
DIFFERENTIATION OF TRAINING IN A FOREIGN SCHOOL PRACTICE

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Learning is an investment for the future

The article is dedicated to the comparative analysis of differentiation of training in the practice of foreign schools. The problem of levels, principles and forms of organization of differentiated education are under consideration.

Introduction. In the 21st century the education system has become one of the most significant and dynamic social infrastructure. The school reforms carried out in different countries address pedagogical issues of international importance, where differentiation of education still remains one of the key problems. As education in China is going through a period of significant transformation, it's of great value to take into account and analyze progressive global trends in the differentiation of education and assess the possibilities of their implementation in the practice of Chinese education.

Main part. With the continuous renewal and development of educational concepts, schools in foreign countries are increasingly focusing on meeting the diverse learning needs of students. Differentiated training has become a key trend in educational practice.

Each country takes its own way in solving the problem of differentiated teaching. In Britain, for instance, the principle of internal and external differentiation is laid in the organization of educational process. It is evident throughout all levels and types of schools. Different schools, based on their own positioning, resource conditions and educational philosophies, implement differentiated strategies in every aspect of teaching to meet the diverse needs of different student groups and promote individual student development. The UK has a wide range of schools, including state ones, private schools, grammar schools and comprehensive schools.

State schools design their curriculum to cater to a broad student population. While ensuring the teaching of core subjects, they also focus on diversified development. During the compulsory education stage, core courses such as mathematics, English, and science strictly follow the national curriculum standards to ensure that students acquire

a solid foundation of basic knowledge. At the same time, schools offer a variety of elective courses covering multiple fields, including arts, sports, and technology [1].

To accommodate different students' learning abilities and paces, state schools often combine multilevel teaching with individual tutoring. The basic level focuses on explaining and consolidating fundamental knowledge, the intermediate level emphasizes the application of knowledge and problem-solving skills training, and the advanced level conducts in-depth exploration and extended learning activities. For students who struggle with learning, schools assign specialized teachers to provide individual tutoring and develop personalized learning plans to help them overcome learning difficulties. In addition, cooperative training in small groups and inquiry-based teaching methods are widely used in a classroom to foster students' cooperation and innovation skills [2].

Private schools, with their ample funding and independent management advantages, have highly distinctive and personalized curriculum settings. In addition to adhering to the national core curriculum framework, they often introduce international curriculum systems, such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) or Advanced Placement (AP) courses, to broaden students' international perspectives and enhance their academic competitiveness.

Private schools generally adopt small class teaching, with class sizes typically ranging from 15 to 20 students, which allows teachers to closely monitor each student's learning status and needs. Teachers implement personalized teaching based on students' learning styles and abilities.

Grammar schools select students through a rigorous entrance examination (the 11+ exam) and focus on cultivating academically – oriented talents. Their curriculum emphasizes both the depth

and breadth of academic subjects. In core academic subjects, they use more challenging textbooks and syllabuses. In the teaching process, grammar schools emphasize the systematic and logical transmission of knowledge and the use of seminars and inquiry – based teaching methods to stimulate students' thinking.

Comprehensive schools accept students from diverse backgrounds and with varying ability levels. Their curriculum is designed to balance the cultivation of both academic and vocational skills. In terms of academic courses, they provide a complete range of basic subject teachings to ensure students have a solid foundation of knowledge. At the same time, they offer a variety of vocationally – oriented courses, such as carpentry, electrical work, hairdressing and beauty, and catering services. Students can choose an academic course as their major and pair it with a vocational skills course as an elective, achieving an initial integration of academic and vocational skills. Additionally, the schools focus on the development of interdisciplinary courses.

Comprehensive schools employ a variety of teaching methods to promote students' all – round development. Cooperative learning is widely used in classrooms, and through group projects, students' teamwork and communication skills are cultivated. Practical teaching is also an important component. Meanwhile, teachers provide tiered teaching and individual tutoring based on students' individual differences to meet the learning needs of different students.

Thus, the UK's different types of schools exhibit a rich and diverse range of practices in educational differentiation, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. State schools focus on building a solid knowledge framework and cultivating thinking skills, but they need to improve in vocational skills education and innovative teaching methods. Private schools excel in shaping cultural literacy and fostering good study habits, but they face issues of curriculum disconnection from reality and unfair evaluation. Grammar schools achieve remarkable results in enhancing academic depth and ensuring academic quality, but they are criticized for limiting access and paying insufficient attention to students' overall development. Comprehensive schools promote the all – round development of students, yet they face challenges such as limited resources and low social recognition.

