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**Diversity of Learners: a Study about how Individual Differences
Affect the EFL Learning Process**

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Requirements for the Master Degree in English Didactics

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Declaration of Authentic Authorship

We hereby declare that this research work, which we submit for assessment of the program of study leading to the award of Master in Didactics of English, represents our original work and has not been submitted to another assessment. We also declare that all words and ideas from other works have been appropriately cited and acknowledged.

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Dedication

In the name of Allah, the most gracious, Most Merciful.

This study is whole heartedly dedicated to our beloved parents, who have been our source of Inspiration and gave us strength when we thought of giving up, who continually provide their moral, spiritual and emotional support.

To our brothers, sisters and husbands who shared their words of advice and encouragement to finish this study.

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Abstract

Education is increasingly concerned with understanding and meeting the needs of diverse learners, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, where individual differences greatly influence the learning process. This study aims at exploring the impact of individual learner differences such as motivation, cognitive abilities, emotional factors, and learning styles on the EFL learning experience. It also seeks to identify the challenges teachers face in addressing these differences and the strategies they employ to support students. It is hypothesized that learner diversity significantly affects language learning outcomes and that teachers perceive differentiated instruction as essential in EFL settings. To test these hypotheses, a descriptive mixed methods research design was adopted. Two data collection tools were used: a questionnaire administered to 40 fourth-year middle school Learners from Mellouki Othman Middle School in Ain Karma and Heriri Abd Middle School in Berdjilate, and interviews conducted with six EFL teachers from the same schools. The results revealed that individual differences play a crucial role in shaping Learners' engagement, participation, and academic performance. Teachers confirmed that adapting instructional approaches to meet learner diversity is necessary, although it presents practical challenges. Most participants acknowledged the importance of recognizing individual learner traits for effective teaching and learning. Based on the findings, the hypotheses are confirmed. The study concludes by offering recommendations for implementing inclusive teaching practices and suggestions for future research in the field of EFL education.

Keywords: *Individual differences, learner diversity, EFL learners, EFL Teachers*

Abstract in Arabic

المخلص

يشهد التعليم اهتمامًا متزايدًا بفهم وتلبية احتياجات المتعلمين المتنوعين، خصوصًا في صفوف اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL)، حيث تلعب الفروق الفردية دورًا كبيرًا في عملية التعلم. تهدف هذه الدراسة الوصفية إلى استكشاف تأثير الفروق الفردية للمتعلمين، مثل الدافعية، القدرات المعرفية، العوامل العاطفية، وأنماط التعلم، على تجربة تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. كما تسعى إلى تحديد التحديات التي يواجهها المعلمون في التعامل هذه الفروق والاستراتيجيات التي يستخدمونها لدعم الطلاب. تفترض الدراسة أن تنوع المتعلمين يؤثر بشكل ملحوظ على نتائج تعلم اللغة، وأن المعلمين يرون التعليم الموجه حسب الفروق الفردية أمرًا ضروريًا في بيئات EFL.

لاختبار هذه الفرضيات، تم اعتماد تصميم بحث طرق مختلطة بأسلوب استكشافي، حيث استخدمت أدوات جمع البيانات التالية: استبيان وزع على 40 تلميذًا في السنة الرابعة من مدرستي "ملوكي عثمان" في عين كرمة و"حريري عبد" في برجيات، ومقابلات أجريت مع ستة معلمين للغة الإنجليزية من نفس المدارس. كشفت النتائج أن الفروق الفردية تلعب دورًا أساسيًا في تشكيل تفاعل الطلاب ومشاركتهم وأدائهم الأكاديمي. وأكد المعلمون أن تكييف طرق التدريس لمراعاة تنوع المتعلمين أمر ضروري، رغم التحديات العملية التي يواجهونها. وأقر غالبية المشاركين بأهمية التعرف على خصائص المتعلم الفردية لتحقيق تعليم وتعلم فعالين.

استنادًا إلى النتائج، تم تأكيد الفرضيات. تختتم الدراسة بتقديم توصيات لتطبيق ممارسات تدريس شاملة واقتراحات لأبحاث مستقبلية في مجال تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفروق الفردية، تنوع المتعلمين، متعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. مدرسو اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FLCA: foreign language classroom anxiety

IDs: individual differences

L2: second language

Q: Question

VARK: Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing, and Kinesthetic modal

N: Number

Chapter One

Introductory Chapter

Introduction

Understanding the diversity of learners has become a crucial component in the process of teaching and learning foreign languages. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, learners vary in terms of their personalities, learning styles, motivation levels, and emotional states. These differences influence how learners engage with language tasks and succeed in language acquisition. However, traditional EFL approaches often rely on generalized methods that may not respond to the specific needs of each learner. This issue is especially noticeable in middle school classrooms, where Learners display various levels of interest and ability. Teachers in such environments face challenges due to large class sizes and limited resources. As a result, some Learners struggle or feel unmotivated, which affects their performance in English.

This introductory chapter outlines the statement of the problem, the purpose and significance of the study, the research questions, and the adopted methodology. It also provides an overview of the dissertation's structure.

Background of the Study

In the field of education, it is widely acknowledged that learners differ in many ways. These differences known as individual differences can include factors such as personality, motivation, learning style, cognitive ability, emotional state, and language aptitude. Such variables play a crucial role in determining how successful a student will be in learning a second or foreign language. In English as a Foreign Language classroom, understanding and responding to these differences is necessary to ensure that every learner has a fair chance to succeed.

One of the most prominent scholars in this area is Robert Gardner (1985), who introduced the Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Acquisition. He argued that motivation is a key factor in learning a foreign language. According to Gardner, students who are motivated tend to make more effort, show more interest, and are more likely to succeed. On the other hand, learners with low motivation may not engage fully with the learning process, leading to poor performance. His work highlights the idea that teachers should pay attention to what drives their students to learn English and how motivation can be supported in the classroom. Another important contributor is Rebecca Oxford (2003), who focused on learning styles and strategies. Oxford emphasized that every learner has a preferred way of acquiring information. Some may be visual learners, preferring to see images or diagrams; others may be auditory, learning better by listening. Some may prefer working alone, while others thrive in group work. Oxford's research shows that when teaching strategies match students' learning styles, learning becomes more effective and enjoyable. If ignored, students may feel frustrated or lost, especially in language classes where communication and comprehension are essential. In addition to motivation and learning style, Zoltán Dörnyei (2005) brought attention to personality traits and affective factors such as anxiety and self-confidence. He suggested that students with introverted personalities may be more reserved and hesitant to participate in speaking activities, while extroverted learners might be more active and expressive. Moreover, language anxiety especially in speaking can prevent students from using the language confidently. Dörnyei's research indicates that emotional support and creating a safe, encouraging classroom environment are critical for learners to take risks and practice their language skills. Tomlinson (2011) offered a broader perspective by focusing on differentiated instruction and the need to tailor teaching to meet diverse learner needs. He argued that treating all learners the same way leads to unequal outcomes. Instead, teachers should plan lessons that are flexible and inclusive, offering different types of activities that appeal to various learners. According to Tomlinson,

differentiated instruction improves classroom engagement and helps students reach their full potential by respecting their individual learning paths.

In the Algerian context, especially in middle schools, many of these principles are not yet fully applied. Classrooms are typically large, with more than 30 students, and the focus is often on completing the textbook rather than responding to student needs. Teachers may not have the time, training, or resources to identify and support learners with different profiles.

As a result, many students either fall behind or are not sufficiently challenged, which negatively affects their motivation and achievement in English.

This study focuses on 4th-year middle school learners in Algeria, a level where students are expected to consolidate their language skills before entering secondary education. However, differences in learning outcomes at this level are clearly noticeable. By investigating how factors like motivation, learning style, and personality influence English learning, this research seeks to provide insights into how teachers can better support their students. Understanding these individual differences will not only improve teaching practices but also promote equality and success in the EFL classroom.

Statement of the Problem

The diversity of learners in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom presents both opportunities and challenges for language instruction. Individual differences such as cognitive abilities, learning styles, motivation levels, and socio-cultural backgrounds can significantly affect the language learning process. Despite this, certain EFL teaching methods often adopt a one-size-fits-all approach, which may not adequately address the varied needs of students. This limitation can hinder the progress of certain learners, particularly those whose learning styles or needs are not met by conventional methods. Given the increasing diversity of learners in educational settings, it is crucial to understand how these individual differences

influence language acquisition and to explore effective strategies that can cater to a wide range of learners.

Aims of the study

- This study aims to investigate the impact of individual differences on the EFL learning process among 4th-year middle school learners at Mellouki Othman in Ain Karma and Heriri Abd in Bergilate middle schools.
- In addition, it aims to explore effective teaching strategies that can be adapted to support diverse learners and enhance their English language acquisition.

Research Questions

1. How do individual differences among 4th-year Mellouki othman in Ain karma and Heriri Abd in Berdjilate Middle schools' learners influence their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process?
2. What are teachers' perceptions of the impact of individual differences on their students' EFL learning process?

Research Hypotheses

H 1: Individual differences such as motivation, learning styles, and cognitive abilities have a significant impact on the EFL learning process of 4th-year middle school learners at Mellouki Othman in Ain Karma and Hriri Abd in Bergilate Middle schools.

H 2: Teachers perceive individual differences as influential factors that affect learners' engagement and performance in the EFL classroom.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it describes and explores how individual differences affect the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process among 4th-year middle school learners. It provides insights into how understanding and addressing these differences can enhance language acquisition and improve learners' overall learning outcomes. The results of this

research will be valuable for language instructors and institutions seeking effective strategies to support diverse learners in the EFL classroom. This study helps both teachers and learners by identifying ways to address the challenges posed by individual differences in language learning. For learners, recognizing and adapting to their unique needs can lead to more personalized and effective learning experiences. Teachers can use the findings to develop strategies that cater to the diverse needs of their students, ensuring that each learner has the opportunity to succeed in language acquisition.

Method

Research Design

The current study seeks to shed light on Diversity of learners : a study about how individual differences Affect the EFL learning process , so a mixed methods research design and a descriptive approach are used to better investigate How do individual differences among 4th-year Mellouki othman in Ain karma and Heriri Abd in Bergilate Middle schools learners influence their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process and What are teachers' perceptions of the impact of individual differences on their students' EFL learning process.

Participants

The population of this study comprises both teachers and learners of the 4th-year Mellouki othman in Ain karma and Heriri Abd in Bergilate Middle schools to gain insights and perceptions of both teachers and learners about individual differences and its impact on EFL learning process.

Data Gathering Tools

To collect the required data for this study, two research instruments were employed: an Interview administered to EFL teachers to examine perceptions of the impact of individual differences on their students' EFL learning process, and a questionnaire administered to students.

Structure of the Study

The present dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter serves as an introductory chapter that outlines the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions and hypotheses, as well as the aims and significance of the study. It also presents an overview of the structure of the dissertation.

The second chapter is dedicated to the literature review. It describes the theoretical foundations and existing research related to individual differences in EFL learning, focusing on aspects such as motivation, personality traits, learning styles, and cognitive and emotional factors. It also discusses how these differences manifest in the EFL classroom, particularly at the middle school level.

The third chapter presents the methodology employed in the study. It details the research design, the target population, the data collection tools (questionnaire and interview), and the procedures followed during the fieldwork.

The fourth chapter provides an analysis of the collected data. It presents the results obtained from the questionnaire distributed to learners and interviews conducted with EFL teachers at Mellouki Othman in Ain Karma and Heriri Abd in bergilate middle schools.

The final chapter discusses and interprets the main findings in light of the research questions and hypotheses. It also includes pedagogical implications, practical recommendations for teachers and suggestions for future research related to individual differences in EFL learning.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the present study by providing an overview of its background, aims, and significance. It has outlined the core problem addressed by the research and presented the research questions and hypotheses guiding the investigation. Additionally, it described the adopted research design, the data collection tools, and the participants involved. The chapter also included a general outline of the structure of the dissertation. The next chapter will present a review of the theoretical background related to the diversity of learners, including key concepts, definitions, and previous studies relevant to understanding and addressing individual differences in language learning.

Chapter two

Literature Review: Individual Differences and EFL Learning

Introduction

The present chapter presents a review of the literature concerning the role of individual differences in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process. It is divided into two sections. The first section provides a general overview of foreign language learning and defines the concept of individual differences, followed by a classification of their main categories. It also explores the key types of learner differences, including motivation, personality traits, learning styles, cognitive abilities, and emotional factors. The second section discusses the importance of understanding these differences in EFL learning and how they influence students' engagement and success in acquiring a foreign language.

Section One: Understanding Individual Differences in EFL Learning

Overview on Foreign Language Learning

Language learning is an essential skill in today's interconnected world, especially with the rise of globalization that brings people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds together. Acquiring a foreign language enables individuals to communicate effectively in international settings, access academic opportunities, and expand career prospects. Among foreign languages, English has emerged as the most widely taught and used globally. Consequently, the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become a central component of educational systems across many countries. Foreign language learning is not a uniform process; rather, it involves the development of four interrelated skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing which form the foundation of communicative competence. These skills must be developed in balance to ensure that learners are able to function in various real-world contexts. Lightbown and Spada (2013) emphasized that language acquisition is most

effective when these skills are integrated and practiced through meaningful interaction. In a similar vein, Sadiku (2015) highlighted the importance of incorporating all four skills into each lesson, arguing that doing so enhances learner confidence, fosters authentic interaction, and promotes comprehensive language use. A diverse range of language activities such as speaking exercises, listening tasks, reading texts, and writing assignments can contribute to developing both fluency and accuracy.

However, not all learners acquire these skills at the same pace or in the same way. In real classroom settings, EFL teachers often observe considerable variation in learner performance. Some students may excel in speaking but struggle with writing, while others may demonstrate strong reading comprehension but experience anxiety when speaking. This variability is attributed to what researchers identify as individual differences unique psychological and personal traits that each learner brings to the language learning process (Dörnyei, 2005). Individual differences play a crucial role in determining the success of foreign language acquisition. Factors such as motivation, personality traits, learning styles, cognitive abilities, and emotional states (e.g., anxiety, self-confidence) can significantly facilitate or hinder learning. Ellis (2008) asserted that internal learner characteristics are as influential as external elements such as teaching approaches or instructional materials.

Definition of Individual Differences

In the field of language education, the concept of individual differences (IDs) refers to the diverse and unique characteristics that learners bring into the classroom, which influence how they acquire, process, and use a foreign language. These characteristics include psychological, cognitive, emotional, and social traits that vary significantly from one learner to another (Dörnyei, 2005). Unlike external factors such as curriculum design or teaching methods,

individual differences are internal and personal, making each student's learning experience distinct.

Dörnyei (2010) defined individual differences as relatively stable traits or attributes that contribute to variations in learners' behavior and performance. These traits not only determine how quickly or effectively a learner acquires a new language, but also how they respond to classroom instruction, feedback, and communicative situations. Among the most commonly studied individual differences in second language acquisition are motivation, personality, learning styles, cognitive abilities, and emotional factors such as anxiety or self-esteem. According to Ellis (2004), individual differences serve as key variables in understanding the uneven progress of learners. While some may thrive in interactive speaking activities, others may prefer reading quietly or reflecting before producing spoken or written responses. These preferences and tendencies are deeply tied to individual psychological make-up and influence both the pace and outcome of language learning. Furthermore, Griffiths (2008) stressed that individual differences should not be seen as obstacles but rather as essential considerations for effective teaching.

Categories of Individual Differences

Individual differences in language learning are often grouped into distinct categories to better understand their influence on learners' performance and outcomes. While the traits themselves may vary greatly from one student to another, researchers have identified general categories that help educators and linguists conceptualize the diverse nature of learner variability. According to Skehan (1991), individual differences can be classified into three broad categories: cognitive, affective, and personality-related factors. Each of these categories plays a specific role in how language is processed, retained, and used.

Cognitive Factors

Cognitive factors refer to the mental processes and capabilities that influence how learners perceive, store, retrieve, and apply information. These include intelligence, working memory, language aptitude, and analytical reasoning. Carroll (1981) was among the first to propose that language aptitude which a learner's natural ability to acquire a second language plays a significant role in determining language learning success. Learners with high aptitude often find it easier to identify grammatical patterns, retain vocabulary, and understand complex linguistic input. Another key cognitive element is working memory. According to Miyake and Friedman (1998), working memory capacity is closely linked to language processing tasks, such as listening comprehension and sentence formation. Learners with strong cognitive abilities are typically more efficient in understanding, analyzing, and producing language.

Affective Factors

Affective factors encompass the emotions, attitudes, and feelings that learners experience throughout the language learning process. Among these, motivation is widely considered the most influential affective variable. Gardner and Lambert (1972) distinguished between instrumental motivation which is driven by practical goals such as career advancement and integrative motivation which is based on a desire to connect with the target language community. Both types can significantly influence how engaged a student becomes in language learning. Another important affective factor is language anxiety. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) defined it as a specific set of self-perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors related to classroom language learning. High anxiety levels can negatively affect learners' performance during speaking tasks, lower their confidence, and reduce their willingness to communicate. Conversely, learners with high self-confidence and low anxiety tend to participate more actively and take more risks in language use.

Personality Traits

Personality traits also play a vital role in shaping how students respond to different learning environments. Characteristics such as extroversion vs. introversion, risk-taking, tolerance of ambiguity, and openness to experience can affect various aspects of language performance. For instance, extroverted learners may benefit more from communicative and group-based tasks due to their sociable nature, while introverted learners may excel in activities that allow reflection, such as reading or writing.

Eysenck's (1975) personality theory contributed to linking specific personality traits to learning behavior. Moreover, Dewaele and Furnham (1999) found that extroverts tend to speak more fluently in foreign languages because of their greater willingness to engage in communication, while introverts may produce more accurate but slower speech. As a result, personality can affect both the quantity and quality of language use.

Types of Individual Differences

Language learning is a highly individual process, influenced by a wide range of personal factors. These individual differences shape learners' experiences, strengths, weaknesses, and ultimate success in acquiring a foreign language. The most commonly discussed types include motivation, personality traits, learning styles, cognitive abilities, and emotional factors.

