Implementing Choice Boards with Cooperative Learning to Serve Mixed-Level Elementary School EFL Learners

Chin-Wen Chien[*]

Abstract

This study discusses an English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher's implementation of choice boards with cooperative learning as a strategy for achieving differentiated instruction among fourth through sixth graders in a rural elementary school in Taiwan. Its data include student responses to a questionnaire, the teacher's reflective journal, and student self-evaluation forms. It found that students tend to report positive attitudes towards such instructional strategies and cooperative learning. Their reported preferences with regard to testing their partners is thru English related activities. The implementation of choice boards should have an emphasis on student accountability. In general, Taiwanese students showed discomfort with the practice of complimenting. This study provides three suggestions for successfully implementing such a strategy in elementary-school EFL classrooms in Taiwan. These are to (a) integrate technology, other methodologies, or both, (b) adopt flexible grouping, and (c) emphasize the habitual practice of complimenting.

Key words: choice board, clock partner, cooperative learning, differentiated
　　　　　　instruction, mixed-level

[*] Assistant Professor, Department of English Instruction, National Hsinchu University of Education

Introduction

The teaching of English to fifth and sixth graders in Taiwan elementary schools became compulsory in the fall semester of 2001 and this was extended to include third and fourth graders in 2005 (Ministry of Education, 2001, 2005). Differences in elementary-age children's economic, social, and cultural backgrounds have resulted in a two-peak phenomenon characterized by a bimodal distribution of the country's elementary-school English education. Teachers have classes of students with such differing levels of English proficiency from having no experience of English to having already read *Harry Potter* in English (Chen, 2008).

Elementary school English teachers in Taiwan rely on peer assistance and classroom management strategies for teaching mixed-level classes rather than on modifying the curriculum to improve their students' learning (Chan, 2008; Chiu, 2008; Hsu, 2009; Liu, 2008). Successful teachers recognize that diversity may affect learning and work toward creating classroom settings that value it (Tileston, 2004). Differentiated instruction is one way to meet the needs of diverse students (Thousand, Villa & Nevin, 2007).

This article discusses an English as a foreign language (EFL) teacher's implementation of choice boards as a strategy for achieving differentiated instruction among fourth through sixth graders in a rural elementary school in Taiwan. Its data include student responses to a questionnaire, the teacher's reflective journal, and student self-evaluation forms. I analyzed these data and concluded with suggestions for implementing choice boards into EFL classrooms as a differentiated-instruction strategy.

Literature Review

Ward first used the term *differentiated instruction* in regard to gifted and talented students when describing instruction modified to meet the needs of individual students by focusing on who they are and what they know rather than on whom teachers wish they were (cited in Bravmann, 2004). Renzulli and Reis (1997) identified the content, process, product, classroom, and teacher as the dimensions of differentiated instruction.

Differentiated instruction also relies on the three components of content, process,

and product (Tomlinson, 2001). For content, teachers can use a variety of texts that may be either materials from English-language media or simple materials written for student use. Teachers can also give students choices among such types of instruction as direct instruction, concrete examples, worksheet practice, online work, and more complex activities. The differentiating process means selecting a variety of learning activities or strategies to explore the concepts in a unit based upon the students' interests, cognitive capacities, and learning styles. Differentiating the product involves varying the complexity of the work that students create in order to demonstrate their level of mastery of a unit's content (Blaz, 2006; Tomlinson, 1999; Tomlinson, 2001; Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006; Thousand et al, 2007).

Cooperative learning has been the trend in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom and it can be carried out during the differentiating process. Allen (2006) defines cooperative learning as "a variety of teaching methods characterized by positive interdependence and individual accountability among students working together to achieve a common goal. Cooperative learning is beneficial in language learning, because McGroarty (1993) claims that cooperative learning "provides a powerful tool for language acquisition because it establishes an instructional context that supports many of the aspects of language development taken as central by theories" (p. 20). Language learners are provided with opportunities for increased language production through cooperative learning and they can negotiate meaning in natural and low-anxiety environment (Bailey, Daley & Onwuegbuzie, 1999). Cooperative learning also encourages the accommodation of cultural and individual differences and orientations (Brown, 2000).

