practice, yet the predominance of the "sometimes" response points to an inconsistent and irregular application rather than a fully embedded instructional approach (see Figure 2.6).



Figure 2.6

Frequency of the Implementation of Differentiated Instruction

The next item in this section invited participants to rate their level of agreement with six statements related to DI in speaking sequences, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The findings are presented below (see Figure 2.7).

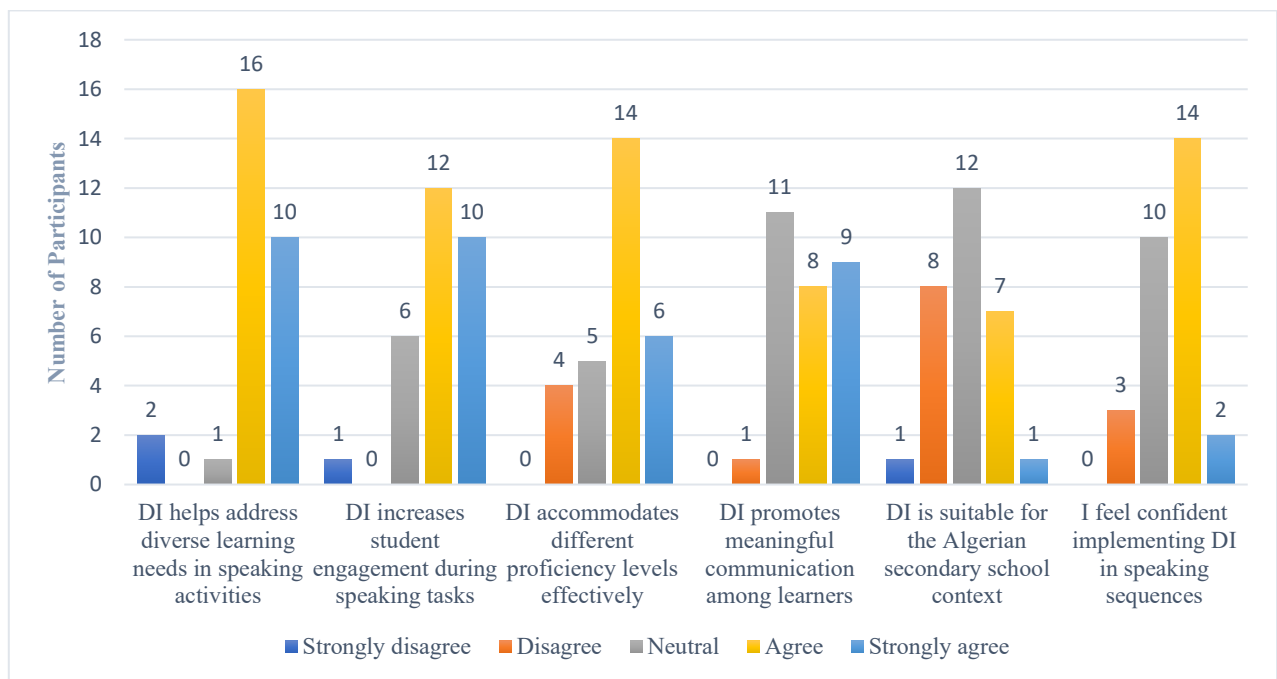


Figure 2.7

Teachers Perspectives about Differentiated Instruction

The statement that received the most positive response states that DI helps address diverse learning needs in speaking activities. The majority of participants agreed, with approximately 16 selecting "Agree" and 10 selecting "Strongly Agree," while very few expressed disagreement or neutrality. These results show that most teachers strongly believe that DI is a valuable tool for addressing learner diversity in speaking.

Regarding the statement that DI increases learners engagement during speaking tasks, responses were similarly positive, with around 12 participants selecting "Agree" and 10 selecting "Strongly Agree." A moderate number selected "Neutral," and only one participant expressed disagreement. This suggests that most teachers perceive DI as having a meaningful positive impact on learner engagement during speaking tasks.

Regarding the statement "DI accommodates different proficiency levels effectively," responses were still predominantly positive—with approximately 14 participants agreeing and 6 strongly agreeing—yet this statement attracted a slightly higher degree of uncertainty, with around 5 participants remaining neutral and 4 disagreeing. This pattern may reflect teachers' awareness that while DI is meant for addressing proficiency differences, its effective implementation across varying levels remains a practical challenge.

Responses to the fourth statement, "DI promotes meaningful communication among learners," were more distributed, with approximately 11 participants selecting "Neutral," 8 "Agree," and 9 "Strongly Agree," and only 1 disagreeing. The relatively high neutral response suggests that while teachers are broadly optimistic about DI's potential to foster meaningful communication, some remain uncertain—possibly because the link between DI strategies and authentic communicative outcomes is less immediately observable in practice.

The fifth statement produced the most divided responses of all six items and stands out as the most telling finding of this section. When asked about this statement "DI is suitable for the Algerian secondary school context," approximately 12 participants selected "Neutral," 8 "Disagree," 7 "Agree," and only 1 each selected "Strongly Agree" and "Strongly Disagree." This notable uncertainty and disagreement suggest that while teachers may value DI in principle, many hold serious doubts about whether it can realistically work within the Algerian secondary school context—given challenges such as large class sizes, curriculum constraints, and limited institutional support.

Responses to the final statement, "I feel confident implementing DI in speaking sequences," reveal a moderate level of confidence, with around 14 participants selecting "Agree" and 10 "Neutral," while only a small number expressed disagreement or strong agreement. The high proportion of neutral responses is noteworthy, as it suggests that a significant portion of teachers are neither fully confident nor lacking confidence when it comes to implementing DI in speaking sequences—pointing to a need for more targeted professional development and practical training in DI application.

The final item of this section asked participants to identify which DI strategies they find most valuable for speaking sequences, with the possibility of selecting multiple options. The results therefore reflect the relative prominence of each strategy across the sample rather than exclusive preferences (see Figure 2.8).