Motivation

Motivation is widely recognized as one of the most significant factors influencing the success of second language acquisition. According to Gardner (1985), motivation refers to "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language." In other words, it involves both the drive to learn and the learner's positive attitude toward the process. Motivation plays a key role in determining

how actively students participate, how persistent they are when facing challenges, and how much they enjoy the process.

Types of Motivation

Researchers have identified different types of motivation that influence EFL learners in diverse ways. These types vary based on learners' goals, personal interests, and external circumstances. Among the most influential models are those proposed by Gardner and Lambert (1972), who distinguished between instrumental and integrative motivation, while Deci and Ryan (1985), introduced intrinsic and extrinsic motivation within their Self-Determination Theory framework.

Instrumental Motivation

This type of motivation is based on practical goals, such as getting a job, passing an exam, or fulfilling academic requirements. Students with instrumental motivation often view language learning as a means to an end.

Integrative Motivation

Learners with this type of motivation have a genuine interest in becoming part of the target language community. They aim to interact with native speakers, learn about the culture, and integrate socially.

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity for its inherent enjoyment or interest rather than for some separable outcome. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), it is “the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence” (p. 56). Learners are motivated by internal satisfaction, such as enjoyment, curiosity, or personal

challenge. For example, a student who enjoys solving grammar puzzles or watching English movies is intrinsically motivated.

Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation involves engaging in an activity to achieve an external outcome or reward. As Deci and Ryan (1985) explained, it occurs “whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcome” (p. 60). Learners are driven by external rewards such as grades, praise, or certificates. For instance, a student studying English to obtain a scholarship is extrinsically motivated.

In fact, many learners are influenced by a combination of these motivations. A student may be both intrinsically motivated (enjoying English media) and instrumentally motivated (needing the language for career goals). Dörnyei (2001) emphasized that maintaining motivation over time is vital, as it drives consistent effort and commitment, especially when learners face obstacles or plateaus in progress.

Personality Traits

Personality traits are enduring psychological characteristics that shape how individuals perceive, interact with, and respond to their environment, including language learning contexts. These traits significantly affect how learners engage in classroom activities, respond to instruction, process language input, and take risks during communication. According to Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991), personality is among the most frequently studied affective variables in second language acquisition because it plays a crucial role in shaping learners' attitudes and behaviors. Among the most discussed personality traits in EFL research are extroversion versus introversion, risk-taking, tolerance of ambiguity, self-confidence, and emotional stability.

Extroversion and Introversion

Eysenck (1975) defined extroversion as a personality dimension marked by sociability, talkativeness, and assertiveness, whereas introversion is characterized by introspection, quietness, and preference for solitary activities. In the language classroom, extroverts are typically more active in group discussions and oral tasks, while introverts may prefer writing or individual reading tasks. However, introversion does not imply lower ability rather it reflects a different learning preference. Dewaele and Furnham (1999) observed that extroverts tend to speak more fluently due to their greater willingness to communicate, while introverts may produce more accurate but slower speech.

Risk-Taking

Risk-taking refers to a learner's readiness to try new linguistic forms even when unsure of the outcome. Beebe (1983) defined it as "the willingness to try out new things without knowing whether they will be successful." In language learning, this includes speaking in front of others despite possible mistakes. Brown (2000) emphasized that moderate risk-taking enhances language performance, particularly in speaking, as it encourages learners to experiment and practice more frequently. On the other hand, excessive or insufficient risk-taking can negatively impact fluency and accuracy.

Tolerance of Ambiguity

Tolerance of ambiguity is the ability to remain calm and effective in situations of uncertainty or lack of clarity, such as when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary or unclear grammatical rules. According to Ely (1989), learners with high ambiguity tolerance are better able to cope with the challenges of second language learning because they are not easily discouraged by confusion or incomplete understanding. Ehrman and Oxford (1995) further argued that this trait

promotes emotional resilience and flexible learning strategies, making learners more adaptable and less anxious.

Self-Confidence and Emotional Stability

Self-confidence and emotional stability are essential traits that influence learners' willingness to participate and their persistence in learning. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) found that learners with higher self-confidence are more likely to initiate communication and take part in class activities. Emotionally stable learners also experience lower anxiety, which allows them to perform more consistently. Ellis (2008) emphasized that while no single personality trait can determine success in second language learning, traits like openness, resilience, and curiosity often support learners in managing challenges and maximizing their exposure to the language.

Learning Styles

Learning styles refer to the preferred ways in which individuals prefer to receive, process, and retain information. These preferences influence how learners engage with materials and respond to instructional methods. Understanding learning styles allows teachers to adapt their approaches and make learning more effective and inclusive. According to Reid (1995), learning styles are internal, affective, cognitive, and physiological traits that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive and interact with their environment. These styles are not fixed abilities, but preferences that can shape motivation and classroom behavior.

One of the most influential frameworks for understanding learning styles is the VARK model developed by Fleming and Mills (1992). This model identifies four primary types of learners: Visual, Auditory, Reading/Writing, and Kinesthetic. Unlike earlier models, VARK emphasizes that many learners may be multimodal, combining more than one preference depending on the context. For instance, a learner may benefit from both reading grammar rules and practicing them through hands-on activities.

Types of Learning Styles

Learning styles can be categorized into distinct types based on how learners prefer to perceive and interact with instructional content. The following are three of the most widely recognized learning styles, as identified by Reid (1995).

Visual Learners

According to Reid (1995), visual learners prefer to learn through seeing. They benefit from diagrams, charts, videos, and written materials. Visual input helps them organize and retain information more effectively.

Auditory Learners

Reid (1995) also described auditory learners as those who learn best through listening. These learners thrive in lectures, discussions, and audio-rich environments such as podcasts and conversations.

Kinesthetic Learners

Kinesthetic learners prefer movement and hands-on activities. They engage more with tasks that involve role-playing, simulations, or physical interaction with materials.

Oxford (2003) suggested that aligning teaching strategies with learners' preferred styles can improve motivation, comprehension, and autonomy. Teachers who vary their instructional methods (e.g., using visuals, discussions, and physical tasks) are more likely to reach all students. However, some researchers have criticized the rigid use of learning style labels. Coffield et al. (2004) argued that over-reliance on style-based instruction can be limiting and unsupported by strong empirical evidence. They recommend adopting flexible, multimodal

teaching approaches that accommodate diverse preferences without confining learners to specific categories.

Cognitive abilities

Cognitive abilities refer to the mental processes that support learning, including attention, memory, reasoning, and problem-solving. These are the core functions that enable individuals to process, store, and retrieve information, which makes them fundamental in foreign language acquisition. They influence how learners perceive input, retain vocabulary, and apply grammatical rules.

One of the most important cognitive aspects is language aptitude, which is a person's natural capacity to acquire a language effectively. According to Carroll (1981), language aptitude consists of four main components: phonetic coding ability which is the skill to recognize and remember unfamiliar sounds; grammatical sensitivity, which refers to the ability to understand the role of words in sentence structures; inductive language learning ability, which means the capacity to identify patterns and draw rules from examples; and associative memory, which is the ability to connect new vocabulary with its meanings. Learners with strong aptitude in these areas often learn faster and with more accuracy.

Skehan (1998) also emphasized that working memory and analytical thinking are essential in formal language learning settings, as they help learners handle complex grammar and vocabulary more efficiently. For instance, a learner with high working memory may remember and apply grammatical structures more easily, while someone with strong phonetic ability can imitate correct pronunciation quickly. Additionally, effective problem-solving helps learners make sense of unfamiliar words using contextual clues.

Emotional Factors

Emotional factors play a critical role in shaping how learners experience language learning. These include variables such as language anxiety, self-confidence, self-esteem, and emotional resilience. These elements influence not only learners' motivation but also their classroom participation, willingness to communicate, and overall performance in the target language.

One of the most influential emotional factors is foreign language anxiety. According to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) is “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p. 128). Learners who experience high levels of anxiety may hesitate to participate, avoid speaking tasks, or underperform even when they are well-prepared. In contrast, learners with high self-confidence tend to be more active and resilient. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) found that self-confidence significantly increases the learner’s willingness to communicate, which is essential for developing oral skills in EFL settings. When learners feel emotionally secure, they are more likely to take risks, practice the language, and learn from their mistakes.

Furthermore, emotional stability helps learners regulate stress and stay focused during challenging learning tasks. Ellis (2008) pointed out that learners with strong emotional control are less likely to be discouraged by failure and more capable of sustaining effort over time.

The Importance of Understanding Individual Differences in EFL Learning

Understanding individual differences among learners is essential for fostering effective and inclusive English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. Every learner comes to the classroom with unique characteristics ranging from motivation, personality traits, learning styles, cognitive abilities, to emotional factors that influence how they engage with and acquire the target language. Recognizing these differences helps educators tailor their

teaching strategies to suit the diverse needs of their students, thereby enhancing both learning outcomes and learner satisfaction. According to Tomlinson (2013), when teachers adapt their methods based on learners' differences, students are more likely to feel valued and engaged. For example, a student with high motivation and strong auditory learning preference may excel in listening tasks, while another with strong visual skills and high language anxiety may perform better in reading or writing activities with visual aids. Differentiated instruction, therefore, becomes a practical response to learner diversity, enabling all students to participate meaningfully in language learning tasks.

Moreover, Dörnyei (2005) emphasized that individual differences not only affect the rate and ease of language acquisition but also shape the learner's long-term attitude toward learning. Students who feel that their learning preferences are acknowledged are more likely to stay motivated and committed, which in turn leads to better language retention and performance. Additionally, Ellis (2004) argued that no single teaching method works equally for all students. Instead, language learning is more effective when instructional approaches are flexible and responsive to personal learner variables. For instance, some learners may benefit from structured grammar-focused lessons, while others may thrive in communicative or task-based learning environments. Consequently, understanding individual differences helps in classroom management, lesson planning, and assessment design. It encourages teachers to provide varied materials and tasks that appeal to different learning preferences, such as visual diagrams, listening exercises, pair work, and hands-on activities. This diversity not only supports learning but also reduces anxiety and builds learner confidence.

Section two : Addressing Individual Differences in the EFL Classroom**Challenges in Addressing Individual Differences**

Addressing individual differences in EFL classrooms presents a significant challenge for teachers, as each learner comes with unique characteristics, needs, and preferences. While supporting each student's learning style, proficiency level, and personality is essential, it is not always feasible in practice. Teachers often face obstacles such as large class sizes, rigid curricula, and limited time or resources. This section explores the key challenges that hinder the effective accommodation of learner diversity in EFL contexts.

Diverse Learning Needs

One of the most prominent challenges in EFL classrooms is the need to address the diverse learning needs of students. Learners differ significantly in how they perceive, process, and respond to language instruction. Some grasp new vocabulary with ease, while others require more time and repetition to fully internalize and apply new content. Learning style preferences further add to this diversity visual learners may benefit from charts, images, and written texts, whereas auditory learners respond better to lectures and discussions. Kinesthetic learners, on the other hand, may thrive in hands-on tasks and physical engagement, while social learners prefer group-based interaction.

This variation makes it difficult to design a single lesson that effectively meets all students' needs. For example, listening activities may benefit auditory learners but not necessarily those who rely on visual or kinesthetic input. Similarly, group discussions may encourage extroverted students while overwhelming those who are more introverted or anxious. Background knowledge and prior exposure to English also shape learner readiness; some students may find lessons too easy or repetitive, while others struggle to keep up. As noted by Dörnyei and Ryan

(2015), individual learner differences include a range of factors such as motivation, aptitude, personality, and preferred learning styles, all of which impact the way students engage with language learning. To accommodate these variations, teachers are encouraged to implement diverse and inclusive instructional strategies. Tomlinson (2014) emphasizes that effective teaching should not rely on a single, fixed approach but rather adopt flexible methods that respond to the unique profiles of learners.

Time and Curriculum Constraints

Another major challenge is the limited amount of time available and the pressure to complete a fixed curriculum. Most language teachers are required to follow a pre-set syllabus within a specific time frame, often with large classes and multiple language skills to cover. As a result, they may not have enough time to adapt lessons to suit each student's needs or learning style. For example, while one student may need more practice with grammar exercises, another might benefit from more speaking activities. However, the teacher may be forced to move on quickly to the next unit in order to keep up with the schedule, leaving some students behind. This can cause slower learners to feel frustrated and lose motivation, while faster learners may become bored and disengaged (Dörnyei, 2001). Moreover, standardized testing often drives the curriculum, focusing more on reading and writing than speaking and listening. This narrow focus limits opportunities for teachers to use creative or personalized methods that could better support diverse learners (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Teachers may also feel pressured to "teach to the test," reducing the time they spend on communicative or interactive tasks that help students develop real-life language skills.

According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), true learner-centered teaching requires flexibility, time, and attention to individual differences all of which can be hard to manage under tight curriculum demands. When teachers are expected to follow a rigid plan, they often cannot slow

down or adapt lessons for students who need extra help. This makes it difficult to give each learner the support they need to succeed.

Lack of Training and Resources

The lack of sufficient teacher training and classroom resources is another major challenge. Many teachers have not received adequate professional development on how to identify and support students with varied learning needs. While they may be proficient in teaching grammar or vocabulary, they often lack confidence or knowledge in applying differentiated instruction strategies, handling mixed-ability groups, or adapting their lessons for students with different learning styles (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). For instance, a teacher might recognize that one student learns best through visuals and another through physical movement, but without proper training, they may struggle to design lessons that cater to both. This often leads to generalized teaching approaches that fail to fully engage or support diverse learners.

Moreover, schools especially those in low resource settings may not provide the tools necessary to support differentiated instruction. This includes limited access to digital tools like tablets or projectors, up-to-date textbooks, visual aids, or even the physical space needed for flexible classroom arrangements. As Tomlinson (2014) emphasizes, effective instruction for diverse learners depends on having access to a broad range of materials and adaptable lesson structures, yet many educators are expected to achieve this with minimal institutional support. Without both proper training and resources, teachers often revert to traditional, one-size-fits-all methods, which can marginalize students with unique needs. As Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) note, addressing individual differences in language classrooms requires not only awareness but also practical strategies and consistent support systems that empower teachers to act effectively.

Classroom Management Difficulties

Managing a classroom with students who have different learning needs can be very challenging for EFL teachers. When students have varying abilities, interests, and behaviors, it becomes harder to keep the class organized and focused. For example, fast learners may get bored and distracted if the lesson is too slow, while struggling learners may feel lost and give up if the pace is too fast. This creates a situation where some students may start talking, daydreaming, or disrupting the lesson, which makes classroom management even more difficult. Teachers also face challenges in giving equal attention to all learners. If a teacher spends more time helping one group of students, others might feel ignored or become disengaged. In mixed-ability classrooms, this often leads to problems with participation and discipline. As Marzano and Marzano (2003) explain, strong classroom management is essential for effective learning, but it requires clear routines, consistent expectations, and the ability to handle different student behaviors in a fair and respectful way.

Moreover, managing group work or pair activities can be hard when students have different communication styles or language proficiency levels. Some students may dominate the conversation, while others stay silent or feel too shy to participate. Teachers need to plan carefully and offer support to make sure everyone is involved, but this takes time and practice. According to Harmer (2007), classroom management is especially important in language learning because students need a safe and supportive environment to feel confident when speaking a foreign language.

Assessment Limitations

Assessment presents another significant challenge in addressing individual differences in EFL classrooms, particularly when traditional evaluation methods are used. As Brown (2004) explains, standardized tests, written exams, and oral presentations are often designed to measure

general language proficiency rather than account for individual learning styles, preferences, or progress. These tools typically follow a one-size-fits-all model, which may fail to accurately reflect students' true abilities. For example, a learner with strong speaking skills but high test anxiety may underperform in written exams, despite having strong communicative competence. Similarly, visual or kinesthetic learners may struggle with conventional assessments that do not align with their preferred modes of learning.

This misalignment between teaching, learning, and testing methods can lead to unfair evaluations and demotivation among learners (Genesee & Upshur, 1996). Moreover, many assessments prioritize grammatical accuracy over communicative effectiveness, which can disadvantage learners who are fluent but occasionally make minor language errors. As Fulcher and Davidson (2007) argue, assessment should be formative and supportive, offering meaningful feedback that helps learners improve rather than merely assigning grades. Consequently, it becomes challenging for teachers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of each student's strengths, weaknesses, and progress.

Approaches to Address Individual Differences

In EFL classrooms, learners differ in how they acquire knowledge, process information, and respond to instruction. To support all students effectively, teachers adopt various instructional approaches designed to address these individual differences. Such approaches promote inclusive learning environments and provide each learner with equitable opportunities for success. Rather than focusing solely on one teaching method, these frameworks offer flexible and responsive strategies tailored to learners' diverse needs. The following sections present key educational approaches commonly applied to support learner diversity in EFL contexts.

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is an instructional approach designed to meet the diverse needs of students by adapting the content, process, and products of learning according to individual learners' abilities, interests, and preferred learning styles. As defined by Hall (2002), it is a teaching philosophy that encourages teachers to adjust instruction based on students' readiness, interests, and learning preferences. Rather than applying a one-size-fits-all model, teachers provide multiple pathways for students to engage with the same material in ways that align with their strengths. For example, in a vocabulary lesson, one student may illustrate new words through drawings, another may listen to a story that includes the target vocabulary, while a third might engage in a matching activity. Although the content remains consistent, each student learns through a method that best suits their individual learning profile.

Differentiated instruction also allows students to demonstrate their understanding in varied ways. Some may choose to write an essay, while others might create a visual poster or deliver a short oral presentation. This flexibility not only builds learner confidence but also enables them to showcase their strengths. According to Subban (2006), research indicates that differentiated instruction improves student motivation, classroom engagement, and academic outcomes.

Mixed ability Grouping

Mixed-ability grouping is a teaching strategy where students with different skill levels, backgrounds, and learning styles are placed in the same group to work together on tasks. According to Kutnick and Blatchford (2014), this approach is based on the idea that learners benefit from peer interaction and that working with classmates of varying abilities encourages both academic and social development. When students of different levels collaborate, stronger students reinforce their understanding by helping others, and those who need more support can

learn from their peers in a comfortable setting. For example, during a reading activity, an EFL teacher might assign students to mixed groups where one student reads the text aloud, another summarizes the content, and a third explains new vocabulary. This setup allows each student to contribute their strengths while learning from others. In an EFL classroom, a group may also include a student who is strong in speaking skills, another who is better at writing, and one who needs support in both. Together, they can complete a project or role-play activity where each contributes according to their strengths. This helps students develop communication skills, build teamwork, and become more engaged in learning.