Differentiated instruction has created a specialized concept of choices (Heacox, 2002; Tomlinson, 1999), using such specific terms as choice menus (Heacox, 2002; Kryza, Duncan & Stephens, 2009), choice lists (Kryza et al., 2009), and choice boards (Chapman & King, 2005, 2008, 2009; Gregory, 2007; Tomlinson, 1999; Turville, 2008). Choice menus and choice boards are numbered lists of assignments that teachers can use for a variety of purposes in differentiated classrooms. Asking students to select what work they do enables teachers to target work toward those students' needs while allowing them to make choices (Heacox, 2002; Tomlinson, 1999). Table 1 illustrates some choices with which teachers can provide students to enable them to show what they have learned.

Table 1　Choice Boards on Reading

Design a game based on the subject's facts and trivia.	Write a song that includes the important information	Create raps, rhymes, or riddles using the vocabulary terms
Write and illustrate a mini book based on the facts	Write a front-page news article that includes important facts and details of an event	Dramatize the procedures, stages, steps, or events in a passage

Heacox (2002) suggested a series of procedures for differentiated instruction. Teachers should first talk with their students about how people all learn differently. They should then set up behavior guidelines, post them, discuss them, and enforce them consistently. Since they should also develop students' skills involving independence in group activities, they should then discuss the behaviors they expect during collaborative work, such as staying on tasks, participating, listening carefully, sharing ideas, and supporting each other's contributions. They then need to provide the students with guidelines for sound levels during work time, including providing a signal for keeping quiet. The next step is to arrange the classroom for group work, putting materials or supplies at workstations to limit the students' need to move around to get what they need. Finally, they need to establish routines so the students know what to do when they finish a task early.

Numerous studies have provided instructions for designing and implementing choice boards for differentiated instruction (Chapman & King, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2009; Gregory, 2007; Heacox, 2002; Kryza et al, 2009; Tomlinson, 1999; Turville, 2008). The literature, however, includes no studies addressing the implementations of choice boards in EFL contexts and their influence on EFL learners' learning attitudes. This case study addresses an EFL teacher's implementation of choice boards with cooperative learning into her classroom practice and her students' attitudes toward that implementation. This study aims to discuss the following issues. First, what kinds of choice boards were designed and how were choice boards carried out in the classroom? Second, how did students respond to the choice boards? Third, what problems occurred when this EFL teacher implemented choice boards with cooperative learning?

Method

Participants

This study's subjects were 36 fourth grade, 50 fifth grade, and 46 sixth grade EFL learners, or 132 in all, in one rural elementary school in Taiwan. Seventy of them were boys and 62 were girls. They had received formal English education from the first grade. They had had three 40-minute English classes weekly in the first and second grade and four 40-minute English classes weekly after that.

Activities

The English teacher in this study, here called Gloria, is a qualified elementary school English teacher who passed the Ministry of Education's 1999 Elementary School English Teacher Qualification Exam. On the first day of the school she reviewed such sentence patterns as, 'How are you?' 'How's the weather?' and 'What time is it?' and asked the students to find their clock partners. Appendix I explains this.

The students asked their classmates questions in English and signed their names under each clock. Gloria explained to the students that they would have 10 minutes with their chosen exercise during each class. She then asked them to work with their clock partners after teaching vocabulary, sentence patterns, phonics, or dialogues from each unit, with the choice of practicing one of these areas. She also explained what their four choices were. Table 2 details these. For those who have fallen behind the rest of the class, Gloria provided them with "Choice 1: pull out remedial instruction" and gave these students additional and repeated instruction in words, phonics, sentence structures, and dialogues. While those who like to test their clock partners, they can choose "Choice 2," those who like to play games can choose "Choice 3." Gloria thought that learners need to be challenged, so learners with higher English proficiency levels can choose "Choice 4: advanced activities." During this exercise time the students practiced with their partners and wrote down what they learned on their self-evaluation sheets. Appendix II presents one of these.