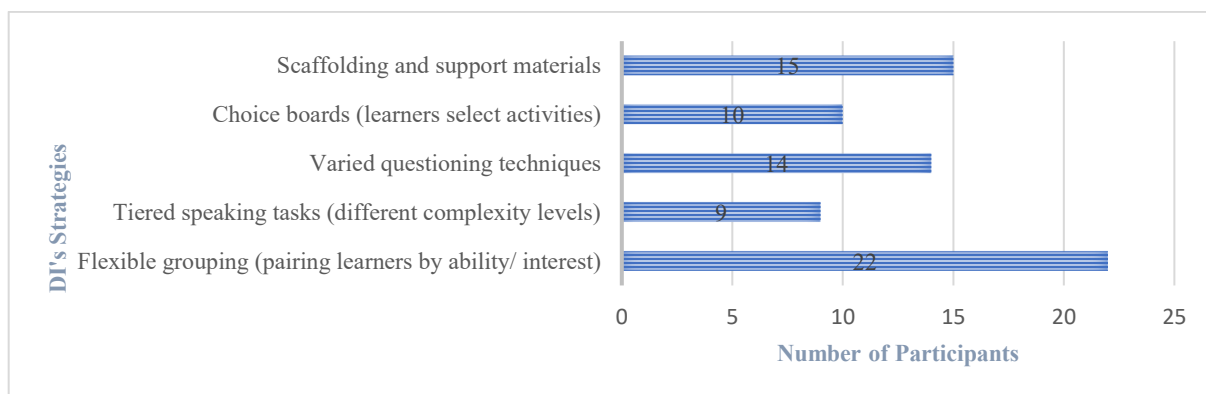


Figure 2.8

Teachers' Favourable Strategies of Differentiated Instruction

The most frequently selected strategy was flexible grouping; pairing or grouping learners according to ability or interest. It was selected by 22 participants (75.9%), making it by far the most favoured DI strategy among the respondents. This finding is particularly significant given the large class sizes reported earlier, as flexible grouping allows teachers to manage diversity within a crowded classroom by creating smaller, more homogeneous or purposefully heterogeneous interaction units.

Scaffolding and support materials ranked second, selected by 15 participants (51.7%), indicating that teachers place considerable value on providing structural support to help learners of varying proficiency levels engage with speaking tasks. This was closely followed by varied questioning techniques, selected by 14 respondents (48.3%), reflecting an awareness of the need to pitch questions at different cognitive and linguistic levels to engage all learners meaningfully. Choice boards, which allow learners to select their own activities, were selected by 10 participants (34.5%), while tiered speaking tasks designed at different levels of complexity - were selected by 9 (31%). The relatively lower endorsement of these two strategies may suggest that they are either less familiar to teachers or more difficult to implement within the constraints of the Algerian secondary school context. Finally, only 1 participant (3.4%) indicated an alternative strategy not listed among the options which is presentations and role play. These findings suggest that teachers tend toward DI strategies that are more immediately manageable and structurally straightforward to implement, such as flexible grouping and scaffolding, over those that require more extensive preparation or learner

autonomy, such as tiered tasks and choice boards. This preference pattern is consistent with the earlier finding that teachers' confidence in implementing DI remains moderate and further underscores the importance of equipping teachers with the practical tools and training necessary to diversify their DI strategy repertoire in speaking instruction.

2.1.1.3 Challenges Faced by Teachers

When asked how challenging they find implementing DI in their speaking sequences, most participants indicated a moderate to high level of difficulty. The largest proportion (44.8%) described implementation as "moderately challenging," while 34.5% found it "challenging" and 13.8% rated it as "very challenging." Together, these three categories account for approximately 93% of all responses, painting a clear picture of the difficulties teachers face when attempting to apply DI in speaking contexts. Only a small minority (around 6.9%) considered it "slightly challenging," and no participant selected "not challenging at all," further emphasizing that implementing DI in speaking sequences is widely perceived as a demanding task (see Figure 2.9).

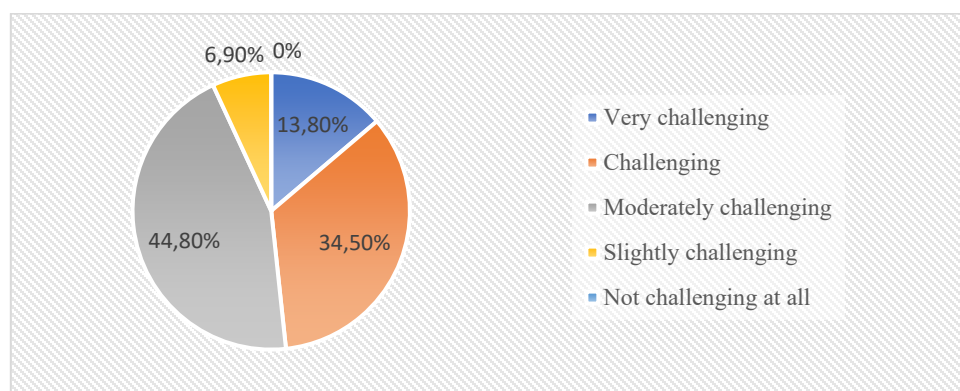


Figure 2.9

Perceived Level of Challenge in Implementing Differentiated Instruction in Speaking Sequences

These findings are consistent with the results discussed earlier, particularly the moderate confidence levels reported by teachers and their reservations about DI's suitability for the Algerian secondary school context. They also align with the broader literature, which consistently highlights implementation challenges as one of the primary obstacles to the widespread adoption of DI, especially in large and mixed-ability classrooms.

Participants were asked to rate the extent to which a set of thirteen factors challenge their implementation of DI in speaking sessions, using a five-point scale ranging from 1 (not challenging at all) to 5 (very challenging). The results reveal a telling picture of the real obstacles teachers face in practice (see Figure 2.10).