According to Webb and Farivar (1999), mixed-ability groups can improve academic achievement and social interaction if tasks are well-structured and roles are clear. However, teachers need to guide group activities carefully to make sure all students participate and benefit equally.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is an instructional approach in which students work collaboratively in small groups to achieve shared academic goals. Each member is individually responsible for their learning while also contributing to the success of the group. This method fosters active engagement, social interaction, and collaborative problem-solving. According to Johnson and Johnson (1999), cooperative learning enhances both academic achievement and interpersonal development by encouraging students to utilize their strengths and learn from their peers. Cooperative learning is particularly valuable as it provides authentic opportunities for communication. For example, during a group project, one student may be assigned to research, another to present findings in English, and a third to monitor the use of grammar and vocabulary. This structure promotes a sense of accountability, ensures participation, and builds key language skills such as speaking, listening, and teamwork.

A central principle of cooperative learning is positive interdependence, where group members rely on each other to succeed. As Slavin (1995) suggests, this approach not only increases student motivation and classroom engagement but also creates a supportive learning environment where diverse learners can thrive.

Strategies to Support Diverse Learners

In order to support individual differences in EFL classrooms, teachers use specific strategies that help all students learn better. These include giving personalized feedback, using learner-centered techniques, and encouraging active participation. Such strategies make learning more inclusive and effective for everyone.

Personalized Feedback

Personalized feedback refers to targeted, learner-specific responses provided by the teacher based on a student's performance, progress, and individual learning profile. It guides learners toward improvement while promoting reflection, confidence, and sustained motivation. As noted by Brookhart (2008), effective feedback acknowledges student effort and offers constructive, actionable advice that helps learners reach their goals. In the EFL context, this might include a tailored comment on a student's pronunciation, vocabulary use, or grammatical accuracy. For example, after a speaking task, a teacher might say, "You used new vocabulary effectively, but try to speak more slowly for clarity." Such comments are far more impactful than general phrases like "good job."

According to Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), personalized feedback plays a crucial role in addressing individual differences by considering learners' cognitive styles, emotional needs, and learning pace. When feedback is adapted to students' specific profiles, it fosters a sense of support and encourages learners to stay engaged. Furthermore, Hattie and Timperley (2007) propose that effective feedback should answer three key questions: Where am I going? How

am I going? and Where to next? .This strategie supports learner autonomy and provides a clear roadmap for improvement, helping students identify their current level, recognize successes and areas for improvement, and plan specific steps toward better outcomes.

Learner-Centered Techniques

Learner-centered techniques place the student at the core of the learning process by promoting active participation, personal responsibility, and autonomy. According to Weimer (2013), this approach shifts the focus from teacher-led instruction to student engagement through tasks that encourage reflection, exploration, and decision-making. Rather than simply receiving information, learners take part in meaningful activities such as presentations, peer discussions, and self-assessments that are tailored to their interests and learning goals.

For instance, students may be asked to prepare a short presentation on a personally relevant topic such as a hobby, cultural tradition, or favorite book. Choosing their own topics increases engagement and emotional connection to the material. During peer discussions, learners take turns leading group conversations, which fosters both speaking fluency and confidence. Additionally, self-assessment tools like reflective journals or rubrics encourage students to evaluate their progress, identify challenges, and take ownership of their learning journey.

Active Engagement Methods

Active engagement methods are instructional strategies designed to involve students directly in the learning process. Instead of passively receiving information, learners participate in tasks that require them to think critically, collaborate with peers, and apply knowledge in meaningful contexts. As noted by Prince (2004), active learning enhances motivation, comprehension, and academic achievement by encouraging students to interact with content through hands-on and reflective activities.

Common examples of active engagement in EFL classrooms include role-plays, think-pair-share, problem-solving tasks, classroom debates, and educational games. For instance, during a role-play scenario such as ordering food at a restaurant, students not only practice vocabulary and sentence structures but also improve their fluency and self-confidence in real-world communication. In a think-pair-share activity, students are first given a question, then discuss it with a partner, and finally share their responses with the class ensuring that every learner is engaged in the learning cycle.

According to Bonwell and Eison (1991), these strategies support higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. Rather than relying solely on memorization, students learn to compare perspectives, solve problems creatively, and apply concepts in diverse situations. Active engagement methods thus contribute significantly to inclusive, student centered EFL instruction by catering to different learning preferences and promoting deeper cognitive processing.

Related Studies on Individual Differences in EFL Learning

In recent years, considerable attention has been directed toward understanding how individual differences influence English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. These differences encompass a range of factors, including personality traits, motivation, cognitive abilities, and learning styles, all of which can significantly impact language acquisition outcomes.

To begin with, Badrkoohi and Maftoon (2017) explored the relationships among L2 motivation, visual learning style, mental imagery, ideal L2 self, and L2 learning experience among Iranian EFL learners. The findings revealed that visual learning had the highest correlation with L2 motivation, suggesting that learners with a preference for visual input are more motivated in their language studies. Additionally, the study emphasized the connection

between learners' mental vision of their future selves and their motivation to learn. Building on the affective dimension, Zhao (2020) examined the relationship between foreign language anxiety, personality traits (e.g., introversion and extroversion), and speaking performance among intermediate EFL learners in China. The results showed that learners with higher levels of anxiety and introverted personalities performed poorly in oral tasks, while extroverted students with lower anxiety performed significantly better. This study highlights the importance of emotional and personality-related factors in shaping learners' oral performance and reinforces the need for supportive, anxiety-reducing classroom environments.

In a similar vein, Kondo (2021) investigated the effects of phonological working memory and L2 motivation on the speaking skills of Japanese EFL learners. The study found that both working memory capacity and motivation were significantly related to speaking performance, indicating that cognitive abilities and affective factors jointly contribute to oral proficiency in a foreign language. Further supporting the role of individual traits, Li (2022) reviewed how motivation, desire to learn, and willingness to communicate influence the use of grammar learning strategies among EFL learners. The study concluded that these psychological and behavioral factors significantly shape the employment of grammar learning strategies, thereby affecting overall language proficiency.

Turning to the Algerian context, Nouioua (2018) investigated the impact of learner autonomy and learning strategies on EFL students' academic achievement at the University of Tlemcen. The study revealed that students who employed a variety of metacognitive and cognitive strategies and took responsibility for their learning performed better academically. This highlights the importance of promoting learner independence and strategy training to accommodate diverse learners in Algerian EFL contexts.

Similarly, Boubakeur and Nawal (2021) examined the impact of individual differences on English language learning among second-year university students at M'sila University. The

research indicated that both students and teachers were often unaware of how individual differences affect language acquisition. It underlined the importance of teacher awareness and the integration of differentiation strategies to support student success.

Conclusion

The present chapter revealed the various ways in which individual differences can be effectively addressed in the EFL classroom. It highlighted the main challenges teachers face, including time constraints, curriculum rigidity, and lack of training or resources. In response to these difficulties, the chapter presented practical approaches such as differentiated instruction, mixed-ability grouping, and cooperative learning, as well as targeted strategies like personalized feedback and active engagement methods. It also reviewed a selection of recent studies that confirmed the importance of acknowledging learner diversity in shaping positive learning outcomes. The next chapter presents the practical part of the study, focusing on the research methodology used to investigate how individual differences influence EFL learning in real classroom settings.

Chapter three**Method****Introduction**

The present chapter represents the practical part of this research, focusing on the method adopted to investigate how individual differences affect the EFL learning process among fourth-year middle school learners. It begins by outlining the research setting, followed by a detailed explanation of the research design and approach. The chapter also introduces the population, sample. Furthermore, it describes the data collection instruments namely, the questionnaire for learners and the interview for teachers along with the procedures followed in gathering and analyzing the data.

Research Methodology**Research Setting**

This study was conducted at Mellouki Othman Middle School, located in Ain Karma and Hariri Abd in Berdjilata region. Both schools provide education for learners from various social and educational backgrounds. The focus was placed on fourth-year learners, as this level marks a critical stage in the EFL learning process, where students are expected to demonstrate a certain level of language understanding and communicative ability. The setting was chosen intentionally to observe the diversity of learners in a real classroom environment and to explore how their individual characteristics influence their English language learning.

Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy that a researcher uses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way. Mouton (1996) defines it as

“a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem” (p. 107). In other words, the research design offers a structured plan that enables the researcher to stay focused, organized, and systematic throughout the study. Similarly, Kothari (2004) emphasizes that research design serves as the conceptual blueprint for the entire research process, including data collection, measurement, and analysis.

In the present study, a descriptive research design was adopted to investigate how individual differences affect EFL learning among fourth-year middle school learners. The decision to use this design stems from the nature of the topic, which explores multiple dimensions of learner diversity such as motivation, learning styles, personality traits, and emotional factors and how they influence language learning in the Algerian context. According to Singh (2021).

Research Approach

Depending on the nature and aims of a study, a researcher may adopt a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approach. A quantitative approach typically emphasizes objective measurements and statistical analysis of data collected through instruments such as surveys and tests. On the other hand, a qualitative approach focuses on understanding phenomena in depth, often through open-ended questions, interviews, and observations.

For the purpose of this study, a mixed methods approach was adopted. Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) define mixed methods research as “research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or program of inquiry” (p. 4). In other words, this approach allows for a richer and more nuanced exploration of the research problem by combining the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Similarly, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) describe mixed methods as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods,

approaches, concepts or language into a single study.” This definition emphasizes the flexibility and the effectiveness of this approach, making it especially effective for exploring complex educational issues like individual differences in language learning.

In the present research, a questionnaire was administered to learners to gather quantitative data, while an interview was conducted with middle school teachers to obtain qualitative insights. As Enosh, Tzafir, and Stolovy (2014) suggest, the mixed methods approach enables researchers to answer research questions with both depth and breadth, enhancing the validity of the findings and making them more applicable to the larger educational context.

Population

The term population refers to the entire group of individuals relevant to the focus of a particular research study. Singh (2006) explains that the population or universe is “the complete mass of observations, which is the parent group from which the sample is to be produced” (p. 82). This underscores the central role that participants play in providing the data necessary to answer the research questions.

In the present study, the population includes fourth-year middle school learners (N=40) and teachers at Mellouki Othman Middle School in Ain Karma and Hariri Abd in Berdjilate, who are directly involved in the English learning and teaching process.

Sample

A sample is a specific portion of the population selected for participation in the study. Hanlon and Larget (2011) define the sample as “a subset of the individuals in a population” (p. 7), indicating that it is chosen to reflect the characteristics of the larger group in a manageable and researchable form. Similarly, Riazi (2016) describes the sample as “a small proportion of a population which researchers consider for study when investigating a

particular topic” (p. 284). This highlights the practical aspect of focusing on a representative group to ensure meaningful data collection.

For the current study, the sample consists of forty (40) fourth-year learners, selected to answer a questionnaire, and Six (6) EFL teachers, who were interviewed to provide deeper insights into how individual differences affect language learning in their classrooms.

Data Collection Tools

Data collection tools refer to the instruments that researchers use to gather the necessary information required to answer their research questions. According to Griffiee (2012), data collection tools are “the means (physical or nonphysical) of producing quantitative or qualitative data to be analyzed and interpreted” (p. 128). In other words, these tools serve as the instruments through which relevant data is obtained, whether in numerical or descriptive form.

For the purpose of the current study, two main tools were utilized: a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire was administered to fourth-year middle school learners to explore their perceptions and experiences regarding individual differences in the EFL learning process. On the other hand, the interview was conducted with EFL teachers to obtain deeper insights into how they perceive and address students' individual differences in the classroom. The selection of participants was based on purposive convenience sampling, which involves choosing individuals who are both relevant to the topic and readily accessible to the researcher. The use of both tools enabled the collection of data from multiple perspectives and enhanced the reliability and depth of the findings by combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Description of the learner's Questionnaire

For the present study, the questionnaire was selected as a research tool since it enables the collection of a huge amount of data within a short period of time. Moreover, it saves time, effort, energy, and cost. This questionnaire was used to answer the first research question. It is a self-designed questionnaire. The questionnaire used in this study consists of sixteen (16) questions and is divided into five sections, each focusing on a different aspect of individual differences in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. It combines multiple-choice, Likert-scale, and open-ended questions to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from fourth-year middle school students.

Section 1: Background Information (Questions 1–2)

This section includes two multiple-choice questions aiming to collect demographic data about the learners, specifically their gender and age. These details help the researcher understand the participants' profiles and examine potential factors related to age or gender that might influence their learning styles and attitudes.

Section 2: Motivation and Attitudes (Questions 3–6)

This section consists of four Likert-scale items designed to explore learners' motivation toward learning English and their attitudes toward classroom activities. It investigates their enjoyment of the subject, reasons for studying English, and their engagement with learning outside the classroom. These questions provide insights into how motivation influences language acquisition.

Section 3: Learning Styles (Questions 7–10)

In this section, the questionnaire examines learners' preferred learning styles through a mix of multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions. It covers whether students learn better through

visual, auditory, or kinesthetic means, and their preferences for individual or group work. This section helps identify the diversity in students' learning preferences.

Section 4: Personality and Emotions (Questions 11–14)

This section includes four Likert-scale items that assess emotional and psychological factors such as anxiety, confidence, and participation in speaking activities. These factors are key in understanding how personality traits impact learners' performance in English.

Section 5: further suggestions

The final section contains two open-ended questions, allowing learners' to express their opinions in their own words. These questions aim to identify what helps them most in learning English and the main difficulties they face. This qualitative input complements the quantitative data by offering deeper insights into learners' experiences.

Description of the interview

The interview aims to explore teachers' perceptions regarding the role of individual differences in shaping EFL learners' learning experiences. It was conducted with four teachers of English at the middle school level and was delivered in person in a printed format. The interview is structured into five main sections.

Section 1: Background Information

Q1: seeks to determine how long the teacher has been involved in teaching English. This helps establish the level of expertise and practical classroom experience the teacher brings, which in turn contextualizes their views on handling diverse learners.

Q2: explores the levels or grades the teacher usually works with. This question helps determine the age group and developmental stage of learners, which may influence the types of individual differences the teacher observes and addresses.

Section 2: Understanding Individual Differences

Q3 aims to identify the types of individual differences teachers commonly notice in their classrooms. This includes cognitive abilities, emotional factors, motivation, learning styles, and language proficiency levels.

Q4 explores how these differences impact learning outcomes. Teachers are asked to reflect on whether such variations influence student engagement, academic performance, or classroom dynamics.

Section 3: Teaching Practices and Strategies

Q 5 investigates how teachers adapt their teaching approaches to meet the varying needs of their learners. This includes differentiated instruction, use of varied materials, or grouping strategies.

Q6 focuses on specific strategies used to support learners who are shy, anxious, or less motivated. Teachers may mention approaches such as encouragement, one-on-one support, or interactive tasks.

Q7 seeks insight into how teachers respond to different learning styles, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic preferences. It helps to understand whether instruction is varied to suit learners' preferred modes of learning.

Section 4: Challenges and Support

Q8 intends to highlight the main challenges teachers encounter when managing diverse learners in a single classroom. These may include time constraints, limited resources, or difficulties in maintaining engagement for all learners.

Q9 examines whether teachers feel adequately trained or equipped to deal with diversity in the classroom. This question explores the need for professional development, institutional support, or resource availability.

Section 5: Recommendations and Suggestions

Q10 collects teachers' suggestions on what could help them address individual differences more effectively. This may involve training programs, teaching materials, or collaboration with colleagues.

Q11 invites teachers to share which strategies or methods they have found most effective in supporting diverse learners. Their responses can provide practical insights into successful practices in real classroom settings.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, the practical methods and tools of the research are explained along with justifications about the choice of the participants and instruments. A detailed description of the questionnaire and the interview is provided in order to test the hypotheses, answer the research questions and achieve the reliability of the study. In the next chapter, research results will be displayed and analyzed thoroughly.

Chapter four**Results****Introduction**

This chapter presents a detailed analysis of the collected data to explore how individual differences affect the EFL learning process, as perceived by both learners and teachers. The main objective is to examine the diversity of learners and how factors such as motivation, learning styles, and cognitive abilities influence their language acquisition. The analysis is based on two main research instruments: the learners' questionnaire and the teachers' interview. Through these tools, the study investigates various aspects of learner diversity and how teachers adapt their instructional practices to meet individual needs.

Analysis of learners' Questionnaire**Section One: Background Information****Question 1:**

1. Gender:

- Male
- Female

The gender distribution of the participants is perfectly balanced, with 50% male and 50% female students. This equal representation ensures that the findings of the study reflect the perspectives of both genders equally.

