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English Teachers' Perceptions Toward differentiated Assessment in Cycle Two at Al Ain public Schools

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ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD DIFFERENTIATED ASSESSMENT IN CYCLE TWO AT AL AIN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Reem Moh'd Kamil Salhyyieh

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Curriculum and Instruction)

Under the Supervision of Dr. Sadiq Ismail

November 2016

Declaration of Original Work

I, Reem Moh'd Kamil Salhyyieh, the undersigned, a graduate student at the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU), and the author of this thesis entitled "*English Teachers' Perceptions toward Differentiated Assessment in Cycle Two at Al Ain Public Schools*", hereby, solemnly declare that this thesis is my own original research work that has been done and prepared by me under the supervision of Dr. Sadiq Ismail, in the College of Education at UAEU. This work has not previously been presented or published, or formed the basis for the award of any academic degree, diploma or a similar title at this or any other university. Any materials borrowed from other sources (whether published or unpublished) and relied upon or included in my thesis have been properly cited and acknowledged in accordance with appropriate academic conventions. I further declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, data collection, authorship, presentation and/or publication of this thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis was concerned with studying the perception of English teachers toward differentiated assessments in Cycle two at Al Ain public schools. The main purpose of this thesis was to identify the perception of English teachers toward differentiated assessments, recognize the different types of assessments teachers are using in their classrooms and understand how these assessments may inform teaching and learning. A questionnaire had been distributed to Cycle two schools. Also, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers to obtain detailed data. The study investigated the views of teachers about differentiated assessments along with the assessment strategies they implement in their classrooms. In addition, it aimed to study the impact of differentiating assessment on teaching and learning. The study showed that many teachers perceived differentiated assessments as effective tools that could be effectively applied in classrooms. Moreover, they could be used to better manage classrooms, meet students' needs and differentiate students' learning. Examining the perception of teachers helped us understand the knowledge teachers had and what they might apply in their classrooms. That allowed us to know if the learning cycle was continuous or conventional in those classrooms. The collected data from the questionnaire beside the obtained results from the interviews described how teachers perceived differentiated assessments in classrooms. This in return clarified the effectiveness of these assessments.

Keywords: Assessment, differentiated assessments, perceptions, strategies**.**

Title and Abstract (in Arabic)

واقع استخدام معلمي اللغة الانجليزية لأساليب التقويم البديلة في الحلقة الثانية في المدارس الحكومية بدولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة توجهات معلّمي اللغة الإنجليزية فيما يخص تنويع أساليب التقييم للطلبة في مدارس الحلقة الثانية الحكومية في مدينة العين. وتهدف أيضًا إلى تحديد هذه التوجهات ومعرفة مختلف أنواع التقييمات التي يستخدمها المعلمون في صفوفهم الدراسية، إلى جانب فهم آلية عمل هذه التقييمات في إخطار عملية التعليم والتعلم وتغييرها. وقد عمدت الدراسة إلى توزيع استبيان على مدارس الحلقة الثانية الحكومية لجمع المعلومات اللازمة، وقد أظهرت النتائج أن العديد من المعلمين يدركون أهمية تنويع أساليب التقييم للطلبة كونها وسيلة يمكن استخدامها بفعالية داخل الصفوف الدراسية، إلى جانب إمكانية استخدام هذه التقييمات لإدارة الصفوف الدراسية بصورة أكبر وتلبية الاحتياجات الفردية للطلبة وتنويع أساليب التعليم. إذ أن معرفة توجهات المعلمين تساعد على تحديد المعرفة التي يملكها المعلمون والأساليب التي من الممكن لهم اتباعها في صفوفهم، الأمر الذي سيؤدي إلى معرفة فيما إذا كان المعلم يتبع أساليب تقليدية أو حديثة في تقييم الطلبة. وعليه، ستظهر نتائج هذا الاستبيان مدى فاعلية أساليب التقييم التي يتبعها المعلمين داخل فصولهم الدراسية.

مفاهيم البحث الرئيسية: التقويم، تنويع أساليب التقويم، التوجهات، الاستراتيجيات.