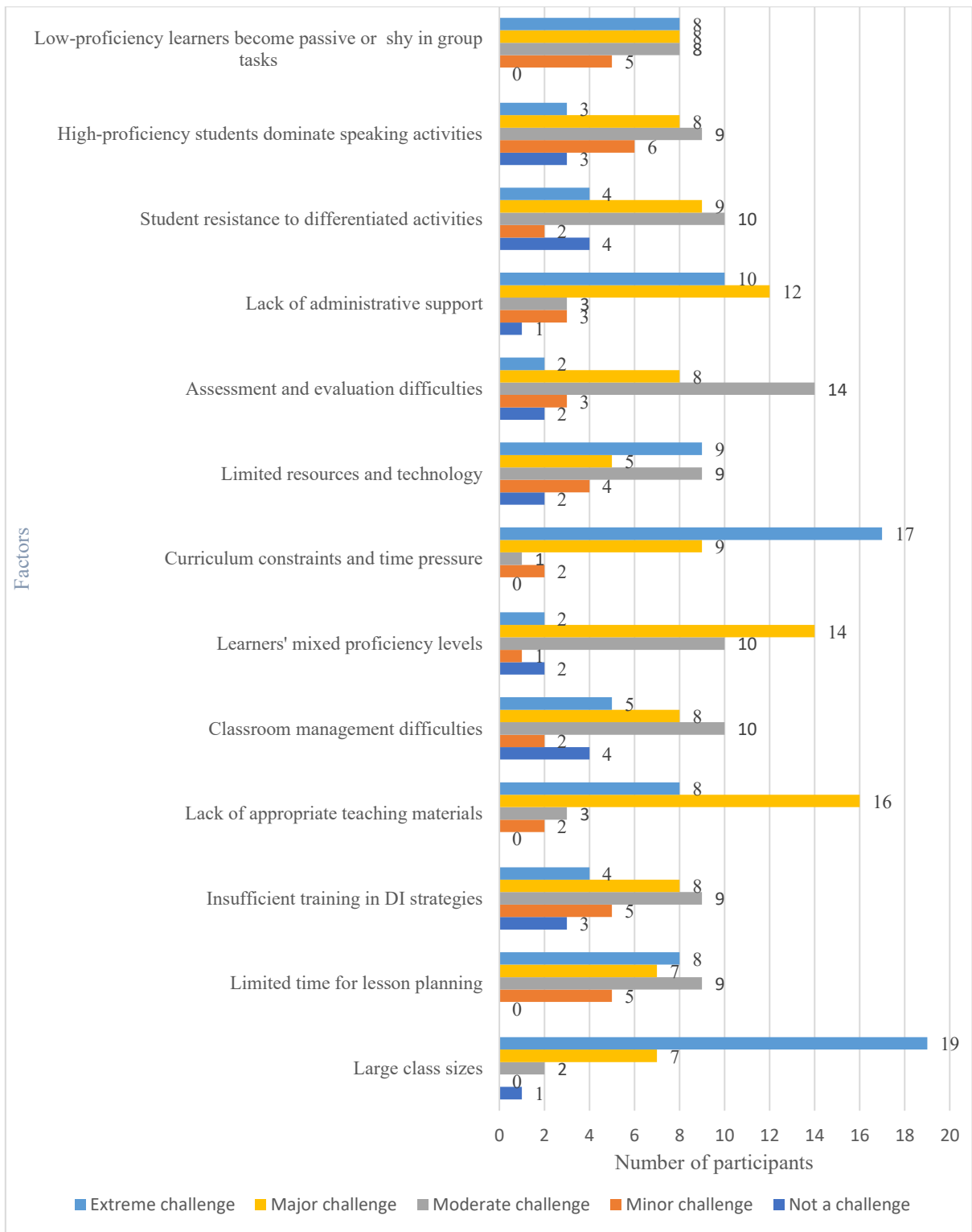


Figure 2.10
Factors Challenging Differentiated Instruction Implementation

Large class sizes emerged as the single most challenging factor, with approximately 19 out of 29 participants rating it as "very challenging." This finding echoes the class size data reported in the general information section, highlighting that overcrowded classrooms represent the primary barrier to effective DI implementation in the Algerian context.

Curriculum constraints and time pressure also received a notably high "very challenging" rating, indicating that the rigid nature of the curriculum and the pressure to cover content within limited time frames significantly hinder teachers' ability to instruction.

Lack of appropriate teaching materials was predominantly rated as "challenging" (level 4), suggesting that the absence of suitable and varied instructional resources constitutes a consistent and practical obstacle for teachers attempting to implement DI.

Limited time for lesson planning received a distributed response across levels 3, 4, and 5, indicating that most teachers find the preparation demands of DI moderately to highly challenging, reflecting the additional workload that differentiated lesson design places on teachers.

Insufficient training in DI strategies showed a more even distribution across the middle to higher levels of the scale, suggesting that while a lack of professional preparation is a recognised challenge, it is perceived as somewhat less acute than structural constraints such as class size and curriculum pressure.

Classroom management difficulties and learners' mixed proficiency levels both received predominantly moderate to high ratings, indicating that managing a diverse group of learners and maintaining order during differentiated activities are ongoing concerns for teachers, though not as overwhelming as the structural factors mentioned above.

Limited resources and technology were rated as moderately to very challenging, with responses spread across levels 3, 4, and 5, reflecting the broader issue of under-resourced classrooms in the Algerian educational context.

Assessment and evaluation difficulties were largely rated as moderately challenging (level 3 dominant), suggesting that while adapting assessment to DI is a recognised difficulty, it is viewed as more manageable compared to structural and resource-related challenges.

Lack of administrative support was notably rated as challenging (level 4 dominant), pointing to an institutional dimension of the problem; teachers feel that they do not receive sufficient backing from school administration when attempting to implement innovative instructional approaches.

Finally, learner resistance to differentiated activities, high-proficiency learners dominating speaking tasks, and low-proficiency learners becoming passive in group tasks all received moderate rating, indicating that learner-related dynamics present a real but comparatively less acute challenge. Nevertheless, these issues can undermine the effectiveness of DI, particularly in speaking contexts where participation and confidence are central to learning outcomes.