Question 2:

2. Age

- 14 years
- 15 years
- 16 years
- 17 years

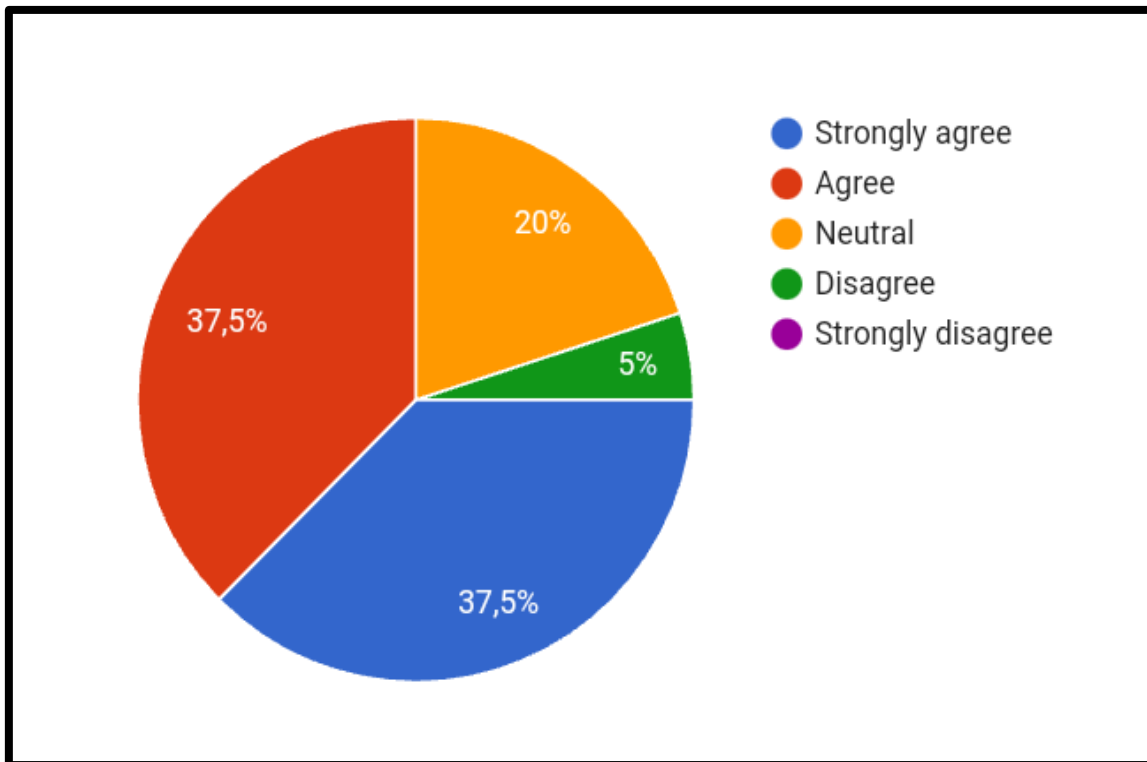
The age distribution among the 40 participants is relatively varied, with the majority falling between 14 and 15 years old. Specifically, 15 years old represent the largest group (40%), followed closely by 14 years old (37.5%). A smaller portion of students are 16 years old (12.5%), while only 10% are 17 years old.

Section Two: Motivation and Attitudes

Question 3: I enjoy learning English.

Figure 1

Students' Enjoyment of Learning English



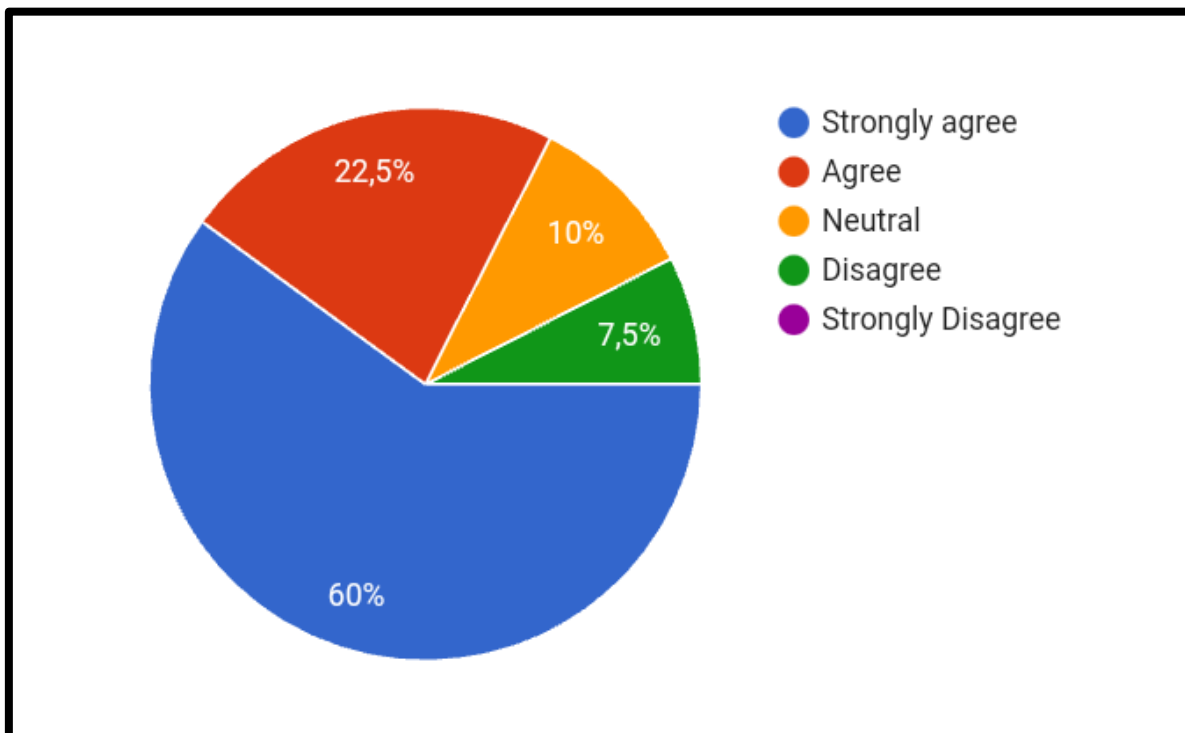
As revealed in Figure 1, students' responses to the statement "I enjoy learning English" reflect a generally positive attitude towards the subject. Specifically, 37.5% (15 students) strongly agreed, and another 37.5% (15 students) agreed, indicating that a total of 75% of the respondents enjoy their English learning experience. Meanwhile, 20% (8 students) chose a neutral response, showing a moderate or uncertain stance. Only 5% (2 students) disagreed, and none strongly disagreed. These results suggest that most students are motivated and

engaged in their English classes, which can serve as a strong foundation for effective language acquisition.

Question 4: I study English because I want to use it in the future (travel, work, or studies).

Figure2

learners' Motivation to Learn English for Future Use

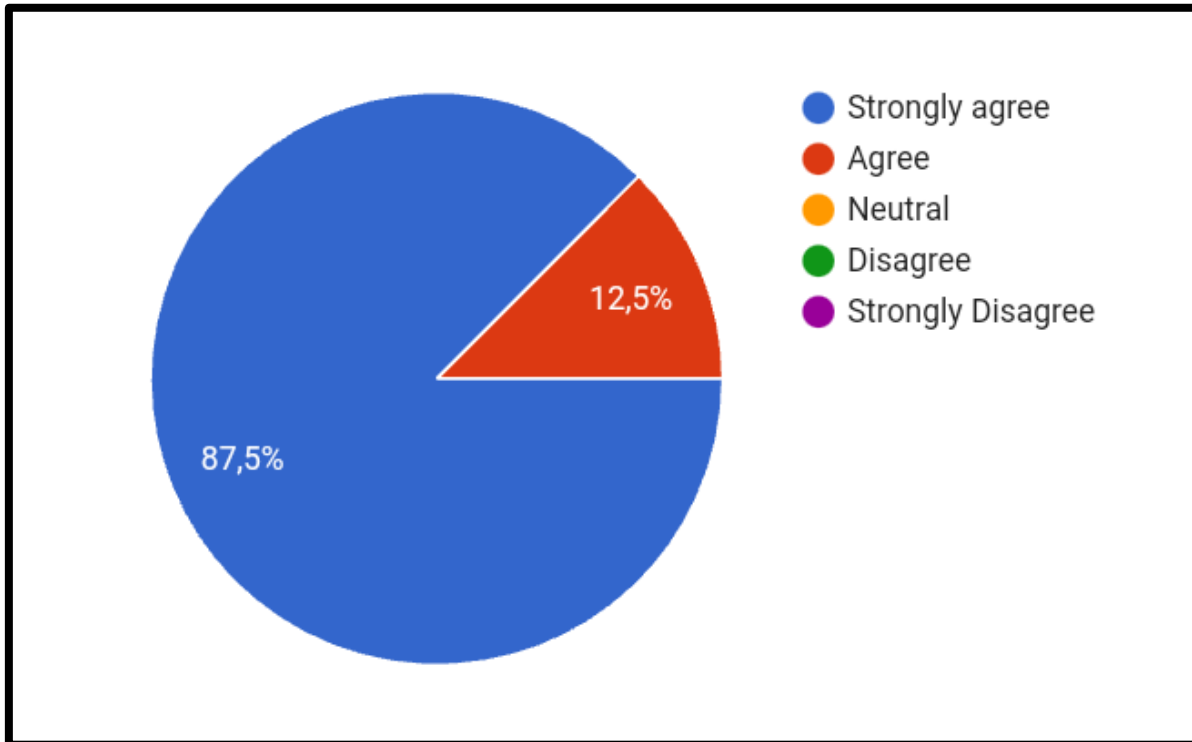


As it is displayed in Figure 2, a large majority of the learners' (60%) strongly agreed that they study English because they want to use it in the future for purposes such as travel, work, or academic studies. In addition, 22.5% agreed with the statement, showing a clear sense of instrumental motivation. On the other hand, 10% of the participants selected a neutral response, while only 7.5% disagreed, and none strongly disagreed. These findings indicate that most students are aware of the practical value of learning English and are driven by long-term goals, which supports the importance of integrating meaningful and goal-oriented content in EFL learning.

Question 5: I feel motivated when the teacher uses games or fun activities.

Figure 3

learners' Motivation When Teachers Use Games or Fun Activities.

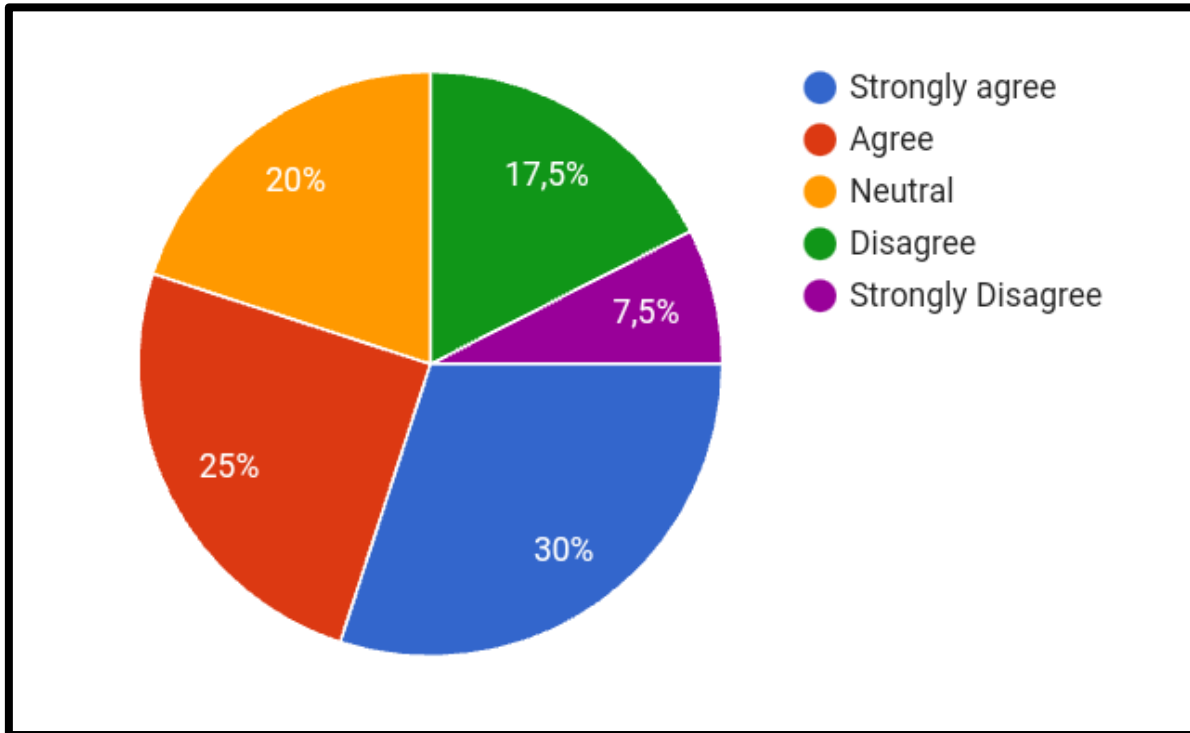


The results obtained from the data revealed that a significant majority of participants (87.5%) strongly agreed that they feel motivated when the teacher uses games or fun activities in the classroom. The remaining 12.5% also expressed agreement, while no students selected neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. These findings clearly reflect students' strong preference for interactive and enjoyable learning methods. Similar to previous responses related to motivation, this result reinforces the idea that fun-based activities contribute positively to learners' emotional engagement and overall enthusiasm for English language learning.

Question 6: I try to learn English even outside the classroom (e.g., watching videos, using apps).

Figure 4

learners' Efforts to Learn English Outside the Classroom



The results shown in Figure 4 indicate that a considerable portion of learners engage in learning English beyond the classroom environment. Specifically, 30% of the participants strongly agreed, and 25% agreed that they attempt to learn English independently through activities such as watching videos or using mobile applications. Meanwhile, 20% adopted a neutral stance, suggesting occasional or uncertain engagement in such practices. On the other hand, 17.5% disagreed, and 7.5% strongly disagreed, reflecting a lack of interest or limited motivation to pursue language learning outside formal instruction.

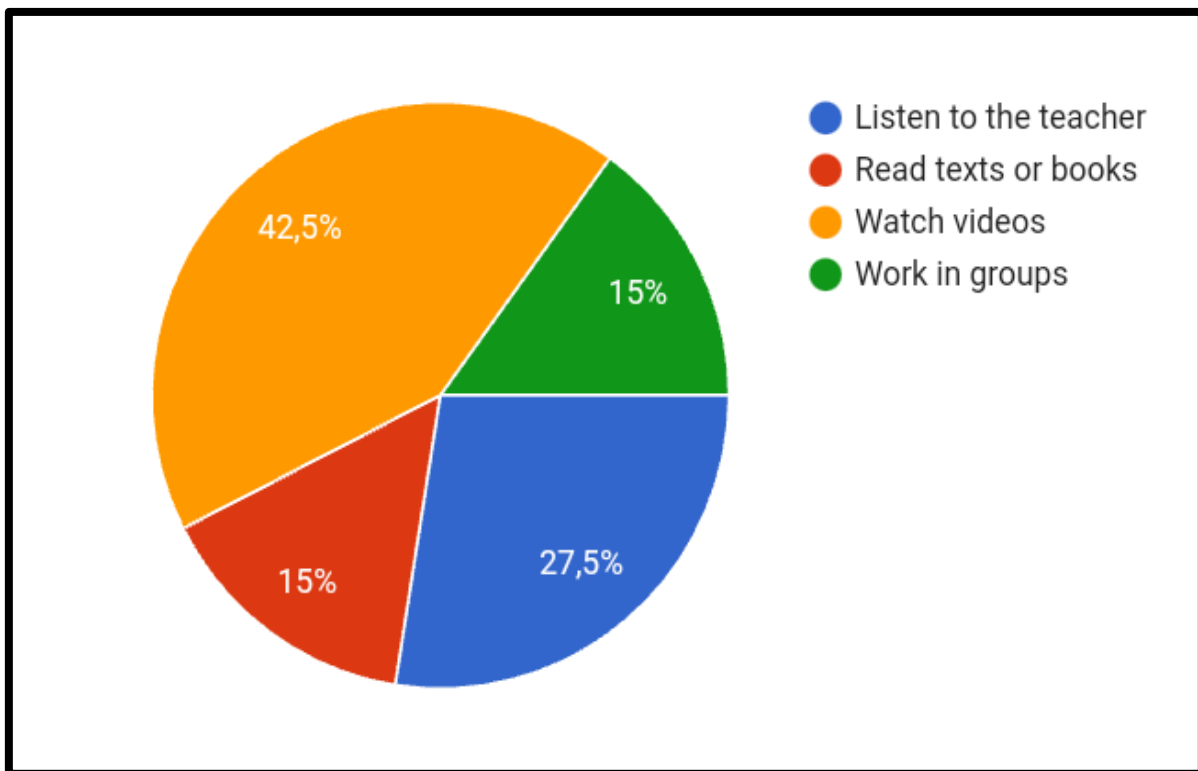
Section Three: Learning Styles

Question 7: I learn best when I:

- Listen to the teacher
- Read texts or books
- Watch videos
- Work in groups

Figure 5

learners' Preferred Learning styles



As illustrated in Figure 5, the majority of learners' (42.5%) reported that they learn best when watching videos, highlighting the importance of visual and auditory content in supporting their comprehension and retention. Additionally, 27.5% of participants stated that they learn most effectively by listening to the teacher, indicating that traditional teacher-centered instruction still holds value for many learners. Reading texts or books and working in groups were both preferred by 15% of the students, showing a smaller yet significant interest

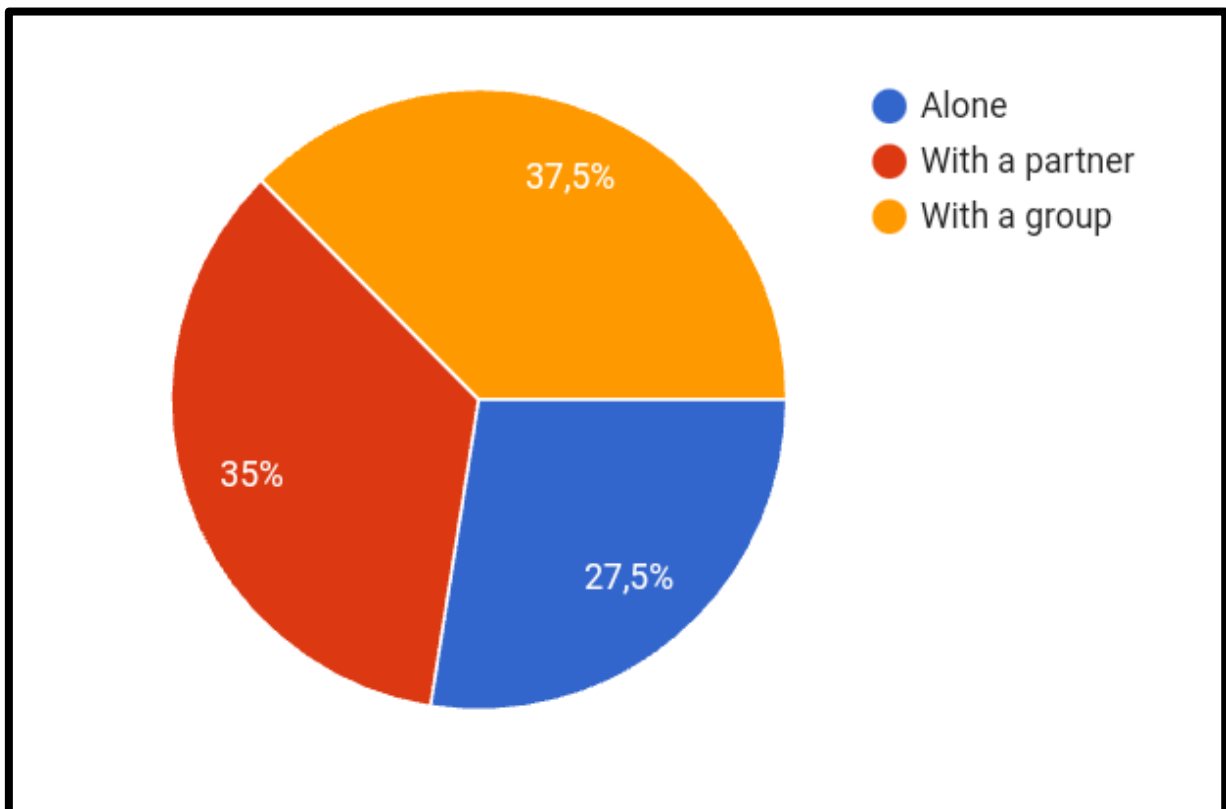
in individual reading and collaborative learning. These findings suggest that while students benefit from various learning styles, incorporating multimedia content may be particularly effective in enhancing EFL instruction.