The students stopped their chosen exercises when a timer beeped. Gloria randomly called on students to give their partners such compliments as, 'Helen did a great job because she could sound out the phonics words.' After three students complimented their

partners Gloria also randomly called on each pair to share what they had practiced, as they had entered it in their self-evaluation forms.

Table 2   Implementation of Choices

Instruction Choices	Vocabulary instruction	Sentence instruction	Phonics	Dialogue
1	Pull-out remedial education	Pull-out remedial education	Pull-out remedial education	Pull-out remedial education
2	Work in pairs and test each other to spell out the words.	Work in pairs and put words into sentences	Work in pairs and test each other to sound out the words.	Work in pairs and practice the dialogue.
3	Work in pairs and use the word cards to complete word activities.	Work in pairs. One reads the sentence and the other writes down the sentences	Work in pairs and complete phonics activities.	Work in pairs and complete dialogue activities.
4	Make word cards on related words.	Use words to make new sentences.	Brainstorm related words. Use these words to write a chant.	Rewrite the dialogue. Put the dialogue into a short paragraph.

Data Collection

This study's data came from a student questionnaire, the teacher's reflective journal, and the students' self-evaluation forms. The data collection lasted for 15 weeks, starting in September 2011. Appendix III shows the questionnaire, which I wrote in Chinese (Appendix IV). I designed the questionnaire to discover the students' attitudes toward their teacher's implementing of choices for them in their English class exercises. They answered the first 16 items on a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1= totally disagree to 5= totally agree. The last item's purpose was to find why they did not choose advanced activities.

Gloria wrote down her reflections after each class. Such data are ideal because they focus on the participant's inner perspectives (Bartels, 2005). This study used these notes to explore her reflections on her students' learning and growth after implementing

choice boards in order to achieve differentiated instruction.

Documents enable researchers to collect informants' language and words. They can be an unobtrusive source of information and researchers can access them when it is convenient for them to do so (Creswell, 1994). I therefore collected and analyzed copies of the students' self-evaluation forms.

Results

Questionnaire

Almost 89% of the students responded that they had never experienced making choices as a way of receiving differentiated instruction before. Most of them reported positive attitudes toward this instructional strategy, with about 68% and 70% responding that it gave them more chances to practice English and provided them with more accountability for learning English. They apparently tended to be unsure about what autonomy means, with only 55% of them responding that making choices gave them more autonomy in learning English.

About 81% of the students responded that they felt that the directions for making their choices were clear. About 51% reported that they felt that 5 to 10 minutes of choice time was sufficient, with 17% disagreeing. About 79% of them responded that they liked working with their clock partners, but 89% responded that they would prefer to choose their own partners.

About 72% of the students responded that they thought that they stayed on task during choice time and 5% responded that they did not work hard then. About 70% and 84% of them responded that the teacher's follow-up checking and the writing of their self-reports ensured their engagement and demonstrated their learning. They tended to report liking activities and games, followed by testing partners and advanced activities. Only 54% reported liking remedial instruction, but 66% of them responded that it helped them to learn more English. Forty-six percent of them responded that they did not choose advanced activities because "My English was not good enough," 31% claimed "The class material is at my level," and 20% stated because "I did not want to show off."

Student Self-evaluation Forms

During choice exercise time most of the students chose such test-each-other options as 'work in pairs and test each other to spell out the words', 'work in pairs and put words into sentences', 'work in pairs and test each other to sound out the words', and 'work in pairs and practice the dialogue'. Gloria eventually asked from 12% to 17% of these to pull out and receive remedial education because they had fallen behind the others.