The final item of this section invited participants to indicate, based on their own experience, what types of support they believe would be most helpful for effectively implementing DI, with the possibility of selecting multiple options. The results provide a clear and direct expression of teachers' needs and priorities (see Figure 2.11).

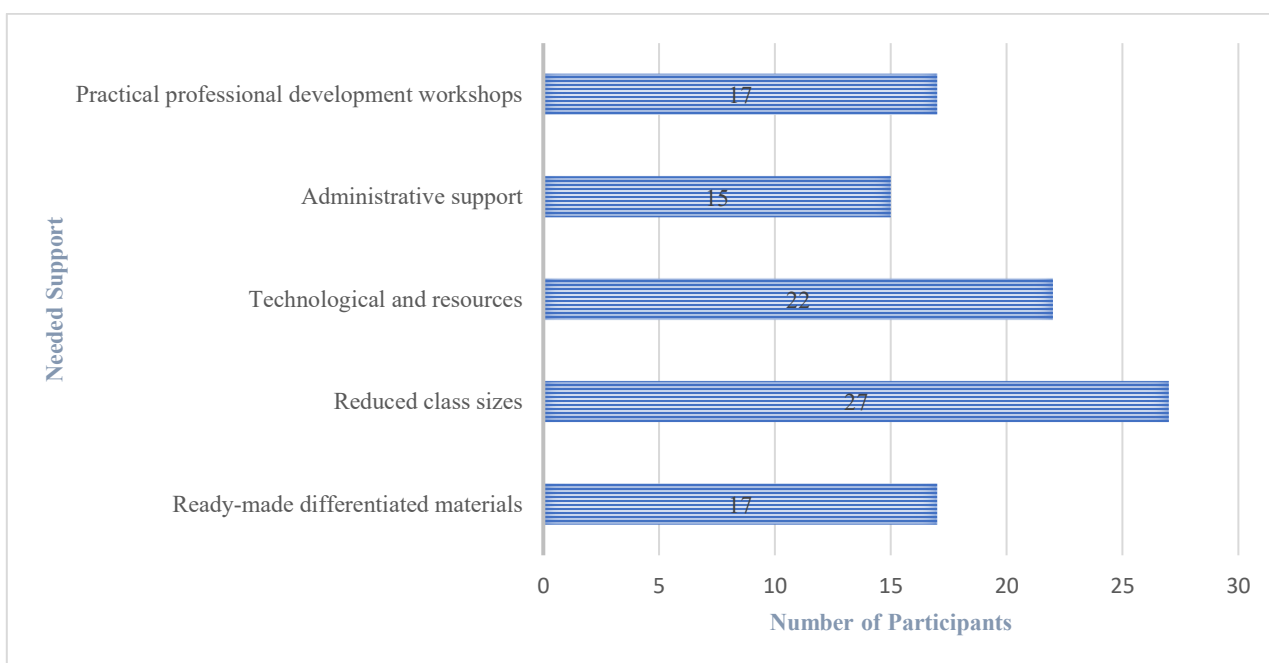


Figure 2.11

Types of Support Needed for Effective Implementation of Differentiated Instruction

Reduced class sizes was the most frequently selected form of support, selected by 27 out of 29 participants (93.1%), reinforcing the earlier finding that large class sizes represent the greatest structural barrier to DI implementation. Technology and resources ranked second (75.9%), reflecting teachers' awareness that access to adequate instructional tools is essential for delivering differentiated learning experiences. Ready-made differentiated materials and practical professional development workshops were equally selected by 17 participants (58.6%), suggesting that teachers need support on two fronts simultaneously: access to classroom-ready and hands-on training. Finally, administrative support was selected by 51.7% of participants, indicating that institutional backing is also considered

an important factor of successful DI implementation. These findings paint a coherent and consistent picture when read alongside the challenges identified in the previous item. The support teachers call for directly mirrors the obstacles they face: smaller classes to address overcrowding, better resources to compensate for material shortages, practical training to fill gaps in professional preparation, and institutional backing to create a more enabling environment. Together, these results highlight that effective DI implementation cannot rest on teachers' individual efforts alone but requires coordinated support at both the institutional and policy levels.

The final question of the questionnaire was open-ended, inviting participants to freely share any suggestions or comments regarding the implementation of DI in speaking sequences. Out of 29 respondents, 24 provided substantive responses while 5 selected not to comment. The responses, though varied in length and depth, converged around several recurring themes that closely echo and enrich the findings discussed earlier (see Appendix B).

The most frequently raised concern was once again the issue of large class sizes, with several teachers explicitly stating that effective DI becomes practically impossible beyond a certain number of learners. One participant noted that, “One of the biggest challenges is the number of learners in class; I sometimes have more than 45 learners and it is impossible to make everyone talk and participate.” Another one stated that “the main issue in implementing DI is the big number of learners in class. I can't always implement it if it is over 30 learners.” And another respondent suggested reducing class sizes to between 15 and 20 learners as a necessary condition for meaningful DI implementation.

Alongside this, curriculum constraints were highlighted as a major obstacle, with calls to reduce the volume of content covered annually in order to create space for more flexible, differentiated speaking practice”.

A particularly significant observation raised by several participants concerns the absence of formal oral assessment in the Algerian educational system. One teacher argued that speaking, despite being a fundamental skill for real-life communication, remains entirely absent from formal examinations, and suggested that DI should be extended to encompass the assessment of speaking, calling for oral examinations comparable to written ones. This suggests that the marginalisation of speaking is not merely a pedagogical issue, but a systemic one rooted in assessment policy.

Several teachers emphasised the need for practical professional training to enable effective DI implementation. Suggestions included providing hands-on workshops, equipping teachers with

concrete strategies, and training learners to engage with differentiated activities. As one teacher noted, many learners have never been exposed to such approaches before. Another participant highlighted, “teachers have to be patient and selective when applying DI in speaking sequences,” implying that successful implementation requires both the mindset and the practical skills to make informed instructional decisions.