Question 8: I prefer working:

- Alone
- With a partner
- In a group

Figure 6

learners' Preferences for Learning Arrangements



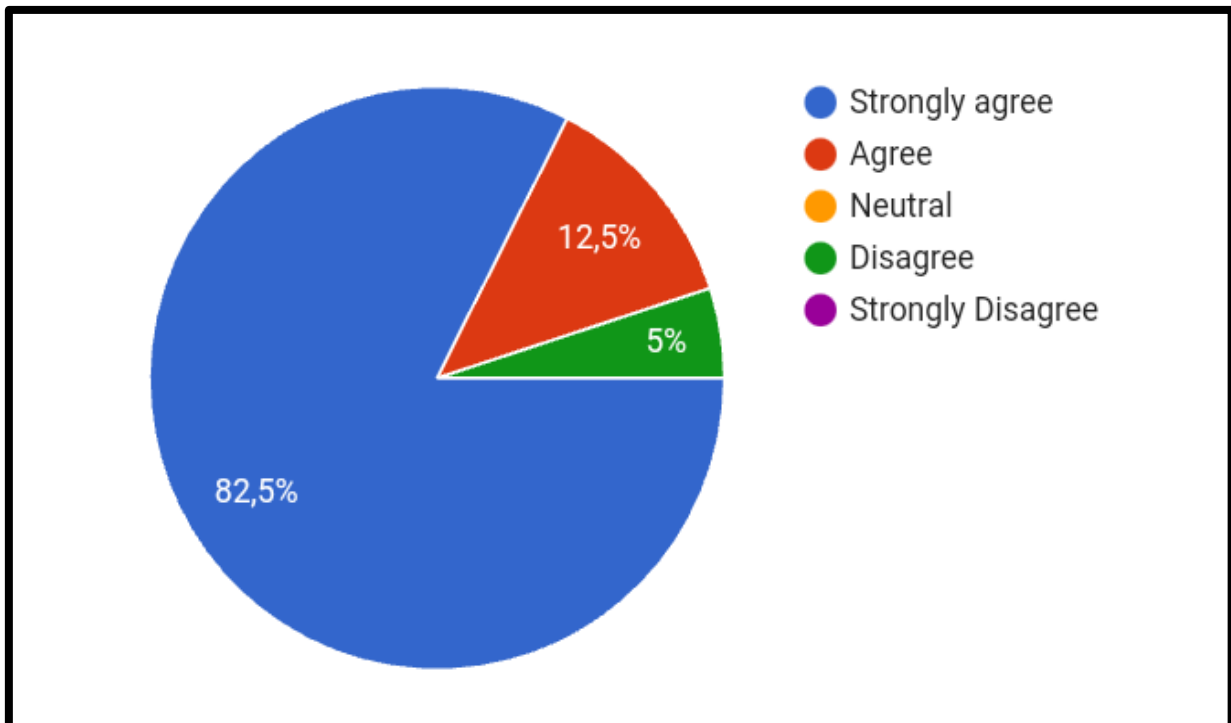
As displayed in Figure 6, the responses show diverse preferences regarding learning arrangements. The highest percentage of students (37.5%) indicated that they prefer working in a group, while 35% expressed a preference for working with a partner. In contrast, only 27.5% stated that they prefer working alone. These findings suggest that the majority of learners are inclined toward collaborative learning environments, whether in pairs or groups.

This preference for social interaction in learning contexts may enhance communication, peer support, and motivation, all of which are beneficial for EFL development. However, the presence of students who favor working individually also highlights the importance of offering flexible learning options that address different learner needs.

Question 9: I understand lessons better when the teacher uses pictures, videos, or real examples.

Figure 7

Impact of Visuals and Real-Life Examples on Lesson Comprehension



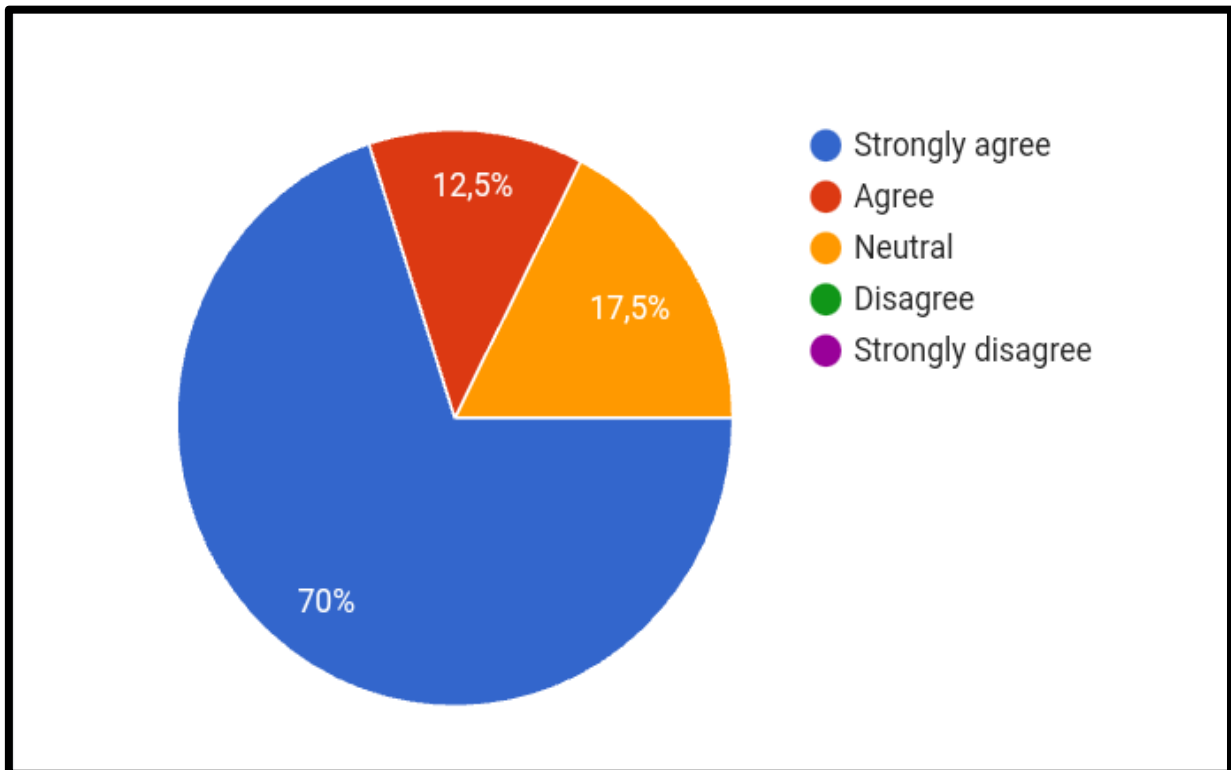
The data presented in Figure 7 highlight the strong positive effect of visual and contextual materials on students' understanding of English lessons. A striking 82.5% of respondents strongly agreed that they understand lessons better when the teacher incorporates pictures, videos, or real-life examples. An additional 12.5% also agreed, showing a broad consensus on the usefulness of these tools. Only 5% disagreed, while none expressed neutrality or strong disagreement. These results underscore the importance of using multimodal resources in EFL

instruction, as they help bridge linguistic gaps and make abstract content more accessible and engaging for learners.

Question 10: I like to move around or do hands-on activities (e.g., acting out, games) when learning English.

Figure 8

learners' Preferences for Kinesthetic and Hands-On Activities in English Learning



According to the results in Figure 8, a significant majority of learners' expressed a strong preference for kinesthetic and hands-on learning activities during English lessons. Specifically, 70% of participants strongly agreed that they enjoy moving around or engaging in physical tasks such as acting out or playing games while learning English. An additional 12.5% agreed with this statement, while 17.5% remained neutral. Notably, none of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed. These findings reveal that incorporating movement-based and experiential learning strategies can play a vital role in increasing students'

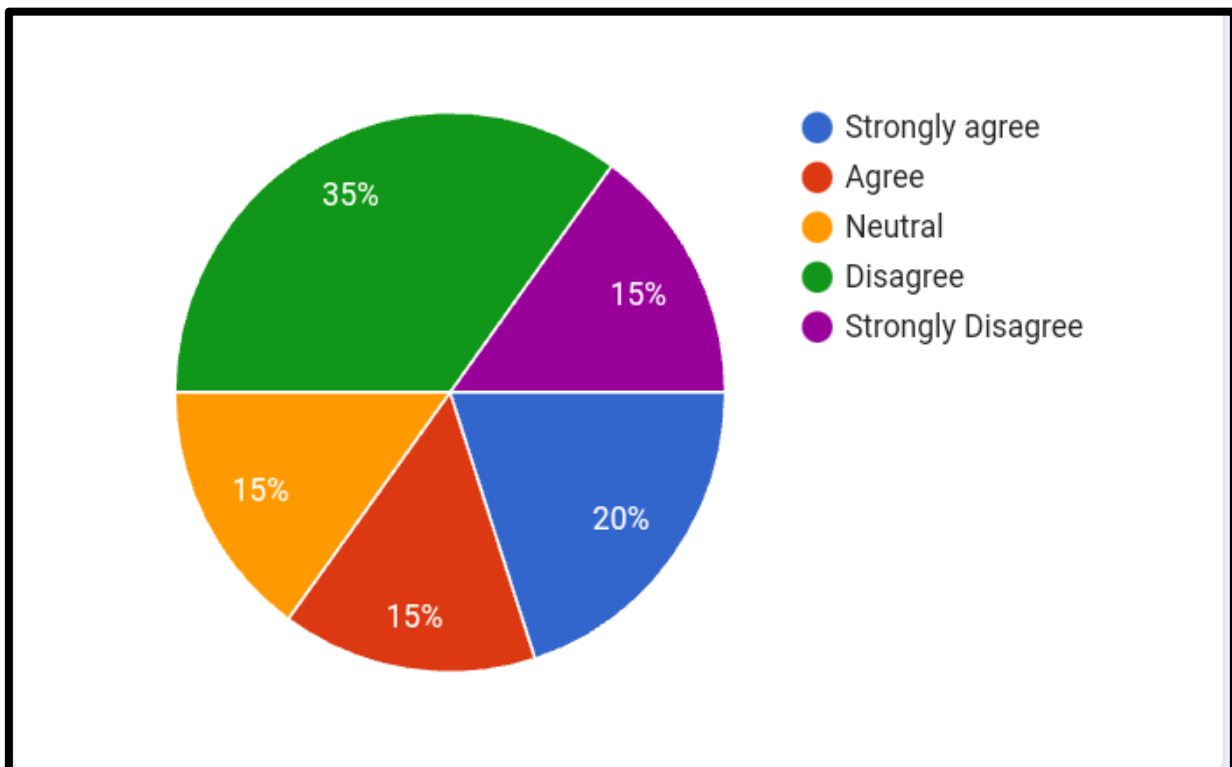
engagement and motivation, particularly for learners who thrive in dynamic and interactive environments.

Section Four: Personality and Emotions

Question 11: I feel anxious when I speak English in front of the class.

Figure 9

learners' Anxiety When Speaking English in Front of the Class

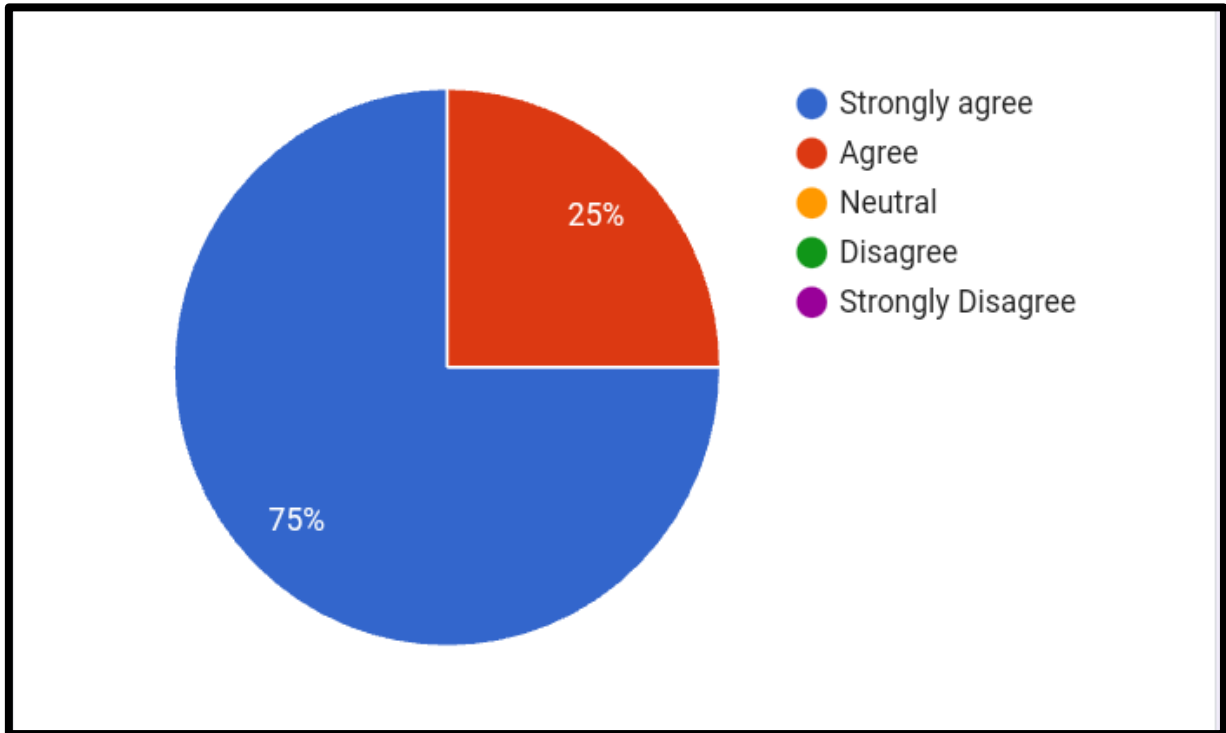


When asked about their feelings toward speaking English in front of the class, students' responses showed noticeable variation, as presented in Figure 9. A combined 35% of learners reported experiencing anxiety, with 20% strongly agreeing and 15% agreeing with the statement. Meanwhile, 15% maintained a neutral position. In contrast, half of the respondents appeared more confident, with 35% disagreeing and 15% strongly disagreeing. These findings highlight the presence of speaking anxiety among a portion of students, though a majority seem comfortable with oral participation. Teachers may need to implement supportive strategies to help anxious learners gradually build their speaking confidence.

Question 12: I like participating in English speaking activities.

Figure 10

learners' Attitudes Toward Participating in English Speaking Activities

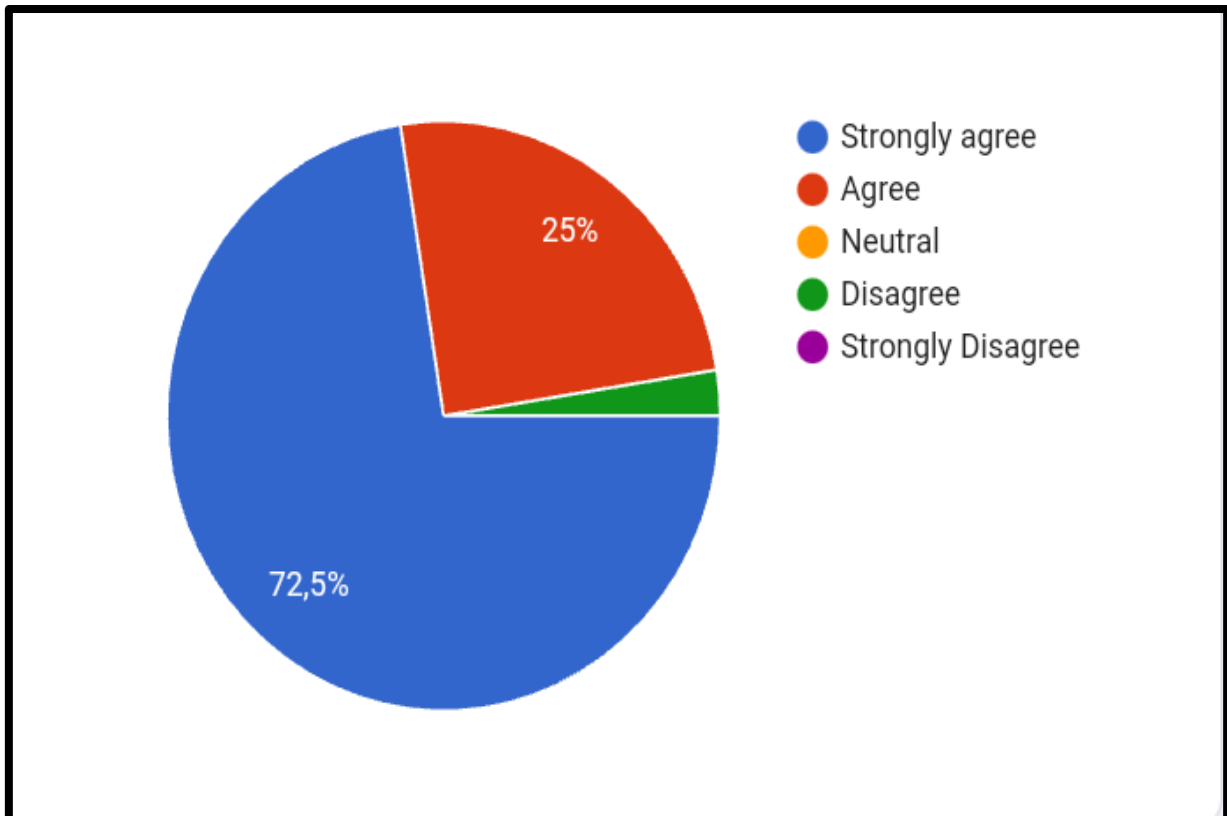


The data illustrated in Figure 10 show a remarkably positive attitude among students toward participating in English speaking activities. A large majority (75%) strongly agreed with the statement, while the remaining 25% also agreed. No participants selected neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree responses. This unanimous positivity suggests that speaking activities are well-received by learners and may play a key role in enhancing their oral performance and confidence.