In the United States the main forms of education differentiation have become the following: various types of educational institutions (public schools, private schools, charter schools, and magnet schools), streams within the same school, multi-level groups of students in one specialized community.

Level differentiation (in terms of success, abilities, profile differentiation) involves moving from one level to another using the following forms: bending, streaming, setting. That's how it is done in various types of schools.

Public schools bear the important responsibility of providing universal education to a broad student population. At the same time, to meet students' diverse interests and developmental needs, they offer a wide range of elective courses.

To accommodate different students' learning abilities and paces, public schools combine tiered teaching with individualized instruction. In subjects like mathematics and English classes are divided into different levels based on students' academic performance and ability levels, such as basic, intermediate and honors classes. Basic classes focus on explaining and consolidating fundamental knowledge, intermediate classes emphasize the application of knowledge and training in problem – solving skills, and honors classes conduct more in – depth academic exploration and extended learning. For students who struggle with learning, schools assign specialized tutoring teachers to develop personalized learning plans and provide one – on – one tutoring. Additionally, teaching methods such as cooperative teaching in small groups and project – based learning are widely used in classrooms to cultivate students' teamwork and innovation skills.

Private schools, leveraging their independent management and abundant resources, offer highly personalized and distinctive curriculum settings. In addition to meeting basic educational requirements, they often introduce international curriculum systems, such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) or Advanced Placement (AP) courses, to broaden students' international perspectives and enhance their academic competitiveness. Some private schools focus on specific fields, such as arts, sports or technology.

Private schools generally adopt small – class teaching, with class sizes typically ranging from 15 to 20 students. This allows teachers to closely monitor each student's learning status and needs. Teachers implement personalized teaching based on students' learning styles and abilities.

Charter schools enjoy considerable autonomy in their operations, allowing them to design unique curricula based on local educational needs and their own philosophies. Many charter schools focus on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education, integrating knowledge across multiple disciplines to develop interdisciplinary courses.

In terms of teaching models, charter schools are innovative, employing a variety of flexible teaching methods such as project – based teaching

and inquiry – based learning. Students participate in projects in groups, conducting independent research from problem – posing, data – collection to solution – formulation and presentation of results recommendations. At the same time, charter schools also utilize online educational platforms to provide personalized learning resources for students, who can choose their learning content and schedule according to their own progress.

Magnet schools are characterized by a specific academic or artistic field and attract students who have an interest and talent in that area [3]. Their curriculum is deeply developed around the featured field. Magnet schools employ specialized teaching methods tailored to the characteristics of their featured fields and the professional development needs of students. Teachers provide personalized guidance based on students' artistic performance and potential, while group rehearsals help develop students' teamwork and artistic expressiveness.

As you can see from the abstract above, different types of schools in the United States exhibit a rich and diverse range of practices in educational differentiation, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Public schools excel in stimulating students' interest and providing targeted teaching, but they face challenges such as fragmented knowledge delivery and subjective evaluation. Private schools effectively broaden students' international perspectives and offer personalized education, but they may struggle with insufficient reinforcement of basic knowledge and ensuring fair evaluation. Charter schools have achieved remarkable results in cultivating innovative thinking and enhancing interdisciplinary skills, but they encounter difficulties in curriculum design and the implementation of teaching methods. Magnet schools help students achieve in – depth development in specific fields, but they may lead to a narrow knowledge base and limitations in further education and employment.

The organization of the entire school education in Germany is based on the principle of differentiation of education (internal, didactic, vertical, horizontal) with a flexible approach to each student, depending on the abilities and levels.

The German education system mainly includes Gymnasium (grammar schools), Realschule (comprehensive schools), vocational schools, and Gesamtschule (comprehensive schools).

The Gymnasium (grammar school) in Germany aims to cultivate academically – oriented talents, with a curriculum that focuses on academic theoretical knowledge.

To meet students' diverse interests and expand their knowledge base, the Gymnasium offers a wide range of elective courses. These include humanities and social science electives such as philosophy,

history, and literary studies, as well as science and technology electives like information technology and astronomy. Students can choose according to their interests.