Several teachers offered concrete pedagogical suggestions, including designing tiered speaking tasks with varying levels of complexity—such as shorter role-plays for beginners and more complex discussions for advanced learners—as well as using flexible grouping to manage mixed-proficiency classes. One teacher specifically recommended assigning distinct roles within group tasks, such as speaker, note-taker, and question-asker, adding, “... so that high-proficiency learners would not dominate the low-proficiency ones.” Others stressed the importance of creating a positive classroom atmosphere, adjusting tasks to learners' interests, and keeping instructions clear and activities flexible.

Some responses touched on the affective dimension of DI implementation, noting that it helps shy or less confident learners feel supported, and that prioritising participation over correctness is particularly effective in early stages of learning. One response, notably personal in tone, captured the frustration of many: “It hurts when a teacher is familiar with the implementation of DI and other educational techniques, but he remains a victim of different circumstances”. A reflection that humanises the challenges reported throughout the questionnaire.

Additional suggestions included allowing audio or video recording as an alternative assessment tool, mitigating the negative effects of summative assessments that focus exclusively on written skills, and providing teachers and learners with more advanced and appropriate instructional materials.

2.1.2 Interview

In this study, a structured interview was conducted with an experienced secondary school inspector in order to gather professional insights relevant to the research topic. The interview questions were prepared in advance and shared with the inspector before the meeting, allowing him to familiarise himself with the topics addressed. Initial contact was established through a mutual colleague, who facilitated the communication and confirmed the inspector's availability and willingness to participate. Due to logistical constraints, a face-to-face interview was not feasible; an online meeting was therefore conducted via Google Meet as a practical alternative (see Appendix D).

When asked about his opinion regarding the teaching of speaking skills in the Algerian context, the inspector emphasised that speaking is the most neglected skill in Algerian secondary school textbooks. He noted that current textbooks, designed around 2006, contain no dedicated speaking activities, focusing instead on reading and writing tasks. He further stressed that speaking should be considered the ultimate productive outcome of listening, and that all classroom activities should lead toward oral production. He also highlighted the importance of helping learners interpret instructions before attempting any speaking task, as misunderstanding instructions prevents any meaningful performance.

Regarding the question on DI's applicability within the current Algerian educational system, the inspector stated clearly that DI is not applicable in its current conditions, primarily because teachers do not invest in knowing their learners' profiles at the beginning of the year. He argued that knowing learners—their learning styles, personalities, and abilities—is the fundamental prerequisite for any differentiation. He confirmed that most Algerian teachers deliver one-size-fits-all lessons, failing to account for the diversity present in their classrooms, and that advanced learners are often left unstimulated while struggling learners are left behind.

Answering the third question, the inspector offered several practical suggestions. He dismissed the lack of materials as a valid excuse, arguing that mobile phones alone provide sufficient resources for speaking activities, and that the real problem is teachers' lack of training. He recommended the use of choral repetition as a strategy to encourage shy learners to speak without fear of individual exposure. He also advocated for positive feedback as a central element of any speaking instruction, stressing that correcting learners mid-speech discourages participation and that mistakes should be addressed collectively and anonymously after the activity rather than through immediate correction.

Since the main feature of classes in Algeria is crowdedness, the interviewee recommended the use of moving lines and moving circles as highly effective strategies for large classes. In moving lines, learners are arranged in two facing rows and practice a speaking task simultaneously with a partner before rotating, ensuring that all learners—including shy ones—speak at the same time without being individually exposed. He also stressed the importance of classroom management from day one, including learning learners names, using learner-led review at the beginning of each session, and incorporating formative assessment throughout the lesson to ensure sustained attention and participation.

In the final question, and in response to how assessment methods could be improved to better reflect learners' speaking abilities, the inspector strongly recommended the use of success grids as a tool for both assessment and self-assessment. A success grid outlines clear criteria—such as vocabulary use, fluency, grammar, and speaking strategies—that learners are made aware of before performing a task, allowing them to self-evaluate and peer-evaluate meaningfully. He also suggested that when assessing peers, learners should be instructed to note only positive observations, while the teacher collects errors anonymously and addresses them collectively the following day, creating a safe and encouraging assessment environment.

2.2 Data Analysis

The following part presents a thematic analysis of the data collected through the questionnaire and the structured interview. After organising and presenting the data, the researchers derived the recurring themes from the participants' responses, which were subsequently classified in a table (see Table 2.1 below). Each theme provides a comprehensive framework for interpreting the findings in relation to the research questions guiding this study. This structured analysis forms the basis for the subsequent interpretation that follows.

Themes	Sub-themes
Effectiveness of Differentiated Instruction	Positive perception of Differentiated Instruction
Feasibility of Differentiated Instruction in speaking	Suitability of Differentiated Instruction for speaking development
	Most valuable strategies
Differentiated Instruction implementation in practice	Restricted application of Differentiated Instruction
	The gap between positive perception and inconsistent practice
	Lack of professional training
Challenges of Differentiated Instruction	Curriculum Constraints including neglect of speaking
	Large Class sizes
	Teachers' lack of knowledge of learners' profiles
Suggestions for improvement	Positive feedback and learner motivation
	Management of large classrooms
	Reforming assessment to reflect learners' speaking abilities

Table 2.1

Themes and Sub-themes Emerging from the Thematic Analysis

Theme 1: Effectiveness of Differentiated Instruction

The data consistently shows that teachers recognise DI as a valuable and effective pedagogical approach for addressing learner diversity in speaking sequences. Nearly 80% of respondents rated DI as either "effective" or "very effective," and none selected "not effective" or "I don't know."

Furthermore, the Likert-scale responses revealed strong agreement with statements affirming DI's capacity to address diverse learning needs and enhance learner engagement during speaking tasks. In addition, the interviewed inspector also acknowledged the value of DI, emphasising that one-size-fits-all instruction fails to meet the diverse needs of learners. This convergence between teachers' perspectives and the inspector's professional insights further reinforces the finding that DI is widely recognised as a valuable and necessary approach in the Algerian secondary school EFL context.