Question 13: I feel more confident when I work in small groups than when I speak alone.

Figure 11

learners' Confidence When Working in Small Groups vs. Speaking Alone

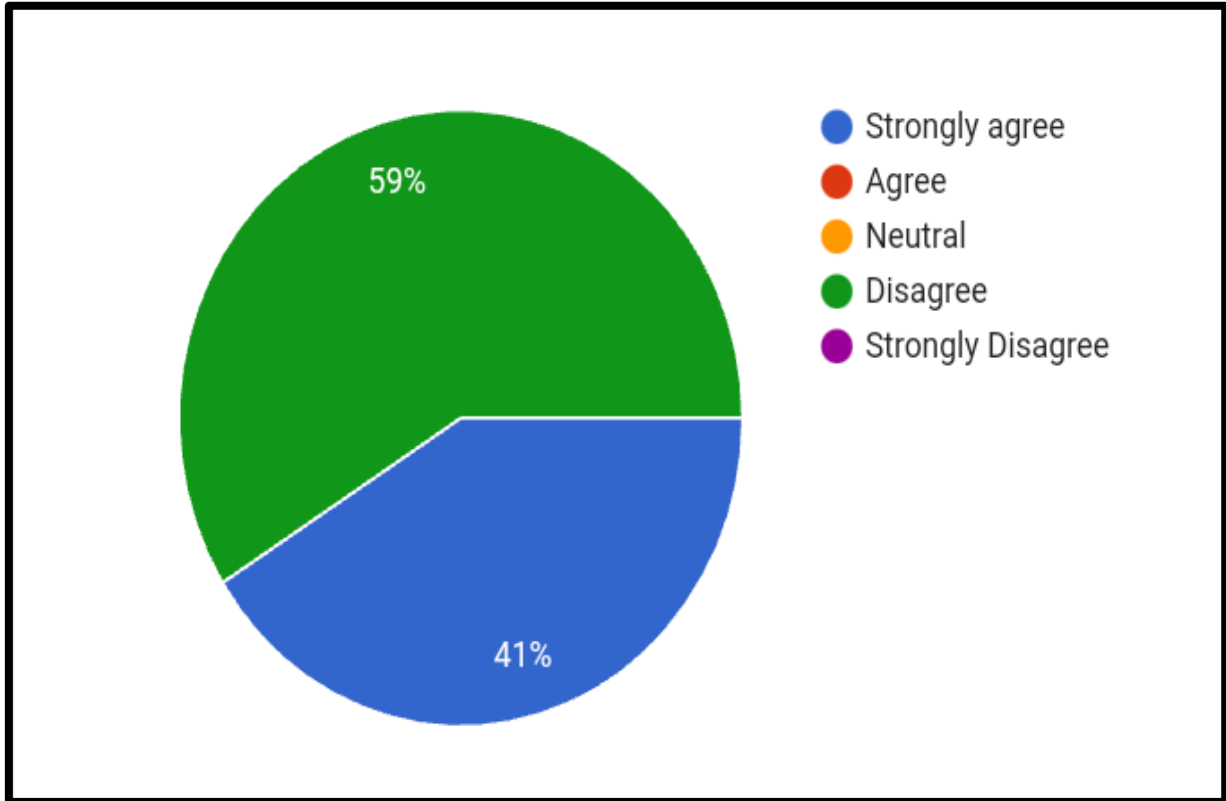


As shown in Figure 11, the vast majority of learners indicated that they feel more confident speaking English when working in small groups rather than alone. Specifically, 72.5% of the respondents representing 29 out of 40 students strongly agreed with the statement, while 25% (10 students) agreed. Only 2.5% (1 student) disagreed, and no students chose neutral or strongly disagree. These findings highlight the importance of collaborative learning in reducing speaking anxiety and boosting learners' confidence. Incorporating small group discussions and peer interaction appears to be a highly effective approach for encouraging oral participation in the EFL classroom.

Question 14: I get discouraged easily when I do not understand something in English.

Figure 12

learners' *Reactions to Difficulties in Understanding English*



The results in Figure 12 shed light on how learners emotionally respond when they face challenges in understanding English. Notably, 41% of the participants (16 out of 40 learners) strongly agreed that they get easily discouraged when they do not understand something. In contrast, 59% (24 learners) disagreed, indicating that they are more resilient in the face of difficulty. Interestingly, none of the respondents chose agree, neutral, or strongly disagree. This contrast suggests that while a considerable number of students experience discouragement, the majority maintain a positive attitude and persistence, which are crucial traits for successful language learning.

Section Five: Learner's attitudes towards learning English**Question 15: What helps you the most to learn English well?**

According to the responses from learners to question about what helps them most in learning English, several key methods emerged. Two learners mentioned "*listening to native speakers*", which helps improve pronunciation, intonation, and understanding of natural speech. One learner highlighted "*reading books, texts and anything in English*", a strategy that enhances vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Another learner valued "*role play games*", as they encourage active participation and practical communication skills. Additionally, one learner emphasized "*using English outside the classroom*", reinforcing learning through authentic practice. Lastly, one learner mentioned "*speaking in groups*", which builds confidence and encourages peer interaction. These varied responses reflect different learning preferences and the importance of combining input, interaction, and real-life application in English learning.

Question 16: What makes it hard for you to learn English?

When asked about what makes it hard for you to learn English, learners provided various challenges. One learner pointed out "*pronunciation*" as a major difficulty, highlighting the challenge of mastering accurate sounds. Another mentioned "*many tenses*", reflecting the complexity of English grammar. The fear of "*criticizing and making mistakes*" was also identified as a barrier to speaking confidently. One learner found "*writing more difficult than speaking*," indicating different skill challenges. Additionally, the confusion caused by "*similar words (homophones)*" was mentioned, which can hinder comprehension and correct usage. Lastly, "*shyness*" was reported as an obstacle, affecting participation and oral practice. These responses underline both linguistic and psychological factors that affect learners' English learning process.

Analysis of the Interview

To explore teachers' perceptions of how individual differences affect the EFL learning process, an interview with eleven (11) questions was conducted with six (6) teachers. The data collected from the interviewees was analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis method. After transcribing the interviews, the researchers started generating codes to identify recurring patterns and themes related to learner diversity and its influence on EFL teaching.

Section 1: Teacher 's background information

Question 1: How long have you been teaching English as a foreign language?

When asked teachers about their teaching experience in English as a foreign language, the participants responded as follows: one teacher stated, 'I have been teaching English for 14 years', another mentioned, "I have been teaching English for 18 years", while others reported "8 years", "5 years", and " I have been teaching English as a foreign language for 9 years." One participant also said "I have been teaching English for three (3) years.". These responses highlight a wide range of teaching experience among the participants.

Question 2: What levels or grades do you usually teach?

Regarding the levels or grades they usually teach, the participants provided the following responses: one teacher stated, "Usually 4MS and 1MS", another said, "Usually MS 4 level", while other mentioned, "I teach 2MS, 4MS". Similarly, the fourth teacher claimed "1MS, 3MS". In similar vein, teacher 5 declared " I usually teach 2MS and 4MS" while the last one said "I usually teach 1MS and 2MS." These responses indicate that the participants are primarily involved in teaching various levels across middle school, particularly first, second, third- and fourth-year students.

Generating the Main Codes

After transcribing the verbal data, the main ideas of the interviewees were highlighted then generated under the name “codes”. According to Tucket (2005), the process of coding refers to the organization of information into meaningful groups. Hence, in this study, 53 codes were raised from the teachers’ responses to the interview ‘s questions. To specify from where each code has been extracted, the researchers use small tables for each question.

Section 2: Understanding Individual Differences

Question 3: What kinds of individual differences do you notice among your learners’ in the English classroom?

Table 1

Generating Codes from Teachers’ Responses to Q3

Interview extract	Codes
I notice differences in language proficiency levels, learning styles,motivation cultural backgrounds, confidence levels, and the pace at which students grasp new concepts	Individual learner differences
Every class is mix of personalities and abilities. some students are quick to participate, while others are shy and prefer to listen. I see a range of English levels; some are almost fluent, and others are just beginning. I also notice differences in motivation, attention span, and how students prefer to learn, some love visuals, some enjoy stories, and others like to move arround and interact.	Learner diversity
Motivation, learning styles	Motivational and cognitive

	differences
Cognitive, learning styles	Cognitive and learning styles differences
Kinds of individual differences: Sex, environment, cognitive	Sociocultural and cognitive differences
Abilities, interests, learning styles, attitudes and other personality traits and gender. Some pupils have better memories than others, some are simply smart than others and some have to make efforts to learn	Cognitive, affective, and sociocultural differences

Question 4: In your opinion, how do these differences affect learners’ learning outcomes in English?

Table 2

Generating Codes from Teachers’ Responses to Q 4

Interview extract	Codes
These differences can lead to varying levels of participation, comprehension, and progress. Some students may excel while others may struggle to keep up, especially if instruction is not differentiated.	Learning outcomes
they affect everything from how much students participate to how confident they feel using English. For instance, a confident speaker might take more risks and learn faster,	Confidence

while a shy student might understand the material but not show it. If i don' t take these differences into account, some students can fall behind or lose interest	
Affects understanding and motivation	Motivation
Affects language skills and learning experiences	Language development
learners will be faster with good results	Learning speed
In my opinion, these differences affect their performances and attitudes of learners during the learning process.	Performance

Section 3 : Teaching Practices and Strategies

Question 5: How do you adapt your teaching to meet the diverse needs of your learners?

Table 3

Generating Codes from Teachers' Responses to Q5

Interview extract	Codes
I use differentiated instruction, provide varied learning materials and incorporate group work, visual aids, and technology. I also offer extra support and feedback to those who need it.	Differentiated instruction
I try to mix things up in class. I use visuals, music, group work and games to keep things interesting and make sure there is something for everyone. I also give extra support to	Multimodal teachingstrategies

students who need it like offering simpler tasks or more one-on-one help when possible	
differentiated instructions and use ongoing assessment	Instructional adaptation
Varied teaching methods	Flexible instructional methods
Facilitate my teaching method moving from the general to the specific considering the weak pupils	Scaffolded instruction
Adopting my teaching style for different learners involves employing a variety of instructional strategies incorporate visual, auditory and kinesthetic	Learning-style-responsive instruction

Question 6: Do you use specific strategies for learners who are shy, anxious, or less motivated? Can you give examples?

Table 4

Generating Codes from Teachers' Responses to Q6

Interview extract	Codes
yes, I create a supportive classroom environment, pair them with encouraging peers, use praise and encouragement, and offer low-pressure speaking activities like pair discussions or journaling's	Supportive environment
yes, definitely, for shy students, I try to create a safe space	Personalized motivation

<p>where they feel okey making mistakes. Sometimes I let them work in pairs or write instead of speaking in front of the whole class. For less motivated students, I try to bring in topics they care about, music, sports or even social media and make lessons more relevant to their lives.</p>	
<p>yes, motivate them / group work</p>	<p>Collaborative learning</p>
<p>yes, support them, use group work</p>	<p>Peer support</p>
<p>Yes of course, encourage them, assign them with different tasks in the class and valuate their works</p>	<p>Task-based engagement</p>
<p>Bring the shy learners to the front, call them even when they don't raise their hands, ask them to speak even they are wrong.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give them specific roles that encourage social interaction. - Give them tasks that will make them feel important like (erasing the black board or passing out papers) 	<p>Role-based inclusion</p>

Question 7: How do you deal with different learning styles e.g. visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners?

Table 5

Generating Codes from Teachers' Responses to Q7

Interview extract	Codes
I use a mix teaching methods such as visual presentations, songs or discussions, and hands-on activities like role-playing or games to engage all learning styles	Multi-sensory instruction
I try to include a little bit of everything in my lessons, I use pictures and videos for visual learners, songs and discussions for auditory learners, and activities like role plays or games for kinesthetic learners. It is not always perfect, but I do my best to reach each student in the way they learn best.	Differentiated input
Varied instructions	Instructional variety
Varied tasks	Task-based variation
Always bringing pictures, audio, real materials to motivate and facilitate their understanding	Use of authentic and visual materials
When teaching the lesson, I should take into consideration the learning styles of my learners to include multiple	Learning-style-responsive teaching

<p>activities, form of instruction that will target the learning styles. It can help me to provide all the necessary materials relevant to my lesson.</p>	
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Section 4: Challenges and Support

Question 8: What are the main challenges you face when dealing with diverse learners in one classroom?

Table 6

Generating Codes from Teachers’ Responses to Q8

<p>Interview extract</p>	<p>Codes</p>
<p>It can be difficult to balance the needs of fast and slow learners, maintain classroom management, and ensure that all students stay engaged and make progress.</p>	<p>Balancing learner differences</p>
<p>The biggest challenge is time. it is hard to plan lessons that work for everyone when you have limited time and a large group. Also, keeping fast learners engaged while supporting those who need more help can be tricky.</p>	<p>Time management</p>
<p>limited time language barriers</p>	<p>Time and communication barriers</p>
<p>limited resources and struggle to support all students</p>	<p>Resource limitation</p>
<p>Classroom management, cultural differences,</p>	<p>Complex classroom dynamics</p>

Differentiating instruction, language barriers	
The main challenges that I have face in my classroom are: Time constraints, lack of understanding how to teach diverse needs, lack of motivation, understanding different learning styles	Instructional adaptation challenges

Question 9: Do you feel that you have enough training or resources to support all types of learners? Why or why not?

Table 7

Generating Codes from Teachers' Responses to Q9

Interview extract	Codes
Not always, while some training is provided, more practical workshops and access to inclusive materials would help address all learners 'needs effectively.	Need for practical training and inclusive resources
Honestly, not always. I've had some training, but I feel like there is always more to learn; especially when it comes to supporting students with learning difficulties or emotional needs. More resources and practical strategies would definitely help.	Insufficient preparation for learner diversity
No, hard to meet all learners ' needs.	Lack of capacity to address learner diversity
No, lack of specialized training.	Lack of specialized training

No, as a teacher, I feel that I always need more resources or training to meet the diverse needs of my learners effectively.	Need for ongoing professional development
No, I don ' t feel.	Lack of sufficient support

Section 5 : Recommendations and Suggestions

Question 10: What do you think teachers need in order to better address individual differences in EFL classes?

Table 8

Generating Codes from Teachers' Responses to Q10

Interview extract	Codes
Teachers need ongoing professional development, access to diverse teaching materials, smaller class sizes, and support from specialists like language therapists or counselors.	Institutional and professional support
We need more hands-on training, practical classroom strategies, and support from specialists. It would also help to have access to a variety of teaching materials that cater to different levels and learning styles.	Training and instructionalresources
Enough time / training	Time and training needs
Flexible teachingmethods	Instructionalflexibility
To better address individual differences in English as a	Holistic teacher support

foreign language (EFL) classroom, teachers need a combination of Knowledge, tools and support systems	
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Question 11: In your experience, what strategies or methods have been most effective in supporting diverse learners?

Table 9

Generating Codes from Teachers' Responses to Q11

Interview extract	Codes
Differentiated instruction, project - based learning, formative assessment and building strong relationships with students have proven effective in supporting diverse learners.	Using varied teaching methods, assessments, and strong teacher-student relationships
Building strong relationships with students makes a huge difference. when students feel understood and supported, they are more willing to participate. Also, using group work, games, and real-life topics helps keep them engaged and allow everyone to contribute in their own way.	Fostering supportive relationships and engaging students through interactive activities
Collaborative learning Use technology	Promoting teamwork and integrating technology in learning
Formative assessment Tailor teaching	Adapting teaching based on ongoing assessment"

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Technology Integration to enhance learning - formative and summative assessment help teachers track progress and adjust teaching methods - project-based learning: usually tied to real world issues or challenges - Flexible grouping: involves creating temporary groups of students based on specific learning objectives needs or abilities - Cooperative learning: this strategy involves students working in small groups to complete tasks, solve problems or discuss concepts 	<p>Combining technology, assessments, flexible grouping, and real-world projects</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the use of active methods of learning (brainstorming's and group discussion before entering to the lesson. -Help students to learn using new methods like singing, role play, sketching ... -The use of technology in learning Repetition of words, sounds -Prior knowledge links -Realia in teaching 	<p>Active and multi-sensory learning strategies with technology support</p>

• Searching for themes

After having all the data coded, the researchers highlighted the most common codes and sorted them into themes. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), searching for themes can be done by “collecting codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential

theme” (p. 35). Hence, these researchers suggest that it may be useful to use some visual representation in this step in order to successfully combine the different codes into themes. As an example, they highlight the use of maps and tables. Hence, in the present study, the researchers used a table in order to sort the different codes into border themes; as a result, nine themes were raised.