During the teaching process, teachers often employ seminar – style teaching methods to guide students in discussing complex academic issues. Teachers place great emphasis on fostering students' independent learning abilities by assigning a large number of self - study tasks, such as reading literature and conducting research projects. Students need to plan their own study time, select learning resources and complete learning tasks through independent thinking, preparing themselves for future higher education and academic research.

The curriculum of Realschule (comprehensive school) in Germany emphasizes the combination of theoretical knowledge and practical application. Teachers widely employ case – study teaching methods, using real-life examples to help students understand and apply knowledge. In economics and management courses, teachers introduce real – life business cases, such as a company's market – expansion strategy or cost – control plan, guiding students to analyze the problems in the cases and apply their knowledge to propose solutions, thereby enhancing their ability to solve practical problems.

The curriculum of vocational schools is closely tailored to specific occupational fields, with a core focus on the cultivation of professional skills [4]. Each course emphasizes practical skill training, enabling students to master key automotive repair techniques through extensive hands – on practice. Vocational schools also offer courses on professional ethics to instill in students a sense of professional responsibility, standards of conduct and teamwork skills.

The apprenticeship – based teaching model is widely adopted. Students learn theoretical knowledge at school while interning at enterprises to acquire practical work skills under the guidance of experienced mentors. This model closely integrates the theoretical knowledge learned at school with practical work experience. Project – based learning is used as a supplementary method to enhance students' comprehensive abilities. It helps to develop students' design skills, innovation capabilities, and project – management skills.

Students are required to pass relevant vocational – qualification assessments to obtain vocational – qualification certificates. The standards for these assessments are rigorous, covering both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Only students who successfully pass the assessments are able to graduate and enter the relevant occupational fields.

Comprehensive schools (Gesamtschule) aim to provide students with a well – rounded and integrated education, with a curriculum that is characterized by its inclusiveness.

Core academic subjects are taught in a tiered manner according to students' learning abilities to ensure that students of different levels receive appropriate education. In addition, a wide range of elective courses are offered to meet students' individual needs, covering areas such as arts, sports and technology, including options like painting, music, and robotics programming.

A variety of teaching methods are employed, with the selection tailored to the characteristics of each course. In main academic subjects the combination of lecture – based teaching, discussion – based learning, and practice – based exercises are used to help students grasp fundamental knowledge. In vocational – related courses, practical teaching methods and project – based learning approaches are utilized to enhance students' practical skills.

Individualized guidance is emphasized. Teachers pay attention to students' individual differences and provide additional tutoring for those who struggle with learning to help them overcome obstacles. At the same time, students are encouraged to leverage their strengths, and those with special talents are given opportunities for development and guidance.

In conclusion, the German education system has several advantages: it is highly targeted in talent cultivation, meeting the diverse needs of society and individual student development; its teaching methods effectively promote the development of students' abilities, and its evaluation system is comprehensive and objective, supporting students' continuous development. However, its shortcomings cannot be ignored: early academic tracking limits students' self – awareness and future development; differences in social recognition can lead to bias; and the unequal distribution of educational resources affects the quality of education.

In the implementation process of differentiated training practices in foreign schools, although some achievements have been made, there are also many severe challenges and difficulties, which are particularly prominent in key areas such as teacher mindset, educational resources and evaluation systems.

The difficulty in changing teachers' mindsets is a major obstacle in the implementation of differentiated training. The unequal distribution of educational resources is also an important factor that restricts the development of differentiated training. The main trends in solving the problem of differentiated training in foreign schools are connected with the issues of deepening the teacher's professional development, the integration and innovation of educational technology,

the customization of personalized learning plans and the promotion of interdisciplinary cooperation.

Conclusion. The comparative analysis of approaches to managing the differentiation of education in foreign schools reveals both similarities and differences. Foreign schools, particularly in such countries like the United Kingdom, the United States and Germany, have developed sophisticated systems for educational differentiation, focusing on personalized learning, interdisciplinary cooperation and the integration of advanced educational technologies. These practices emphasize the importance of a flexible approach to student through tailored teaching strategies, diversified curricula, and comprehensive evaluation systems. The implementation of differentiated training in these countries has shown significant benefits in enhancing student engagement, improving academic performance and fostering the development of comprehensive skills.

By adopting and adapting successful strategies of education differentiation from foreign schools, China can enhance its educational system to better meet the diverse needs of its students. This involves not only implementing differentiated teaching methods and forms but also fostering a culture of continuous improvement and innovation in education. The ultimate goal is to create an educational environment that supports the holistic development of each student, preparing them for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Literature

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