From 16% to 22% of the students chose such activities as 'work in pairs and use the word cards to complete word activities'. Gloria had presented such activities in class as concentration, bingo, message sender, and go fishing.

Fewer than 5% of the students chose such advanced activities as 'make word cards on related words', 'use words to make new sentences', 'brainstorm related words and use these words to write a chant', and 'rewrite the dialogue and put the dialogue into a short paragraph'.

Table 3　Results of Students' Choices in Self-Evaluation Forms

Instruction Choices	Vocabulary	Sentence	Phonics	Dialogue
1	14%	17%	12%	14%
2	62%	66%	67%	66%
3	22%	17%	18%	19%
4	2%	0%	3%	1%

The students wrote down what they learned on the self-evaluation forms. They chose to work in pairs and to complete phonics activities. One student wrote down such words that she and her partner practiced during the exercise as 'drink' and 'blue'. Figure 1 is a photocopy of this.

Figure 1.　Students' self-evaluation form on phonics

Vivian chose to work in a pair with Amy and practice the dialogue. She wrote down the dialogue she practiced during the exercise. Figure 2 is a photocopy of this.

Figure 2.　Students' self-evaluation form on dialogue

Teacher's Reflective Journal Entries

Gloria's reflective journal noted major problems in regard to complimenting, remedial education, and accountability. In regard to complimenting, some students could follow Gloria's instructions and compliment their clock partners. She noted that:

> Today was the first time I implemented choice boards on vocabulary. By the end I asked the students to compliment their partners. Wendy said, 'Bell did a great job because he said the words fluently.' Wendy followed my sentence pattern, which was, '[Someone] did a great job because ....'

Some of the students; however, were not used to complimenting each other. Gloria noted that, "After implementing choice boards on dialogue instruction I asked the

sixth graders to compliment one another. They were shy and they did not volunteer to compliment their partners until I called on them to do so."

Gloria designed the remedial instruction for those who fell behind. Some students, however, had insufficient self-confidence and came to her seeking help when she thought they should still try without her help. She noted that:

> Today I implemented the choice board for vocabulary and explained how it should work. I asked the students to come to me if they needed my help. If not, they could work with their clock partners. Fanny came to me twice immediately and clearly lacked self-confidence. How should I encourage her to work with her partner instead of relying on me?

A few students, furthermore, were lazy and needed her to monitor and push them or they would go off task during choice time. Gloria noted that, 'Today Jerry and Leo were off task. They did not work with each other during the 10-minute choice time for vocabulary. They began to work when I called their names and reminded them to be on task.'

Discussion

The discussion focuses on the implementations of choice boards in English classroom in terms of choice design, monitoring, grouping, and complimenting.

Choice Design

The students tended to report positive attitudes toward the implementation of choices as a strategy for differentiated instruction and to consider Gloria's directions for engaging in the choice exercises to be clear. Most of the students responded that they preferred testing their clock partners or engaging in games and activities during their choice exercises. Although 65% of them responded that they liked advanced activities, fewer than 5% of them actually did them. They did not choose advanced activities because "My English was not good enough." About 54% of them reported liking remedial education, but only 12% to 17% actually received it.

No empirical studies have focused on the implementations of choice boards in EFL

contexts and can be used to explain why learners in this study barely chose advanced activities and very few learners received pull-out remedial instruction. However, the majority of the learners in this study preferred testing their clock partners or playing games. Young learners tend to enjoy constructive play and games, because games lighten formal teaching and can help renew young learners' energy. Moreover, young learners are more willing to participate and even shy learners can be motivated to speak and participate in the fun atmosphere (Brewster & Ellis, 2002).

Games, activities, manipulations, and hands-on experience can provide hidden practice for specific language patterns and vocabulary for younger learners (Brewster & Ellis, 2002; Decure, 2000; Deesri, 2002; Garris, Ahlers & Driskell, 2002). Such activities should be based on the learners' English proficiency levels, with the activities for learners with higher proficiency levels focusing on higher cognitive levels by having students perform such tasks as considering reasons, comparing alternatives, finding similarities and differences, forming opinions, and analyzing evidence.