Table 10

Generating Themes from the Main Codes

Codes	Theme
Individual learner differences Learner diversity Motivational and cognitive differences Cognitive and learning styles differences Sociocultural and cognitive differences Cognitive, affective, and socio-cultural differences	Types and Dimensions of Individual Differences in EFL Learning
Learning outcomes Confidence Motivation Language development Learning speed Performance	Impact of Individual Differences on EFL Learning Outcomes.
Differentiated instruction Multimodal teaching strategies Instructional adaptation	Instructional Strategies to Address Learner Diversity.

<p>Flexible instructional methods</p> <p>Scaffolded instruction</p> <p>Learning-style-responsive instruction</p>	
<p>Supportive environment</p> <p>Personalized motivation</p> <p>Collaborative learning</p> <p>Peer support</p> <p>Task-based engagement</p> <p>Role-based inclusion</p>	<p>Inclusive Strategies for Engaging Shy, Anxious, and Unmotivated Students.</p>
<p>Multi-sensory instruction</p> <p>Differentiated input</p> <p>Instructional variety</p> <p>Task-based variation</p> <p>Use of authentic and visual materials</p> <p>Learning-style-responsive teaching</p>	<p>Adaptive Instructional methods for Different Learning Styles</p>
<p>Balancing learner differences</p> <p>Time management</p> <p>Time and communication barriers</p> <p>Resource limitation</p> <p>Complex classroom dynamics</p> <p>Instructional adaptation challenges</p>	<p>Challenges in Managing Individual Differences in the Classroom</p>
<p>Need for practical training and inclusive resources</p> <p>Insufficient preparation for learner diversity</p>	<p>Support Needs for Teachers in Addressing Learner Diversity</p>

<p>Lack of capacity to address learner diversity</p> <p>Lack of specialized training</p> <p>Need for ongoing professional development</p> <p>Lack of sufficient support</p>	
<p>Institutional and professional support</p> <p>Training and instructional resources</p> <p>Time and training needs</p> <p>Instructional flexibility</p> <p>Holistic teacher support</p>	<p>Professional and Institutional Support for Teachers</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Using varied teaching methods, assessments, and strong teacher-student relationships -Fostering supportive relationships and engaging students through interactive activities -Promoting teamwork and integrating technology in learning -Adapting teaching based on ongoing assessment -Combining technology, assessments, flexible grouping, and real-world projects -Active and multi-sensory learning strategies with technology support 	<p>Effective Teaching Strategies for Supporting Learner Diversity</p>

Defining and naming themes

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), this phase starts when “you have a satisfactory thematic map of your data” (p. 22). They add that defining themes refers to explaining the essence of each theme and identifying the feature that has been covered in each theme, whereas naming themes refers to providing themes with names that you will give them in the final analysis. In the current study, the themes’ names were not adjusted in the final analysis, as the researchers believed that the names given to themes were “concise, punchy, and immediately give the reader a sense of what the theme is about” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 23). Hence, the researchers use a table to better explain what each theme is about.

Table 11

Defining and Naming Themes

Themes	Description
Types and Dimensions of Individual Differences in EFL Learning	This theme explores the various types of individual learner differences, including cognitive, affective, sociocultural, and motivational dimensions that influence EFL learning.
Impact of Individual Differences on EFL Learning Outcomes	This theme highlights how learners’ diverse traits affect their performance, language development, confidence, motivation, and overall learning progress.
Instructional Strategies to Address Learner Diversity.	This theme covers the methods and approaches teachers use to adapt instruction in order to accommodate students with varying learning needs.
Inclusive Strategies for Engaging	This theme focuses on specific techniques teachers

<p>Shy, Anxious, and Unmotivated Students.</p>	<p>employ to support and engage learners who are less confident, anxious, or lacking motivation</p>
<p>Adaptive Instructional methods for Different Learning Styles</p>	<p>This theme involves teaching practices tailored to suit visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and other learning styles to enhance comprehension and participation.</p>
<p>Challenges in Managing Individual Differences in the Classroom</p>	<p>This theme addresses the difficulties teachers face in handling diverse learner needs, including time constraints, classroom complexity, and limited resources.</p>
<p>Support Needs for Teachers in Addressing Learner Diversity</p>	<p>This theme reflects teachers' perspectives on the training, tools, and support they require to effectively manage and respond to student diversity.</p>
<p>Professional and Institutional Support for Teachers</p>	<p>This theme emphasizes the importance of institutional backing, professional development, and access to resources in helping teachers meet diverse learner needs.</p>
<p>Effective Teaching Strategies for Supporting Learner Diversity</p>	<p>This theme showcases dynamic and interactive teaching methods used to foster inclusive learning and accommodate students with varied backgrounds and abilities.</p>

Producing the report**Question 3: Types and Dimensions of Individual Differences in EFL Learning**

The third question of the interview aimed to explore the various types and dimensions of individual differences observed by teachers in the EFL classroom. The theme for this question is Types and Dimensions of Individual Differences in EFL Learning. Responses assigned to this theme described a wide range of learner characteristics that affect the language learning process. The analysis of the verbal data linked to this question led to the emergence of six codes: Individual learner differences, Learner diversity, Motivational and cognitive differences, Cognitive and learning styles differences, Sociocultural and cognitive differences, and Cognitive, affective, and sociocultural differences.

The responses revealed a shared recognition among teachers that EFL learners differ significantly in their learning experiences. As Teacher 1 stated, “I notice differences in language proficiency levels, learning styles, motivation, cultural backgrounds, confidence levels, and the pace at which students grasp new concepts.” Teacher 2 said, “Every class is a mix of personalities and abilities. Some students are quick to participate, while others are shy and prefer to listen. I see a range of English levels; some are almost fluent, and others are just beginning. I also notice differences in motivation, attention span, and how students prefer to learn; some love visuals, some enjoy stories, and others like to move around and interact.” Similarly, Teacher 3 said, “Motivation, learning styles.” Teacher 4 pointed out, “Cognitive, learning styles.” Teacher 5 stated, “Sex, environment, cognitive.” While Teacher 6 explained, “Abilities, interests, learning styles, attitudes and other personality traits and gender. Some pupils have better memories than others, some are simply smarter than others, and some have to make efforts to learn.”

These responses reflect a deep awareness of the diverse dimensions that shape students’ learning experiences. The types of individual differences mentioned by the teachers are

strongly supported by literature. For instance, Badrkoohi and Maftoon (2017) highlighted the role of learning styles and motivation, particularly the influence of visual learning and the ideal L2 self, in shaping EFL learners' motivation. Zhao (2020) emphasized the impact of emotional and personality traits such as anxiety and introversion on speaking performance, aligning with Teacher 1 and Teacher 2's reference to confidence and willingness to participate. Kondo (2021) also confirmed that cognitive factors like phonological working memory, along with motivation, play a key role in learners' oral proficiency, which corresponds with Teacher 4 and Teacher 6's observations. Furthermore, Li (2022) discussed how motivation, willingness to communicate, and personal interest affect the use of grammar strategies, echoing Teacher 3 and Teacher 6's points on interests and attitudes. In the Algerian context, Nouioua (2018) showed that autonomous learners who use metacognitive strategies perform better, suggesting the value of recognizing and supporting learner diversity as seen in Teacher 5's emphasis on environment and cognitive traits. Similarly, Boubakeur and Nawal (2021) stressed the importance of teacher awareness of individual differences and the need for differentiation strategies, reinforcing the relevance of this theme across contexts.

Q4. Impact of Individual Differences on EFL Learning Outcomes

The fourth interview question explored how individual differences influence students' outcomes in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. The central theme for this question is Impact of Individual Differences on EFL Learning Outcomes. The analysis of the interview responses revealed six main codes: learning outcomes, confidence, motivation, language development, learning speed, and performance. These codes reflect the teachers' awareness of how learners' unique traits impact their academic progression and engagement.

All the interviewed teachers acknowledged that individual differences play a significant role in shaping students' experiences and achievements. As Teacher 1 stated, "These differences can lead to varying levels of participation, comprehension, and progress. Some

students may excel while others may struggle to keep up, especially if instruction is not differentiated.” Teacher 2 emphasized that “they affect everything from how much students participate to how confident they feel using English. For instance, a confident speaker might take more risks and learn faster, while a shy student might understand the material but not show it. If I don't take these differences into account, some students can fall behind or lose interest.” Teacher 3 simply stated that individual differences “affect understanding and motivation,” while Teacher 4 noted that they “affect language skills and learning experiences.” Teacher 5 believed that “learners will be faster with good results,” and Teacher 6 concluded that these differences influence both “performance and attitudes of learners during the learning process.”

The impact described by the teachers aligns closely with findings from the literature review. For example, Nouioua (2018) highlighted the role of learning strategies and learner autonomy in promoting better academic performance, particularly when instruction is adapted to individual needs. Li (2022) emphasized the importance of motivation and cognitive style in shaping learning effectiveness and outcomes, which supports Teacher 2's remarks on confidence and risk-taking. Additionally, Boubakeur and Nawal (2021) pointed to the significance of teachers' recognition of learner diversity in preventing disengagement and dropout, reinforcing Teacher 1's concern about students falling behind when differences are not addressed. These insights confirm that acknowledging and adapting to individual differences is essential for promoting positive learning outcomes in the EFL context.

Q5. Instructional Strategies to Address Learner Diversity

This interview question aimed to explore the various instructional strategies teachers use to address learner diversity in EFL classrooms. The theme for this question is Instructional Strategies to Address Learner Diversity. The responses revealed the use of multiple teaching approaches to accommodate the varied needs, styles, and abilities of students. The analysis of

the teachers' verbal data resulted in six main codes: Differentiated instruction, Multimodal teaching strategies, Instructional adaptation, Flexible instructional methods, Scaffolded instruction, and Learning-style-responsive instruction.

All teachers emphasized the importance of adapting their teaching methods to meet learners' diverse needs. For example, Teacher 1 stated, "I use differentiated instruction, provide varied learning materials and incorporate group work, visual aids, and technology. I also offer extra support and feedback to those who need it." This response reflects the key components of differentiated instruction as described by Tomlinson (2017), who emphasized the importance of providing varied input and support to engage all learners effectively. Teacher 2 said, "I try to mix things up in class. I use visuals, music, group work and games to keep things interesting and make sure there is something for everyone. I also give extra support to students who need it like offering simpler tasks or more one-on-one help when possible." Her approach aligns closely with Fleming and Mills' (1992) VARK model, which supports the use of multimodal teaching strategies to cater to learners' visual, auditory, reading/writing, and kinesthetic preferences. Moreover, Teacher 3 mentioned, "Differentiated instructions and use ongoing assessment," which echoes Nouioua's (2018) findings on the use of metacognitive strategies and ongoing assessment to support learner autonomy and address individual needs. While Teacher 4 simply stated, "Varied teaching methods," which generally reflects the principle of flexible instructional methods that Ellis (2008) advocated, emphasizing the need for adaptable teaching based on learners' varying proficiency and responsiveness. Teacher 5 explained, "Facilitate my teaching method moving from the general to the specific considering the weak pupils," which is closely related to scaffolded instruction, as emphasized in Boubakeur and Nawal (2021), who stressed the role of step-by-step instructional support in accommodating students with different learning paces and abilities.

Finally, Teacher 6 stated, "Adopting my teaching style for different learners involves employing a variety of instructional strategies incorporating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic." This response strongly mirrors the VARK model proposed by Fleming and Mills (1992), as well as the broader concept of learning-style-responsive instruction.

Q6. Instructional Strategies to Address Learner Diversity

The sixth interview question focused on the strategies teachers implement to support students with diverse needs in the EFL classroom. The theme for this question is Instructional Strategies to Address Learner Diversity. Responses under this theme highlight how teachers manage variations in personality, motivation, and confidence, particularly when dealing with shy or less motivated students. The analysis of verbal data led to the emergence of six main codes: Supportive environment, Personalized motivation, Collaborative learning, Peer support, Task-based engagement, and Role-based inclusion.

The majority of the interviewed teachers emphasized the importance of creating a positive and supportive classroom climate to help students feel safe and motivated. For instance, Teacher 1 stated, "Yes, I create a supportive classroom environment, pair them with encouraging peers, use praise and encouragement, and offer low-pressure speaking activities like pair discussions or journaling." Similarly, Teacher 2 said, "Yes, definitely. For shy students, I try to create a safe space where they feel okay making mistakes. Sometimes I let them work in pairs or write instead of speaking in front of the whole class. For less motivated students, I try to bring in topics they care about, music, sports, or even social media and make lessons more relevant to their lives." Teacher 3 shared a brief but focused approach: "Yes, motivate them/group work," while Teacher 4 echoed similar strategies, stating, "Yes, support them, use group work." These responses reflect a reliance on collaborative learning and peer support to encourage participation. Teacher 5 expanded on this idea, explaining, "Yes of course, encourage them, assign them with different tasks in the class and value their works."

Teacher 6 offered additional strategies to ensure inclusion and boost interaction: “Bring the shy learners to the front, call them even when they don't raise their hands, ask them to speak even if they are wrong. Give them specific roles that encourage social interaction. Give them tasks that will make them feel important like erasing the blackboard or passing out papers.”

The strategies described by the teachers are strongly aligned with the findings from the literature review. For example, Nouioua (2018) emphasized the role of personalized motivation and learner autonomy, which can be seen in Teacher 2's efforts to use relevant and student-centered content. Likewise, Boubakeur and Nawal (2021) highlighted the need for inclusive pedagogies that accommodate different personalities and learning styles, which relates to Teacher 1 and Teacher 4's focus on supportive environments and group dynamics. Moreover, Abuhabil et al. (2021) discussed the value of peer support and task-based learning, similar to the role-based inclusion methods mentioned by Teacher 6. These strategies align with best practices for fostering engagement and participation among diverse learners in the EFL context.

Q7. Adaptive Instructional Methods for Different Learning Styles

The seventh interview question aimed to explore how teachers adapt their instruction to accommodate various learners learning styles. The overarching theme for this question is Adaptive Instructional Methods for Different Learning Styles. From the analysis of the interview responses, six codes were identified: Multi-sensory instruction, Differentiated input, Instructional variety, Task-based variation, Use of authentic and visual materials, and Learning-style-responsive teaching.

Teachers provided rich insights into how they customize their teaching practices to match learners' learning preferences. For instance, Teacher 1 stated, “I use a mix of teaching methods such as visual presentations, songs or discussions, and hands-on activities like role-playing or games to engage all learning styles.” Similarly, Teacher 2 emphasized a well-

rounded approach: “I try to include a little bit of everything in my lessons. I use pictures and videos for visual learners, songs and discussions for auditory learners, and activities like role plays or games for kinesthetic learners. It is not always perfect, but I do my best to reach each student in the way they learn best.” Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 highlighted the importance of variety by simply stating “varied instructions” and “varied tasks,” reflecting an effort to keep lessons flexible and engaging. Teacher 5 added a practical dimension: “Always bringing pictures, audio, real materials to motivate and facilitate their understanding,” showcasing the importance of authentic and multimodal materials. Lastly, Teacher 6 provided a more reflective response: “When teaching the lesson, I should take into consideration the learning styles of my learners to include multiple activities, forms of instruction that will target the learning styles. It can help me to provide all the necessary materials relevant to my lesson.”

These instructional approaches align strongly with research from the literature review. For example, Dörnyei (2005) and Li (2022) highlighted the importance of adapting instruction to match learners’ cognitive styles and preferences. Teacher 2’s comprehensive inclusion of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic methods resonates with Abuhabil et al. (2021), who argued for learning-style-responsive teaching to maximize learner engagement. Furthermore, the use of authentic and multimodal materials as described by Teacher 5 supports Nouioua’s (2018) emphasis on cognitive and metacognitive strategies and the use of real-life content to enhance learner autonomy and comprehension. Finally, Boubakeur and Nawal (2021) underscored the importance of recognizing and addressing individual learner differences, a practice clearly illustrated by the diverse teaching strategies shared by the participants.

Q8. Challenges in Managing Individual Differences in the Classroom

This question aimed to explore the challenges that teachers face in handling individual differences among students. The theme that emerged is Challenges in Managing Individual Differences in the Classroom, and the analysis led to six key codes: Balancing learner

differences, Time management, Time and communication barriers, Resource limitation, Complex classroom dynamics, and Instructional adaptation challenges.

All interviewed teachers expressed various difficulties. For example, Teacher 1 stated, “It can be difficult to balance the needs of fast and slow learners, maintain classroom management, and ensure that all students stay engaged and make progress.” Teacher 2 added, “The biggest challenge is time. It is hard to plan lessons that work for everyone when you have limited time and a large group. Also, keeping fast learners engaged while supporting those who need more help can be tricky.” Teacher 3 mentioned, “Limited time, language barriers,” while Teacher 4 shared, “Limited resources and struggle to support all students.” Teacher 5 described broader challenges: “Classroom management, cultural differences, differentiating instruction, language barriers.” Lastly, Teacher 6 emphasized, “Time constraints, lack of understanding how to teach diverse needs, lack of motivation, understanding different learning styles.”

These responses are clearly reflected in previous literature. For instance, Nouioua (2018) highlighted that many Algerian EFL teachers struggle with limited time and lack of resources, which directly corresponds to the concerns of Teachers 2, 3, and 4. Additionally, Boubakeur and Nawal (2021) emphasized that teachers often lack the necessary training and awareness to address learner diversity, which matches the statements of Teachers 5 and 6 who mentioned difficulties in understanding how to teach students with different needs. The issue of managing fast and slow learners, as noted by Teacher 1, is also reflected in Abuhabil et al. (2021), who reported that instructional adaptation remains one of the most complex tasks in heterogeneous classrooms.

Q9. Support Needs for Teachers in Addressing Learner Diversity

This question explored the types of support teachers require to effectively address learner diversity. The overarching theme is Support Needs for Teachers in Addressing Learner

Diversity. The analysis revealed six main codes: Need for practical training and inclusive resources, Insufficient preparation for learner diversity, Lack of capacity to address learner diversity, Lack of specialized training, Need for ongoing professional development, and Lack of sufficient support.