Theme 2: Feasibility of Differentiated Instruction in Speaking

While teachers broadly recognised DI's value, their responses regarding its feasibility in speaking contexts revealed a more moderate stance. The majority of participants (55.2%) indicated that applying DI to speaking instruction is "moderately possible," while 34.5% considered it "highly possible" and 10.3% viewed it as "completely possible." The absence of responses in the "slightly possible" and "not possible" categories suggests that teachers are generally convinced of DI's applicability, yet the predominance of "moderately possible" indicates that reservations persist, likely stemming from an awareness of the practical constraints involved.

Regarding the most valuable strategies for speaking sequences, flexible grouping emerged as the most favoured (75.9%), followed by scaffolding and support materials (51.7%) and varied questioning techniques (48.3%), reflecting teachers' preference for strategies that are manageable and immediately applicable within their classroom realities.

Theme 3: Differentiated Instruction Implementation in Practice

Despite the overwhelmingly positive perceptions reported above, the data reveal a significant gap between what teachers believe about DI and how consistently they implement it in their speaking sequences. Almost half of the participants (51.7%) reported implementing DI strategies only "sometimes," and only 6.9% stated that they "always" do so. Moreover, while teachers broadly affirmed DI's value, a considerable proportion expressed only moderate confidence in their ability to implement it, and the statement "DI is suitable for the Algerian secondary school context" produced the most divided responses of all Likert-scale items. This finding is further reinforced by the inspector, who stated that most Algerian teachers rarely implement DI and that many are not fully aware of its underlying principles or practical applications, attributing this to a lack of professional training and a persistent tendency to rely on conventional, teacher-centred instructional methods.

Theme 4: Challenges of Differentiated Instruction

The data reveal that the challenges of implementing DI in speaking sequences in Algeria are deeply rooted in broader systemic issues; mainly the longstanding neglect of speaking as a core language skill. This fundamental gap creates an unfavourable environment for DI implementation in speaking, as teachers are left without adequate instructional resources or institutional guidance to support differentiated oral activities. Also, large class sizes emerged as the most severe obstacle, rated as "very challenging" by approximately 19 out of 29 participants. This was closely followed by curriculum constraints and time pressure, which were also predominantly rated as highly challenging, reflecting the rigid nature of the Algerian secondary school curriculum and the limited time available for flexible differentiated instruction. Additionally, insufficient professional training, lack of appropriate teaching materials, and limited administrative and institutional support were all identified as significant challenges. Teachers also reported learner-related difficulties including high-proficiency learners dominating speaking in the activities. These findings are powerfully reinforced by the inspector, who confirmed that most teachers lack the training necessary to implement DI effectively and that the prevailing educational conditions—particularly overcrowded classrooms and a curriculum that neglects speaking - make consistent DI implementation extremely difficult in the Algerian secondary school context.

Theme 5: Suggestions for Improvement

The data gathered from both the questionnaire and the interview converged around three main suggestions for improving DI implementation in speaking sequences. First, teachers overwhelmingly called for reduced class sizes (93.1%), identifying this as the single most important condition for making DI work in practice, alongside better access to technology, resources, and ready-made differentiated materials. Second, the teachers and the inspector emphasised the critical importance of positive feedback and learner motivation, with the inspector stressing that praising learners' attempts to speak—rather than immediately correcting errors—fosters confidence and gradually develops oral proficiency. He further recommended the use of moving line circles as a practical strategy for ensuring inclusive participation in large classes. Third, the inspector highlighted the importance of reforming assessment practices to better reflect learners' speaking abilities, recommending the use of success grids as structured self and peer assessment tools that make learning criteria transparent and empower learners to monitor their own progress. These suggestions point to the need for coordinated action at

both the classroom and institutional levels to create the conditions necessary for effective and sustainable DI implementation in Algerian secondary school EFL classrooms

2.3 Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings

The following part discusses and interprets the findings obtained from the thematic analysis of the data collected through the questionnaire and interview. The discussion is organised around three research question guiding this study, with the aim of providing clear, evidence-based answers supported by the existing literature.

Research Question 1: What perspectives do secondary school English teachers express towards DI implementation in speaking sequences?

The findings related to this question reveal that Algerian secondary school EFL teachers hold positive perspectives on DI in the context of speaking instruction. The data consistently demonstrated that teachers recognise DI as a valuable and effective pedagogical approach. These findings are consistent with Tomlinson (2017), who argues that DI is one of the most responsive and inclusive approaches available to educators, precisely because it acknowledges and accommodates the inevitable diversity present in any language classroom.

However, despite this positive outlook, the data also revealed a significant gap between teachers' beliefs about DI and their actual implementation of it in speaking sequences. This gap between attitude and practice is a well-documented phenomenon in educational research. Further, the inspector confirmed this inconsistency, stating that most Algerian teachers rarely implement DI meaningfully and that many remain unaware of its underlying principles or practical applications, attributing this to a persistent reliance on teacher-centred methods and a lack of professional training. Regarding the strategies teachers find most valuable for speaking sequences, the findings reveal a clear preference for flexible grouping (75.9%), scaffolding and support materials (51.7%), and varied questioning techniques (48.3%)—all of which are relatively straightforward and manageable within existing classroom constraints. In contrast, strategies requiring greater preparation or learner autonomy, such as tiered tasks and choice boards, received lower endorsement. This preference pattern reflects a pragmatic orientation among teachers, consistent with the findings of Smit and Humpert (2012), who observed that teachers tend to favour DI strategies that are less time-consuming and more easily integrated into existing lesson structures, particularly under resource and time constraints.

Research Question 2: What challenges do secondary school English teachers face when implementing DI in speaking sequences?