Computers provide ready access to written, audio, and visual materials relevant to the language and culture being studied (Kern, 2006). Computers and tapes are great supplementary teaching materials because students have the chance to listen to reading materials or to learn from the many online interactive websites. Learners can listen to the CDs provided by textbook publishers in order to review lessons or do interactive computer exercises.

Monitoring

Monitoring students during the 10-minute choice exercises was a challenge because Gloria was the only teacher in the classroom. About 72% of the students claimed that they were always on task during the choice exercises, and only a few actually were not. The students tended to recognize the importance of using their self-evaluation forms and their teacher's follow-up checking in order to monitor their learning. Teachers should provide students with performance checklists, or rubrics, so they can evaluate themselves, thereby empowering them to take accountability for their own learning and to develop a sense of ownership and control over their personal learning progress (Chapman & King, 2008; Gregory, 2007; Kryza et al., 2009).

Grouping

The students tended to respond that they liked to work with their clock partners but that they preferred to choose their own partners. Inflexible, limited approaches to grouping can seriously limit students' academic, linguistic, and even social development by limiting their opportunities. Teachers should therefore practice flexible grouping when preparing choice exercises. This means allowing their students to form their own pairs for some activities while the teachers form them for others (Johnson, 1994). Flexible grouping patterns for cooperative learning in the EFL classroom allows learners to exchange information and use different patterns of interaction (Rico, 2008).

Teachers can, furthermore, pair students according to their ability in order to enable them to work with personally challenging and stimulating materials and information, and they can also pair them for peer-to-peer tutoring. Enabling students to assist each other with specific needs is a way to give them responsibilities for understanding what they know and how they can use the information (Gregory, 2007).

Complimenting

After reflecting on her implementation of choice boards as a strategy for achieving differentiated instruction, Gloria encouraged her students to compliment their partners for their learning and behavior. She also provided students with the sentence pattern, "[Name] did a great job because …" Many students; however, were unaccustomed to complimenting their partners, particularly the sixth graders.

The act of giving a compliment is intrinsically courteous and makes an opportunity available to express an interest in the hearer (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991). Complimenting can be characteristically distinct across different cultures. Making compliments is one of the language functions that Taiwan's Ministry of Education has mandated to be taught in elementary school English education (Ministry of Education, 2001, 2005).

English compliments either focus on appearance or on ability (Manes & Wolfson, 1981). Learning a language involves much more than memorizing forms. It also involves learning special pragmatic features that play a crucial role in communication. Teachers should therefore instruct EFL learners in how to compliment others in order to equip them with the communicative competence necessary to perform and understand intentionality under contextual and discourse constraints (Farerch & Kasper, 1984).

Conclusion

Elementary school English teachers in Taiwan have classes of students with different levels of English proficiency. This study focuses on a case study of an EFL teacher's implementation of student choices as a strategy for providing differentiated instruction. It has found that the students tended to report positive attitudes toward such instructional strategies and cooperative learning, what their reported preferences were in regard to English-related activities and testing their partners, what the effects of an emphasis on student accountability are, and the students' discomfort with the practice of complimenting.

This study has made three suggestions for successfully implementing such a strategy in elementary-school EFL classrooms in Taiwan. These are to (a) integrate technology, other methodologies, or both, (b) adopt flexible grouping, and (c) emphasize the habitual practice of complimenting.

This case study involved only 132 young EFL learners. This small number of participants limits its findings by preventing them from being generalisable in regard to larger English learner populations. Based on the teacher's reflective journal, the student questionnaire, and the students' self-evaluation forms; however, the instructional procedure and suggestions for implementing it do provide practical implications for EFL classroom practice.

Textbooks are required teaching materials in elementary schools in Taiwan. This article focuses on the implementation of the use of choices for learning the vocabulary, sentence structures, phonics, and dialogue that these textbooks cover. It suggests the supplementary use of English picture books and other learning materials.