Teachers expressed a shared concern about the adequacy of their preparation and the resources available to them. For instance, Teacher 1 stated, “Not always, while some training is provided, more practical workshops and access to inclusive materials would help address all learners’ needs effectively.” Teacher 2 added, “Honestly, not always. I’ve had some training, but I feel like there is always more to learn, especially when it comes to supporting students with learning difficulties or emotional needs. More resources and practical strategies would definitely help.” Other participants, such as Teachers 3 and 4, gave shorter but clear responses like, “No, hard to meet all learners’ needs,” and “No, lack of specialized training.” Teacher 5 explained, “As a teacher, I feel that I always need more resources or training to meet the diverse needs of my learners effectively.” Teacher 6 simply stated, “No, I don’t feel.”

These insights echo the findings of several studies in the literature review. For instance, Boubakeur and Nawal (2021) emphasized that many teachers lack sufficient awareness and training to effectively accommodate individual differences, aligning with the concerns expressed by Teachers 4 and 5. Likewise, Nouioua (2018) stressed the need for teacher training programs to offer more concrete strategies and inclusive practices, which supports the views of Teachers 1 and 2. Additionally, Messaoudi and Latreche (2020) highlighted the gap between theory and practice in teacher preparation, calling for ongoing professional development and context-specific support, as echoed by Teachers 2 and 5.

Q10. Professional and Institutional Support for Teachers

This question focused on understanding the kind of professional and institutional support that EFL teachers believe is necessary to effectively address learner diversity in their classrooms. The codes that emerged from the teachers' responses include Institutional and professional support, Training and instructional resources, Time and training needs, Instructional flexibility, and Holistic teacher support. These reflect the multifaceted support system required to help educators manage diverse learners effectively.

The responses revealed that most teachers emphasized the importance of ongoing professional development, the need for specialized training, access to diverse teaching resources, and institutional backing. For instance, Teacher 1 stated, "Teachers need ongoing professional development, access to diverse teaching materials, smaller class sizes, and support from specialists like language therapists or counselors." Similarly, Teacher 2 noted, "We need more hands-on training, practical classroom strategies, and support from specialists. It would also help to have access to a variety of teaching materials that cater to different levels and learning styles." Meanwhile, Teacher 3 emphasized, "Enough time / training," and Teacher 4 highlighted the need for "Flexible teaching methods." Finally, Teacher 5 pointed out, "To better address individual differences in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom, teachers need a combination of knowledge, tools and support systems."

These responses align with studies previously discussed in the literature review. For example, Messaoudi and Latreche (2020) found that EFL teachers in Algeria often struggle to meet diverse learners' needs due to a lack of professional training and institutional support. Likewise, Nesari and Heidari (2014) highlighted the importance of school leadership in providing adequate resources, professional development, and collaborative environments for teachers to improve instructional practices and respond effectively to students' diverse needs.

Dörnyei (2005) also pointed out that teacher motivation and institutional backing play critical roles in successful classroom management and learner engagement. Therefore, the findings of this question emphasize the crucial role of systemic and sustained support in enabling teachers to address learner diversity effectively.

Q11. Effective Teaching Strategies for Supporting Learner Diversity

This question aimed to explore the most effective teaching strategies adopted by EFL teachers to address learner diversity. The responses revealed a variety of techniques including differentiated instruction, project-based learning, technology integration, formative and summative assessments, and building strong teacher- learner relationships. The following extracts illustrate these practices: One teacher stated: “Differentiated instruction, project-based learning, formative assessment and building strong relationships with learners have proven effective in supporting diverse learners.”

Another teacher explained: “Building strong relationships with learners makes a huge difference. When students feel understood and supported, they are more willing to participate. Also, using group work, games, and real-life topics helps keep them engaged and allow everyone to contribute in their own way.” A different respondent emphasized: “Collaborative learning, use technology.” Teacher 4 added: “Formative assessment, tailor teaching.” while teacher 5 elaborated: “Technology Integration to enhance learning. Formative and summative assessment help teachers track progress and adjust teaching methods. Project-based learning: usually tied to real world issues or challenges. Flexible grouping: involves creating temporary groups of students based on specific learning objectives, needs, or abilities. Cooperative learning: this strategy involves learners working in small groups to complete tasks, solve problems or discuss concepts.”

Lastly, a teacher described: “The use of active methods of learning (brainstorming’s and group discussion before entering to the lesson). Help students to learn using new methods like

singing, role play, sketching... The use of technology in learning. Repetition of words, sounds. Prior knowledge links. Realia in teaching.”

These strategies strongly align with established research in the literature review. For instance, Tomlinson (2014) emphasized that differentiated instruction and ongoing assessment are essential in addressing students’ diverse needs. Richards and Rodgers (2014) noted the value of cooperative and project-based learning in enhancing engagement and accommodating various learning styles. Ryan and Deci (2000) also discussed how supportive teacher- learner relationships increase learner motivation and participation.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the results obtained from the questionnaire of learners and the teachers' interview at Mellouki Othman Middle School in Ain Kerma and Heriri Abd Middle School in Berdjilate. Data were gathered to explore how individual differences among learners influence the process of learning English as a foreign language. The collected data provide valuable insights into the role of these differences in shaping EFL learning experiences. These aspects will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

Chapter Five

Discussion

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the discussion of the concept of learner diversity in the EFL classroom. Moreover, it comprises several key parts that explore how individual differences among learners affect the language learning process. It aims at answering the research questions related to the impact of cognitive, affective, and social factors on EFL learning. Additionally, the chapter seeks to verify the hypotheses formulated about the role of individual differences in shaping learners' motivation, engagement, and performance. Finally, it concludes by discussing the challenges that arise from learner diversity and suggesting effective approaches for addressing these differences in the classroom.

Discussion of the Research Questions and Hypotheses

Teachers' and learners' Perceptions of Individual Differences in EFL Learning

Hypothesis One

The first question aimed to explore how individual differences among 4th-year middle school learners at Mellouki Othman and Heriri Abd in Ain Karma and Bergilate influence their English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process.

The results obtained from the students' survey revealed that most learners recognized the role of individual differences, such as motivation, learning styles, and cognitive abilities, in shaping their experience with learning English. This awareness aligns with findings in the literature, where studies emphasize that these factors significantly affect EFL learning outcomes (e.g., Dörnyei, 2005; Ehrman & Oxford, 1995).

According to the survey, students with high motivation levels reported better engagement and persistence in learning tasks, which supports Ushioda's (2011) argument that motivation is a

crucial driver in language acquisition. Similarly, learners who identified their learning styles, such as visual or auditory preferences, noted that adapting teaching methods to these styles helped improve their understanding, consistent with Reid's (1995) findings on the importance of learning styles in language classrooms.

Moreover, cognitive abilities like memory and attention span were highlighted by students as influencing their vocabulary retention and grammar comprehension, matching the conclusions of Skehan (1998), who pointed out the impact of cognitive capacities on language learning success. Nevertheless, some students expressed challenges related to their individual differences, such as difficulties in maintaining motivation or mismatches between teaching methods and their preferred learning styles. This reflects the complexity of addressing diverse learner needs in the EFL classroom (Tomlinson, 2014).

It can be concluded that individual differences significantly influence the EFL learning process of 4th-year middle school learners at Mellouki Othman and Heriri Abd Middle schools. As a consequence, the hypothesis stating that individual differences such as motivation, learning styles, and cognitive abilities affect the EFL learning process is confirmed and supported by the survey findings, confirming the critical role these factors play in language learning.

Hypothesis Two

The analysis of the interviews with EFL teachers from both middle schools revealed clear awareness of the role individual differences play in shaping students' language learning experiences. The findings correspond significantly with the literature on individual learner variables and their impact on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) acquisition.

To begin with, several teachers emphasized that learners' motivation levels vary significantly across classes, with some learners showing strong intrinsic interest in learning English, while others require more external encouragement. This aligns with Dörnyei's (2005) theory of

motivation, which posits that motivated learners tend to be more persistent and engaged, ultimately achieving better outcomes. Teachers highlighted that when students see practical value in learning English such as for future travel or careers, they are more willing to participate, echoing the instrumental motivation discussed in the literature.

Furthermore, language anxiety was identified by teachers as a major barrier for many students, particularly when it comes to oral expression in front of peers. This confirms the findings of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), who stress that foreign language anxiety can negatively impact learners' willingness to speak and their overall performance. Teachers noted that shy or anxious students often avoid speaking tasks, especially in whole-class settings. This observation reflects MacIntyre and Gardner's (1991) assertion that anxiety interferes with both cognitive processing and language production, particularly in oral communication. Teachers also commented on the diversity of cognitive abilities and learning strategies used by students. Some learners excel with visual aids and games, while others benefit more from written repetition or grammar drills. This observation is consistent with Ehrman and Oxford (1995), who highlight how cognitive styles and learning strategies influence how students absorb and process new language information. Teachers confirmed that students who apply memory strategies, such as associating new vocabulary with real-life objects, tend to retain more language than those who rely solely on rote memorization.

In terms of classroom practices, most interviewees stated that adapting instruction to individual preferences is both necessary and challenging. This finding is in line with Tomlinson's (2014) work on differentiated instruction, which supports the idea of modifying tasks, materials, and pacing to accommodate different learners' needs. Teachers noted that they try to vary group work, solo tasks, and visual activities to reach more students. However, they also acknowledged the difficulty of meeting every learner's preference within time constraints and large class sizes.

Another theme that emerged was students' different learning styles, with teachers recognizing that some students are more visual or auditory learners, while others prefer kinesthetic or interpersonal learning modes. These observations align with Reid's (1995) classification of learning styles, which emphasizes that matching instruction to student preferences can improve engagement and achievement. Teachers mentioned that video-based lessons, role-playing, and interactive games helped appeal to multiple learning styles simultaneously.

Lastly, teachers affirmed that not all students benefit equally from the same teaching methods, highlighting the need for a flexible and student-centered approach. This reinforces Griffiths' (2008) conclusion that learner differences must be acknowledged and supported in order to create effective language learning environments. In summary, the interview findings strongly support the theoretical literature on individual differences in EFL learning. Teachers' perceptions confirm that motivation, anxiety, cognitive ability, learning styles, and classroom dynamics all play essential roles in determining how students learn English. The recognition of these factors highlights the importance of tailored pedagogical strategies that address learner diversity for improved language outcomes.

It can be concluded that most teachers at the middle school level perceive individual differences as influential factors that affect students' engagement and performance in the EFL classroom. Their responses highlighted how factors such as learning styles, motivation levels, and emotional states play a significant role in shaping the learning process. As a consequence, the second hypothesis, which states that teachers perceive individual differences as influential factors that affect students' engagement and performance in the EFL classroom, is confirmed, since the interviewees consistently emphasized the importance of addressing learners' diverse needs through tailored instructional approaches.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study highlight the significant role that individual differences play in the EFL learning process among 4th-year middle school learners at Mellouki Othmane in Ain Kerma and Heriri Abd in Bergilate. These differences, including motivation, learning styles, and cognitive abilities, profoundly influence students' engagement, performance, and overall language development.

Firstly, understanding these individual differences is crucial for educators to create tailored teaching approaches that meet learners' diverse needs. The study suggests that learners with higher motivation and adaptive learning strategies tend to perform better in English language acquisition. On the other hand, students who struggle with certain cognitive challenges or mismatch between teaching methods and their preferred learning styles face more difficulties in language mastery. Moreover, the study implies that teachers must be aware of these differences to adjust their instructional methods and materials. Such adjustments can foster more inclusive classrooms where all learners have equal opportunities to succeed. This includes adopting varied activities and assessment techniques that accommodate different learner profiles. Furthermore, recognizing individual differences encourages the promotion of learner autonomy, helping students develop personalized strategies to overcome their weaknesses and leverage their strengths. This empowerment can lead to higher motivation and improved language outcomes.

In conclusion, the implications of this study call for continuous professional development programs for teachers to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to address individual differences effectively. Additionally, further research is needed to explore specific interventions that can best support diverse learners in the Algerian EFL context.

Limitations of the Study

During the course of this research, several limitations were encountered that may have influenced the findings. Firstly, not all 4th-year EFL learners from Mellouki Othmane in Ain Kerma and Heriri Abd in Beridjlate Middle Schools were fully cooperative. Despite the survey being distributed conveniently, some students either did not complete it or left several questions unanswered, especially the open-ended ones, which limited the depth of the collected data. Furthermore, a number of students appeared uncertain or confused about their attitudes towards the influence of individual differences on their English learning process. This ambiguity was reflected in some conflicting responses, making it challenging to draw definitive conclusions.

Additionally, only six teachers participated in the study, which is a relatively small sample size. The limited number of teacher responses may be attributed to their heavy workload, involvement in other academic duties, or a lack of availability, which restricted the diversity of professional insights included in the study. Lastly, some teachers indicated that they did not specialize in teaching certain language skills, which may have affected their ability to provide comprehensive feedback related to individual differences among learners.

Despite these limitations, the study offers valuable insights into the impact of individual differences on EFL learning and sets a foundation for future research with larger and more diverse samples.

Recommendations for the Research Findings

On the basis of the study results, a set of recommendations can be suggested to EFL teachers and learners:

- Given that individual differences have a strong influence on the EFL learning process, teachers are advised to adopt varied instructional strategies that meet students' diverse learning needs.
- In order to ensure that all learners are supported, teachers should pay close attention to aspects such as learners' motivation, personality traits, cognitive abilities, and preferred learning styles.
- Teachers should be trained to recognize and address the emotional and psychological factors that may affect EFL learners' performance, such as anxiety, low self-confidence, or lack of interest.
- Teachers are encouraged to diversify classroom activities and tasks to provide equal learning opportunities for both high achievers and struggling students.
- It is highly recommended that teachers create an inclusive and supportive classroom environment where all learners feel respected and valued regardless of their learning pace or style.
- In order to help students become more autonomous, they should be guided to discover their own strengths and weaknesses and be provided with tools to develop effective learning strategies.
- Teachers should offer regular and personalized feedback that encourages improvement and builds learners' confidence.
- Further professional development programs should be introduced to help teachers better understand how to manage diversity and improve classroom practices accordingly.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Since individual differences remain a major concern in the EFL classroom, and considering their complex and dynamic nature, further investigations should be carried out to explore their impact on language learning. Accordingly, we suggest the following:

- An experimental study is recommended to examine how personalized teaching approaches based on individual differences affect learners' performance in different EFL skills such as speaking, reading, and listening.
- A comparative study can be conducted between urban and rural middle schools in Algeria to explore how environmental and social factors contribute to shaping learners' individual differences.
- Future research should investigate the influence of psychological factors, including anxiety, motivation, and self-efficacy, on EFL learners' classroom engagement and academic achievement.
- It is recommended to study teachers' perceptions, knowledge, and classroom practices regarding individual differences to identify the training and support they may need.
- Further studies may focus on the effectiveness of differentiated instruction and learner-centered strategies in reducing the gap between high-performing and low-performing EFL students.
- Longitudinal research can be carried out to follow learners' progress over time and understand how individual differences evolve and influence language acquisition at different educational levels.
- A study can explore how specific types of individual differences such as learning styles or cognitive abilities influence the way students interact with oral language activities, particularly in technology supported environments.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, the findings discussed and interpreted to provide answers to the research questions and validate the hypotheses. Moreover, the implications of the study highlighted the importance of recognizing and accommodating individual differences in EFL teaching and learning. The chapter also acknowledged the limitations encountered during the research process. In addition, a number of recommendations were provided for teachers and learners to better address learner diversity. Finally, suggestions for further research were offered to deepen the understanding of individual differences and their impact on language acquisition.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Learners' Questionnaire

Title: Diversity of learners: A study about how individual differences Affect the EFL learning process

Target Group: 4th-Year Middle School learners

Instructions: Please read each statement carefully and mark (✓) in the circle that best shows your opinion.

Section 1: Background Information

1. Gender:

- Male
- Female

2. Age

- 14 years
- 15 years
- 16 years
- 17 years

Section 2: Motivation and Attitudes

3. I enjoy learning English.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

4. I study English because I want to use it in the future (travel, work, or studies).

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

5. I feel motivated when the teacher uses games or fun activities.

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

6. I try to learn English even outside the classroom (e.g., watching videos, using apps).

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Section 3: Learning Styles

7. I learn best when I:

Listen to the teacher

Read texts or books

Watch videos

Work in groups

8. I prefer working:

- Alone
- With a partner
- In a group

9. I understand lessons better when the teacher uses pictures, videos, or real examples.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

10. I like to move around or do hands-on activities (e.g., acting out, games) when learning English.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Section 4: Personality and Emotions

11. I feel anxious when I speak English in front of the class.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

12. I like participating in English speaking activities.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

13. I feel more confident when I work in small groups than when I speak alone.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

14. I get discouraged easily when I do not understand something in English.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Section 5: Further Suggestions

15. What helps you the most to learn English well?

16. What makes it hard for you to learn English?

Appendix B

Teachers 'Interview

Teacher's Interview

Title: Diversity of learners : a study about how individual differences Affect the EFL learning process

Target Group: Middle School EFL Teachers

Dear Teachers,

You are kindly invited to participate in this interview. It aims at exploring your perceptions regarding the impact of individual differences on students' English language learning. Your insights will contribute significantly to the completion of this research. Thank you in advance for your time and collaboration.

Section 1: Background Information

1. How long have you been teaching English as a foreign language?
2. What levels or grades do you usually teach?

Section 2: Understanding Individual Differences

3. What kinds of individual differences do you notice among your students in the English classroom?
4. In your opinion, how do these differences affect students' learning outcomes in English?

Section 3: Teaching Practices and Strategies

5. How do you adapt your teaching to meet the diverse needs of your students?
6. Do you use specific strategies for students who are shy, anxious, or less motivated? Can you give examples?
7. How do you deal with different learning styles e.g. visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners?

Section 4: Challenges and Support

8. What are the main challenges you face when dealing with diverse learners in one classroom?

9. Do you feel that you have enough training or resources to support all types of learners? Why or why not?

Section 5: Recommendations and Suggestions

10. What do you think teachers need in order to better address individual differences in EFL classes?

11. In your experience, what strategies or methods have been most effective in supporting diverse learners?