The findings related to the second research question reveal that the challenges of implementing DI in speaking sequences in Algeria operate on multiple levels: systemic, institutional, material based, and interpersonal. Still, all of them are deeply rooted in the longstanding neglect of speaking as a core language skill within the Algerian educational system. At the systemic level, the inspector confirmed that current secondary school textbooks contain no dedicated speaking tasks, reflecting a curriculum that has historically prioritised written expression over oral communication. This gap was further highlighted by teachers, who identified curriculum constraints and time pressure as among the most severe barriers to DI implementation. These findings align with Omari (2017, as cited in Belit & Aliouchouche, 2022), who concluded that the principles of the Algerian English curriculum are not reflected in teachers' actual classroom practices, with most instructional attention devoted to reading, writing, and grammar rather than speaking.

At the institutional level, large class sizes emerged as the single most severe obstacle. This finding is particularly significant given that 65.5% of participants reported managing classes of between 31 and 40 learners, and 24.1% reported classes of more than 40-conditions that make meaningful differentiation extremely difficult to sustain. The inspector also confirmed that overcrowded classrooms represent one of the most persistent and debilitating constraints on effective teaching in Algeria.

At the professional level, insufficient training emerged as a critical challenge, with teachers reporting limited knowledge of DI strategies and a lack of practical professional development opportunities. The inspector reinforced this finding, arguing that many teachers do not even know their learners' profiles which he identified as the important prerequisite for any meaningful differentiation. As Tomlinson and Moon (2013) argue, effective DI requires not only a positive disposition toward differentiation but also the professional knowledge and institutional support necessary to sustain it over time both of which appear to be lacking in the Algerian secondary school context.

Finally, learner-related challenges were also identified, including high-proficiency learners dominating speaking activities and low-proficiency learners becoming passive or shy to participate, fearing the judgments of their peers. In this regard, Du et al. (2025) emphasise on carefully considering

the affective barriers such as language anxiety and embarrassment, because they are one of the main factors leading to learners' discouragement to participate in speaking tasks .

Research Question 3: What suggestions can be made to improve the implementation of DI to enhance learners' speaking skills in the Algerian context?

The findings evolved around three main areas of improvement. First, a percentage of 93.1% of teachers called for reduced class sizes as the most important structural condition for effective DI implementation, alongside better access to technology and ready-made differentiated materials.

Second, the inspector strongly recommended the use of positive feedback and motivational strategies, stressing that praising learners' attempts to speak rather than correcting errors immediately fosters confidence and gradually develops oral proficiency. This recommendation is closely supported by Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, which posits that an individual's belief in their own capacity to perform a given task plays a pivotal role in determining their engagement and persistence (as cited in Bhati & Sethy, 2022). In the context of speaking instruction, positive feedback from the teacher serves as a powerful source of verbal persuasion, helping learners build confidence in their speaking abilities, reducing their fear of making mistakes, and gradually lifting their self-efficacy to the point where they become more willing and motivated to participate in oral activities. This aligns with Krashen's (1992) affective filter hypothesis, which similarly posits that reducing emotional and psychological barriers is essential for effective language acquisition. He also recommended moving line circles as a practical strategy for ensuring inclusive participation in large classes.

Third, the teachers and the inspector highlighted the urgent need to reform assessment practices to include oral components, with the inspector recommending success grids as transparent and learner-centred assessment tools that empower learners to monitor their own progress. Together, these suggestions call for coordinated action at both the classroom and policy levels, as Fuchs (2010, as cited in Lunsford, 2017) reminds us that "a teacher's negative feelings can have a tremendous impact on behaviours, student learning and the overall success of the inclusion program" - underlining that sustainable improvement requires not only structural reform but also building teachers' confidence, motivation, and professional readiness to implement DI effectively.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed and systematic thematic analysis of the data collected through a teacher questionnaire and a structured interview, exploring key themes related to teachers' perspectives on DI, the challenges they face when implementing it in speaking sequences, and the suggestions they propose for improvement. The analysis highlighted both the positive perceptions teachers hold toward DI and the significant gap that persists between these perceptions and their actual classroom practice, shedding light on the complex realities of DI implementation in the Algerian secondary school EFL context. The chapter offered a meaningful interpretation by connecting the findings to the three research questions, for an understanding of how teachers perceive, apply, and experience DI in speaking sequences. The results were linked to existing literature, situating the study within the broader academic field and reinforcing the validity of the challenges and suggestions identified. These comprehensive findings have prepared the groundwork for the overall conclusions of the study and recommendations for future research.

General Conclusion

Heterogeneity is a natural feature of any language classroom, as learners inevitably differ from one another in terms of proficiency level, learning needs, interests, and abilities. Teaching them all in the same way through a one-size-fits-all approach does not adequately address this natural diversity, and often results in disengagement, unequal participation, and widening proficiency gaps. Variety and responsiveness are therefore essential to ensure that all learners' differences are genuinely addressed. It is within this perspective that DI emerged as a promising pedagogical solution, one that adapts content, process, and product to accommodate individual learning differences and foster more inclusive and effective classroom environments.

This study represented an attempt to explore secondary school EFL teachers' perspectives on DI and the challenges they face when implementing it in speaking sequences in the Algerian educational context. Through a comprehensive literature review, a teacher questionnaire, and a structured interview with an experienced secondary school inspector. This study has attempted to provide meaningful insights into how teachers perceive DI, how they apply it in practice, and what obstacles they encounter along the way, thereby answering the following research questions: "What are secondary school EFL teachers' perspectives on implementing DI in speaking sequences?", "What challenges do secondary school EFL teachers face when implementing DI in speaking sequences?", and "What suggestions can be made to improve the implementation of DI to enhance learners' speaking skills in the Algerian context?"

The research findings revealed that the participating teachers hold largely positive perspectives on DI, recognising its value in addressing learner diversity, enhancing learner engagement, and developing speaking skill. In this regard, teachers broadly affirmed that DI is effective in accommodating different proficiency levels and promoting meaningful communication among learners. Furthermore, the most favoured DI strategies among participants included flexible grouping, scaffolding and support materials, and varied questioning techniques, all of which reflect a practical and manageable approach to differentiation within the constraints of the Algerian secondary school context.

