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**Enhancing the Teachers' Management of Diversity in the Algerian Tertiary Education.**

Free education in Algeria made learning accessible to a big number of students from different backgrounds. Heterogeneous classes with many differences were then constituted. This study aims at finding out the nature of these differences and how teachers cope with them. A study was conducted at the department of English language at El.Oued university in Algeria. A structured interview was administered to a number of ten teachers so as to elicit information about the components of the English language class diversity and how to overcome any sort of inconveniences. Results reveal that teachers classified the differences encountered into two main categories. The first category consists in the variation of the students' prior knowledge of English. It is asymmetric since they enroll in the English language classes coming from both literary and scientific streams. The second category includes social differences caused by having two categories of students: those who are devoting their full time to study and those who are studying and exercising some part time jobs simultaneously. Concerning the strategies adopted by teachers to manage the differences, they stated that the unequal prior knowledge of English can influence the comprehension of the lessons. However, this can be solved by prescribing extra assignments to students or by varying the approaches of teaching so as to fit the majority of students. As for the problems caused by the social differences, teachers asserted that the hybrid mode of teaching made the online courses the best reinforcement of the in- presence lessons.

**Keywords:** Diversity, differences, Heterogeneous Classes.

## **Introduction**

Algeria is adopting the principle of providing equal educational opportunities for all individuals from all different classes, regardless of any sort of possible differences that can occur. The widespread of public schools in the country enabled almost all families to ensure the schooling of their children at primary, middle and high school. Similarly, the free education is ensured by the Algerian government for all high school diploma holders seeking to pursue their studies to get bachelor, master or Phd degrees in the public university institutions. Despite all of the above mentioned positive points that reveal the state endeavors to ensure the equity of education, the existence of differences and diversity in the same class is inevitable. Therefore, the present research aims at answering the following two questions:

- 1- What sorts of differences do the Algerian schools and universities have?
- 2- What strategies are adopted by teachers to cope with and manage the differences in academic institutions?

## **1.Literature Review**

This section attempts to provide the theoretical background of the study. Different concepts related to 'diversity in education' are defined taking into consideration the Algerian educational context.

### **1.1. Diversity**

Diversity involves all differences that can exist among individual or groups. The differences can be resulted from having different: race and ethnicity, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, language, physical or mental abilities, cultural or political affiliations and any other sort of differences. Within the educational context, diversity is present in classes, and it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure equity among learners in a form of providing equal and fair treatment and opportunities. Justice can be maintained through

inclusion of all different groups in participating and in contributing to the process of learning. Inclusivity is also maintained by eliminating any sort of exclusion.

Consequently the term “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)” was coined to describe policies and programs that promote the representation and the participation of different groups and individuals of all kinds of differences.

## **1.2. Differences**

We should admit that the existence of differences among individuals and groups is regarded as normal and common. This can be positive because it adds diversity and richness to the scene. Hence, the efforts should not be directed towards changing the reality of the different other, but rather work to maintain and promote the compatibility and the integration. Tolerating differences should be at the top priorities of teachers and educational institutions.

## **1.3. Heterogeneous Classes**

The heterogeneous classroom consists of different kinds of learners with different learning abilities and competencies. This why teachers should be aware of designing suitable lessons, tests, exams and assignments that cope with the differences. Therefore, the teachers' approaches and methods will be carefully selected to meet the needs of the diversity.

## **2. Methodology**

A study was conducted at the department of English language at El.Oued university in Algeria during the academic year 2021/2022. A structured interview was administered to a number of ten teachers so as to elicit information about the components of the English language class diversity and how to overcome any sort of inconveniences.

### **3. Results**

Results reveal that teachers classified the differences encountered into two main categories. The first category consists in the variation of the students' prior knowledge of English. It is asymmetric since they enroll in the English language classes coming from both literary and scientific streams. The second category includes social differences caused by having two categories of students: those who are devoting their full time to study and those who are studying and exercising some part time jobs simultaneously.

Concerning the strategies adopted by teachers to manage the differences, they stated that the unequal prior knowledge of English can influence the comprehension of the lessons. However, this can be solved by prescribing extra assignments to students or by varying the approaches of teaching so as to fit the majority of students. As for the problems caused by the social differences, teachers asserted that the hybrid mode of teaching made the online courses the best reinforcement of the in- presence lessons.

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