A future study should focus on the implementing of a choice-based strategy for achieving differentiated instruction with picture books. Another study should address how to implement a similar strategy to stimulate the students' interest in learning English, increase their cultural awareness, and improve their reading comprehension strategies.

References

Allen, L. Q. (2006). Investigating culture through cooperative learning. *Foreign Language Annals, 39*(1), 11-21.

Bailey, P., Daley, C. E., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (1999). Foreign language anxiety and learning style. *Foreign Language Annals, 32*(1), 63-76.

Bartels, N. (2005). Researching applied linguistics in language teacher education. In N. Bartels (Ed.), *Applied linguistics and language teacher education* (pp. 1-18). New York, NY: Springer Science and Business Media.

Blaz, D. (2006). *Differentiated instruction: A guide for foreign language teachers*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Bravmann, S. (2004). Two, four, six, eight, let's all differentiate. Differentiated instruction: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow. *New Horizons for Learning*. Retrieved from http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/differentiated/bravmann.htm

Brewster, J., & Ellis, G. (2002). *The primary English teacher's guide*. London, UK: Penguin English Guide.

Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Chan, Y. J. (2008). *Incorporating literature circle in a sixth-grade English class in Taiwan*. Unpublished master's thesis, Ming Chuan University, Taiwan.

Chapman, C., & King, R. (2003). *Differentiated instruction strategies for reading in the content areas*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Chapman, C., & King, R. (2005). *Differentiated assessment strategies: One tool doesn't fit it all*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Chapman, C., & King, R. (2008). *Differentiated instructional management: Work smarter, not harder*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Chapman, C., & King, R. (2009). *Differentiated instruction strategies for writing in the content areas*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Chen, Y. J. (2008). *Elementary school English teachers' teaching difficulties in and remedies for the bimodal distribution of students' English abilities*. Unpublished master's thesis, National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan.

Chiu, L. F. (2008). Using predictable books to teach writing in an English as a foreign language setting. *Journal of Taiwan Normal University-Education, 53*(2), 27-58.

Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Decure, N. (2000). *New ways in using communicative games in language teaching*. TESL-EJ,

4(3). Retrieved from http://www.cc.kyoto-su.ac.jp/information/tesl-ej/ej15/r12.html.

Deesri, A. (2002). Games in the ESL and EFL class. *The Internet TESL Journal, 3*(9). Retrieved from http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Deesri-Games.html.

Faerch, C., & G. Kasper (1984). Pragmatic knowledge: Rules and procedures. *Applied Linguistics, 5*(3), 214-225.

Garris, R., Ahlers, R., & Driskell, J. E. (2002). Games, motivation, and learning: A research and practice model. *Simulation & Gaming, 33*(4), 441-467.

Gregory, G. H. (2007). *Differentiated instructional strategies: One size doesn't fit it all*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Heacox, D. (2002). *Differentiating instruction in the regular classroom: How to reach and teach all learners, grades 3-12*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit.

Hsu, H. W. (2009). Helping less proficient children in multi-level classrooms: A study of teaching English to young learner teachers' strategies used. In K. Al-Thubaiti, C. Batterham, K. Chatsiou, L. Papadopoulou & K. Yoshimoto (Eds.) *Language at the University of Essex (LangUE) 2008 proceeding* (pp. 52-66). Colchester, UK: Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex.

Johnson, D. M. (1994). Grouping strategies for second language learners. In F. Genesee (Ed.), *Educating second language children: The whole child, the whole curriculum, the whole community* (pp.183-209). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Kern, R. (2006). Perspective on technology in learning and teaching languages. *TESOL Quarterly, 40*(1), 183-210.

Kryza, K., Duncan, A., & Stephens, S. J. (2009). *Inspiring elementary learners: Nurturing the whole child in differentiated classroom*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Liu, Y. F. (2008). Differentiated instruction in flexible grouping in EFL classroom. *Journal of Taipei Municipal University of Education, 39*(1), 97-122.