However, despite this positive outlook, the findings also revealed a significant gap between teachers' beliefs about DI and its implementation in speaking sequences. The majority of teachers reported implementing DI only sometimes rather than consistently, and expressed moderate rather than strong confidence in their ability to do so. This gap is largely explained by the considerable

challenges teachers identified, among which is the persistent problem of large class sizes, rated overwhelmingly as the most severe obstacle to effective DI implementation. Additional challenges included curriculum constraints and time pressure, insufficient professional training in DI strategies, the lack of appropriate teaching materials, and limited administrative and institutional support. These findings paint a coherent picture of teachers who are willing and aware of DI's value, yet held back by systemic conditions that are largely beyond their individual control.

Inspector's insights further enriched these findings by providing a broader institutional perspective, confirming that the challenges identified by teachers are deeply rooted in the structural and policy dimensions of the Algerian educational system, particularly the longstanding neglect of speaking instruction and oral assessment in favour of written examinations.

The alignment of these findings with existing literature reinforces both the validity and significance of the present study's contributions to the field of English language teaching in Algeria. The evidence gathered supports the view that DI holds real promise as a pedagogical approach for addressing learner diversity and improving speaking instruction, but its effective and consistent implementation requires far more than individual teacher effort. It demands coordinated action at the institutional and policy levels, including reduced class sizes, curriculum reform, provision of adequate resources, practical and sustained professional development opportunities.

In conclusion, this research was an attempt to contribute to the field of EFL education in Algeria by shedding light on an under-researched yet critically important dimension of language teaching; the implementation of DI in speaking sequences at the secondary school level. The study's findings advocate for a shift away from uniform, teacher-centred instructional approaches toward more inclusive, flexible, and learner-centred methodologies that genuinely recognise and respond to individual differences. It is hoped that the insights offered hereby will inform future research, guide educational decision-makers, and encourage teachers to continue exploring differentiated approaches despite the challenges they face, in pursuit of a more equitable and effective language learning experience for all learners.

Above all, it is worth emphasising that learning a foreign language is fundamentally about gaining a living means of communication; a tongue through which one can connect, express, and interact with others across cultures and contexts. In the Algerian educational reality, however, this purpose is often overshadowed by a deeply rooted focus on written examinations that measure linguistic knowledge rather than communicative ability. This prevailing view must be reconsidered in

favour of one that truly honours the purpose of foreign language learning. Speaking is not a secondary skill to be neglected for the sake of grammar and writing; it is the very heart of language use. Until this shift in perspective takes root at both the institutional and pedagogical levels, approaches such as DI will remain unable to reach their full potential in a system that has yet to fully embrace what it truly means to learn a language.

1. Recommendation for Future Research

Based on the findings identified in this study, the following recommendations are suggested for future research:

- Consider conducting future research through an experimental longitudinal study tests the practical suggestions and recommendations proposed in the present study. Such research could investigate the extent to which addressing and reducing the key challenges identified by teachers, including large class sizes, curriculum constraints, insufficient professional training, and limited resources, effectively improves DI's implementation in speaking sequences over time. This would allow future researchers to move beyond exploration toward concrete, evidence-based conclusions about what works, under what conditions, and to what extent, ultimately contributing to more informed and practical solutions for DI implementation in Algerian secondary school EFL classrooms.
- Consider conducting future research by adopting a mixed-methods approach with a larger and more geographically diverse sample drawn from different regions of Algeria. Combining both qualitative and quantitative data would yield richer and more representative findings. The qualitative approach would allow researchers to gather in-depth non-numerical data concerning teachers' perceptions, lived experiences, and the challenges they encounter when implementing DI in speaking sequences, while the quantitative approach would enable statistical analysis and generalisation to a broader population. Such an approach produce more reliable evidence capable of informing educational policy, curriculum design, and teacher training programmes at a national level.
- Consider conducting future research by adopting a longitudinal approach when studying the implementation of DI in speaking sequences. A long-term approach would allow researchers to observe how teachers' practices, confidence, and perceptions evolve over time, providing a more realistic understanding of DI's actual impact on both instructional practices and learners' speaking development. This extended timeframe would ultimately enable researchers to

identify more concrete and practical solutions to the challenges encountered in real classroom settings, contributing more meaningfully to the improvement of speaking instruction in the Algerian secondary school context.

2. Limitations of the study

While this study offers valuable insights into teachers' perspectives on DI and its implementation in speaking sequences, it is necessary to acknowledge certain limitations that arose during the research process.

The first limitation relates to the difficulty encountered in finding participants, particularly regarding the inspector's interviews. Several inspectors were contacted throughout the data collection phase, yet the majority did not show interest in participating, which proved time-consuming and significantly delayed the research process. Fortunately, one qualified inspector ultimately agreed to participate, whose insights proved to be a genuine asset to the study. Nevertheless, a larger and more diverse sample of inspectors would have provided a broader and more comprehensive institutional perspective on the challenges surrounding DI implementation in Algerian secondary schools.

The second limitation concerns the geographical scope of the study. The participating teachers were selected from a restricted geographical area, namely the researchers' immediate surroundings, as acknowledged in the general information section. This convenience sampling approach, while practical and justified given the time and accessibility constraints of the research, means that the findings may not accurately reflect the perspectives and experiences of EFL teachers across other regions of Algeria, where educational conditions, available resources, and institutional support may differ considerably. A more geographically diverse and balanced sample would have enriched the data and allowed for a more comprehensive picture of how DI is perceived and implemented at the national level.

The third limitation concerns the duration of the research. Due to academic time constraints, this study was conducted within a short timeframe, which inevitably restricted the depth and scope of the data that could be gathered. Exploring teachers' perspectives on DI and the challenges they face when implementing it in speaking sequences is a complex and evolving matter that cannot be fully captured within a limited research period. A longer study duration would have allowed for more extended observation of teachers' actual classroom practices, more in-depth follow-up interviews, and

a more realistic assessment of how DI implementation develops over time in authentic teaching settings.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire Form



Appendix B: Questions of the Interview



Appendix C: Piloting Questions



Appendix D: Inspector's Responses