Acknowledgements

Dedication

My work is dedicated to my beloved parents who inspired me to start this work. A special thank of gratitude to my lovely husband who supported me during my studies. Also, I would like to dedicate my thesis to my sister and brothers who have never left my side at any time.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview

Teachers use different types of assessment while teaching to meet their students' needs. Others use these different forms of assessment with their students because they are a requirement in their schools. As for Abu Dhabi Emirates, Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) believes that assessments are the core of the process of teaching and learning (*Policy on Student's Assessment*, 2012). Therefore, different assessments should be identified for different students. ADEC requires English teachers at all grade levels to use different types of assessment such as the External Measure of Student Achievement (EMSA), Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS), English Continuous Assessment Rich Tasks (ECART), Continuous Assessments (CA) and the final examination. These are not required for all grades; some of them are specific to cycle one, two or three.

All students in Cycle 2 are subject to the following assessments CA, EMSA and ECART. These assessments evaluate the mastery of different English Language skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening. Moreover, they are known to be standardized and follow the international standards of appropriate practice. As an example, EMSA is a standardized diagnostic test teachers can use to diagnose students' understanding of learning objectives and outcomes that they are taught throughout the year (ADEC, 2012). It is a written exam of multiple-choice and short answers.

In addition, Continuous Assessment is the main assessment tool of students. According to the *Policy of students' Assessment* (2012), Continuous Assessment is an approach that integrates lots of strategies which measure student's learning. Its activities are not restricted to "student assignments, research, presentations, reports,

quizzes, tests, and practical activities (p. 62)". Teachers have the freedom to choose the best type of assessments that are beneficial to their students' learning. They can provide them with a mixture of the above mentioned assessment activities. However, this should be done in alignment with the guidelines provided by ADEC in the policy manual.

Differentiated assessment is a cycle where students' data are continuously gathered prior, within and after students' learning process in order to assess how much they have learnt in their classroom (Quality Education, 2009). However, differentiated assessments are not aimed only to test what students have memorized throughout the lesson. They test what students have understood, learned and comprehended from the lesson. These assessments have certain characteristics. According to Parker, Fleming, Beyerlein, Apple and Krumsieg (2001) differentiated assessments are supposed to provide students with constructive feedback about their learning in order to promote their academic performance.

The main purpose of differentiated assessment is to measure students' performance, understanding and achievement of the intended learning outcomes. It is a continuous process because it helps teachers to collect data regularly about their students to enhance their planning. It can be easily differentiated to match students' needs and abilities. However, in order to be able to differentiate assessments to students, teachers should know their learners very well (Chapman & King, 2005).

Differentiated assessments are best implemented when students choose the way and the time they want to be evaluated. Also, when students decide if they want to be assessed based on their achievement or development attainment (Blaz, 2008). Such assessments can take different formats. Peer assessment, self-assessment,

teacher-student conferences, portfolios and exemplars are different forms of differentiated assessments (Lynch, 2010). These types of differentiated assessment are not difficult to apply at any classroom if the teacher has the proper skill for implementation. As the above mentioned different studies show, the importance of differentiated assessment in classrooms related to creating a positive classroom environment which meets the diverse needs of students.

This study focuses on studying the perception of English teachers toward differentiated assessments strategies. It examines teacher's views regarding these assessments. Then it tackles the different types of differentiated assessment strategies teachers believe are necessary for all students. After that, the study discusses the effect of these assessments on the instructional process especially teaching and learning. To illustrate, teacher-student conference is the process of providing students a feedback about their learning and performance through a structured interview that has defined goals. It encompasses providing students with the needed feedback along with recommendations on how to improve their learning by establishing a specific goal that fits the need of every individual student (Designing Effective Projects, 2007). It brings teachers and students together to discuss the development of the students by defining specific goals and reflecting on them (Taylor, Branscombe, Burchman & Land, 2011). It involves creating a friendly bond with the students and listening to them very well (Tylor et al, 2011).

Therefore, it is important for teachers in schools to use differentiated assessments with their students. Thus, this study examines the perceptions of Cycle 2 English teachers toward differentiated assessment. Also, it aims at examining the different types of differentiated assessment teachers are using with their students and how these assessments inform teaching and learning.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In line with the emphasis of ADEC to provide the best quality of teaching and assessments to students in classrooms, in addition to the new trend of teaching that focuses on creating student-centered classrooms, the use of differentiated assessment emerged to be essential to meet the varied needs of students. However, many ADEC supervisors and schools leaders realized that there is a problem regarding teachers' understanding of assessments. Some teachers believe that one type of assessment is enough for all students. However, others believe that there is a need to differentiate assessments for students in classrooms. The difference in these positions may create a gap in fulfilling the vision of ADEC which focuses on creating classrooms that rely heavily on differentiating instruction and assessments for students to meet their diverse needs. Moreover, in line with the emphasis of ADEC to create student-centered classrooms, such observations do not reflect the best practices that ADEC is calling for. Therefore, the researcher decided to study this problem and investigate English teachers' perceptions regarding differentiated assessments.