Manes, J., & Wolfson, N. (1981). The compliment formula. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), *Conversation routines* (pp. 115-132). Hague, the Netherlands: Mouton.

McGroarty, M. (1993). Cooperative learning and second language acquisition. In D. D. Holt (Ed.), *Cooperative learning: A response to linguistic and cultural diversity* (pp. 19-46). McHenry, IL: Center for Applied Linguistics and Delta System.

Ministry of Education (2001). *Guidelines on English teaching activity designs and assessments in elementary and junior high school*. Taipei, Taiwan: Ministry of Education.

Ministry of Education (2005). *Guidelines on English teaching activity designs and assessments in elementary and junior high school*. Taipei, Taiwan: Ministry of Education.

Olshtain, E., & Cohen, A. (1991). Teaching speech act to nonnative speakers. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 154-165). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Renzulli, J. S., & Reis, S. M. (1997). *The schoolwide enrichment model: A how-to guide for educational excellence* (2nd ed.). Mansfield Center, CT: Creative Learning Press.

Rico, L. T. (2008). *Strategies for teaching English learners*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

Thousand, J., Villa, R., & Nevin, A. (2007). *Differentiating instruction: Collaborative planning and teaching for universally designed learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Tileston, D. W. (2004). *What every teacher should know about diverse students*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Tomlinson, C. (1999). *Differentiated classroom*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Tomlinson, C. A., & McTighe, J. (2006). *Integrating differentiated instruction and understanding by design: Connecting content and kids*. Alexandria, VA: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Turville, J. (2008). *Differentiation by student learning preferences: Strategies and lesson plans.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Appendix I: Clock Partner

Directions: The "clock partner" is used to put students into pairs. On the first day of school, an English teacher can review the sentence patterns that were taught before. Student A asks Student B, "What's your name?" and student B answers, "I'm Kathy." Student A writes his name under "One o'clock" on Student B's worksheet. Student B writes her name "Kathy" under "One o'clock" on Student A's worksheet. Student A and Student B become "one o'clock" partners. While carrying out class activities or tasks, the English teacher says, "Find your one o'clock partner and work on this activity." Student A and Student B work together and complete the assigned activity.
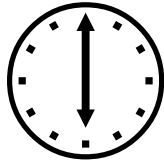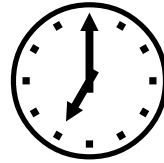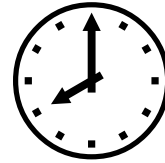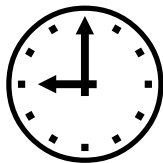
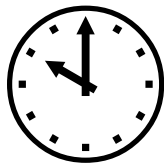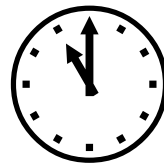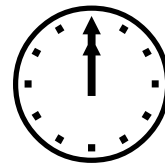Name: _____ Class: _____ Number: _____
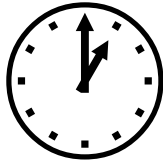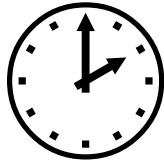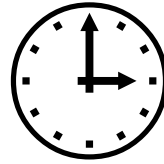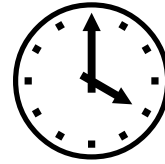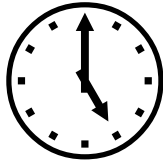
Appendix II:
Vocabulary DI Instruction Self-Evaluation Form

Vocabulary DI Instruction Self-Evaluation Form	
Name: _____	Signature: _____
My Choices ☐ Pull-out remedial education ☐ Work in pairs and test each other to spell out the words from word cards. ☐ Work in pairs and use the word cards to complete word activities. ☐ Make word cards on related words or make sentences.	My achievement

Appendix III:
English Questionnaire on Choice Boards

Dear students,

We use choice boards in English classes. I want to know your opinions about using choice boards in English classes. Read the following sixteen sentences and choose from 1 to 5 (☐1 totally disagree ☐2 disagree ☐3 OK ☐4 agree ☐5 totally agree). The last question has four choices and you can have multiple choices.

