

## TEACHING A LANGUAGE IN A MIXED-ABILITY GROUPS

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### ABSTRACT

One of the most challenging scenarios for a language instructor is teaching a class with students of diverse levels, learning abilities, or both. This column has mostly focused on ideas for foreign language students and language study guidance up until this point. However, today's advice is for instructors of foreign languages who wish to bridge the gap between cultures. Nonetheless, these recommendations will also aid language learners; after all, every disciplined student is also his or her own instructor. Whether you are a professional educator or a self-taught student, these guidelines should aid you in your language education endeavours.

**Key words:** different levels, student, pupils, class, time, lesson.

### INTRODUCTION

Most teachers encounter the issue of a group of pupils with varying skill levels at some point. One of the most challenging scenarios for a language instructor is a class with pupils of diverse levels, learning abilities, or both. The lesson must be structured so that no one feels like they are wasting time waiting for others or that they are "out of their depth" relative to the other members of the group.

At least for a portion of the session, it may be necessary to forgo lockstep teaching (all students working on the same task at the same time) so that the instructor may engage intensely with one subgroup while the others work independently. This, of course, necessitates the availability of resources suited for independent study. If computers are accessible in the classroom, the simplest way is to use online content.

### METHOD

These resources might, of course, serve as the sole foundation for the courses. Each student works independently through a course while the instructor rotates, supervises, and provides assistance, explanation, and practise as needed. This may very well be the optimal approach for groups of students with vastly varying skill levels. With others, however, when the difference is less pronounced, it is also viable to include independent work into more conventional whole-class lectures.

As an illustration, consider an EFL class with students ranging from upper elementary to intermediate levels. The next topic to be studied in the course is the present perfect for past-to-present occurrences, such as, "He has worked here for the last five months." This is a completely new framework for the upper elementary pupils,

so they will require a methodical presentation as well as a great deal of supervised practise before they can go on to freer activities utilising the structure. However, the lesson for intermediate students consists solely of review and consolidation.

- The first activity is a review of the simple past, which all students have previously encountered.
- Next, the class divides into two groups. The primary and weaker intermediate students remain with the teacher for a methodical introduction of the new structure, but the other, stronger students work independently at the computer on a second simple past consolidation exercise, which might be a brief listening or reading activity.

### **RESULTS**

This activity's purpose is to ensure that all pupils comprehend the form's usage. If any of the higher-level pupils don't understand, the instructor may ask the lower-level students to clarify. This both verifies that the students who attended the presentation comprehend the material and increases their motivation: One of the issues with mixed ability groups is that it is usually the same weaker or lower level students who "don't know/can't do," which can lead to low self-esteem and a lack of interest for the course. This task offers them the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge. These exercises might include of grammar work, listening consolidation, or whatever else the instructor deems appropriate for the pupils at that time. In the meantime, the pupils at the lower level remain with the teacher to perform controlled practise work.

### **CONCLUSION**

Perhaps the most significant aspect of lockstep work is that it enables pupils to build a cohesive group identity and cooperative working environment. However, this will only occur if all participants find the lockstep phases valuable. The phases of split groups ensure that when students do work together, they are able to complete a task at the appropriate degree of difficulty for all group members. No one is left feeling I already know this, nor does anybody feel the lesson is too difficult or too quick.

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