☐1 totally disagree ☐2 disagree ☐3 OK ☐4 agree ☐5 totally agree

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Choices as DI instruction gives me more chance to practice English.					
2	Choices as DI instruction gives me autonomy to learn English.					
3	Choices as DI instruction gives me accountability in learning English.					
4	I like to work with my clock partner.					
5	I like to choose my own partner.					
6	5-10 minutes of choices as DI instruction is sufficient.					
7	Teachers' follow-up check makes sure I am engaged in class.					
8	Writing the achievement is a way to show my learning.					
9	I like pull-out remedial instruction.					
10	I like to test my classmates.					
11	I like to do activities or play games.					
12	I like to do advanced activities.					
13	I learn more English when the teacher gives me pull-out instruction.					
14	The direction on choices as DI instruction is clear.					
15	I'm on the task during the choices as DI instruction.					
16	I've never tried choices as DI instruction before.					
17	I don't choose advanced activities, because ☐ I do not like to show off. ☐ My English is not good enough. ☐ The class material is at my level. ☐ Others ＿＿＿＿＿＿					

Appendix IV:
Chinese Questionnaire on Choice Boards

同學們：

這學期英文課我們使用的選擇板，老師想知道你們在英文課堂內使用選擇板的想法，讀下面的十六個句子，勾選1-5的選項〔1=非常不同意、2=不同意、3=尚可、4=同意、5=非常同意〕。第十七個句子有四個選項，可以重複選擇。

英文老師□□□

1=非常不同意、2=不同意、3=尚可、4=同意、5=非常同意

		1	2	3	4	5
1	選擇板當作區別化教學給我更多機會練習英文。					
2	選擇板當作區別化教學讓我學英文有自主權。					
3	選擇板當作區別化教學讓我對英文學習負責任。					
4	我喜歡我的時鐘夥伴。					
5	我喜歡自己選夥伴。					
6	5-10分鐘的選擇板當作區別化教學是足夠的。					
7	老師的抽查可以確定我認眞參與活動。					
8	寫「我的成果」是展現我的英文學習。					
9	我喜歡補救教學。					
10	我喜歡跟同學互相考試。					
11	我喜歡做活動和玩遊戲。					
12	我喜歡進階活動。					
13	當老師給我補救教學，我可以學更多英文。					
14	選擇板當作區別化教學的指令很清楚。					
15	我認眞完成選擇板當作區別化教學活動。					
16	我沒有經歷過選擇板當作區別化教學。					
17	我不選擇進階活動因爲 □ 我不愛現 □ 我的英文不夠好□ 上課內容符合我的程度. □ 其他 ＿＿＿＿＿＿＿					

使用選擇板與合作學習
來面對小學英語程度差異的學生

簡靜雯[*]

摘　　要

　　本文旨在探討一位英語教師使用選擇板與合作學習來面對臺灣小學四年級到六年級英文程度差異的策略。資料包括問卷調查結果、教師省思日記以及學生自我評量表。研究發現學生對於這種選擇板教學策略和合作學習具有正向態度；就活動選擇而言，他們比較偏好用英語相關活動來考他們的夥伴；選擇版的實施應該強調責任制。然而臺灣學生不習慣稱讚夥伴。研究結果對於有效地在臺灣國小英語教室實施提出三項具體建議：第一，融入科技和教學方法於選擇板中；第二，實施彈性分組；第三、重視稱讚夥伴的習慣養成。

關鍵詞：選擇板、時鐘夥伴、合作學習、區別化教學、不同程度

---

[*]國立新竹教育大學英語教學系助理教授