Different educators and ADEC supervisors believe that differentiated assessments are important in terms of meeting students' individual needs and examining students' development. To illustrate, Sangitah (2016) agreed that there are different perceptions toward assessment among teachers. Some teachers might welcome using differentiated assessments while others may not. She elaborated that the difference in these views came as a result of the difference philosophies teachers are following. Some teaches still believe in the traditional way of teaching and assessing that do not support differentiation, while others are implementing the new methods of assessment that emphasize on enforcing differentiation in instruction and

assessment. However, she believes that the majority are implementing differentiation in assessment.

Thus, many studies have investigated differentiated assessments. Many of them support the use of differentiated assessments in classrooms. The study of Jonsson, Mattheos, Svingby and Attstrom (2007) shows that differentiated assessments support teachers to identify the individual learning needs of each student. The study believes that by meeting these needs, teachers can recognize the growth in students' learning. Also, Birjandi, Estaji and Deyhim (2013) agreed that differentiated assessments enhance students' abilities as a result of continuous intervention and mediation teachers implement to their teaching and assessment strategies. Moreover, Moon (2003) believed that these assessments enable teachers to plan well and make the right decisions about students needs.

The researcher believes differentiated assessments are effective in identifying the specific needs of each student and students' development. This can be implemented by using varied strategies such as self-assessment and peer-assessment which promote students' thinking skills and enhance students' interaction with each others. In addition, the researcher believes that differentiated assessments should promote students' capabilities such as students' readiness, thinking and reflection. This is due to the formative nature of these assessments. Moreover, the researcher believes that differentiated assessments have great impact on informing teaching process by modifying lessons plans, changing teaching strategies to best meet students' needs, catering students' diversity and deciding the appropriate assessment strategies for students.

1.3 Research objectives

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identifying English teachers' perceptions toward differentiated assessments in Cycle two schools.

2. Identifying differentiated assessments strategies English teachers are using

3. Examining how differentiated assessments inform teaching and learning.

1.4 Research questions

The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the perceptions of English teachers toward differentiated assessments?

2. What type of differentiated assessment strategies do teachers use in their classes?

3. How do differentiated assessments inform teachers to enhance teaching and learning?

1.5 Significance of the study

ADEC policy manual states that as part of ADEC requirement, when teachers use varied assessments, the results of these assessments should inform teachers with the best instructional approaches to use with the students to enable them meet the intended learning objectives (ADEC Policy Manual, 2014). Therefore, the significance of this study is presented in its findings. Firstly, the findings when shared with ADEC personnel will inform ADEC whether teachers are fulfilling ADEC's requirements which focus on implementing differentiated instruction accompanied by differentiated assessments in classrooms in order to enhance students' achievements and meet their

varied needs. Therefore ADEC can prepare the appropriate trainings to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills.

Secondly, this study gives teachers an opportunity to reflect on their practices when responding to the questionnaire. For instance, the questionnaire enables teachers to reflect on their understanding of differentiated assessments, strategies they use for assessments and the impact of their assessment strategies on their teaching.

Thirdly, when sharing the findings of the research with the teachers it will help them understand the importance of implementing differentiated assessments in classrooms for teachers and students such as meeting students' needs and informing teachers to modify their teaching practices. Fourthly, students would be better evaluated to assess the learning outcomes they had achieved by the end of each lesson. The findings of the study help teachers use the most appropriate assessment tools with each student. This in return supports students' fair and proper assessments. Finally, this study could be used as a reference for future studies.

1.6 Definitions of terms

A number of terms are used and highlighted in this study in order to facilitate the understanding of its basic elements and components:

Assessment: assessing students based on: "(1) their competence and knowledge on course specific objectives, and their ability to relate theoretical knowledge to displayed scenarios and critical thinking, as expressed in their personal task (Jonsson, Mattheos, Svingby, & Attstrom, 2007)."

Differentiated Assessment: It is an assessment structure that aims to differentiate assessment strategies "among students within the same year level, respects their

diverse talents and ways of learning and provides mechanisms that enable them to develop skills to learn in ways that they might otherwise have found more challenging (Varsavsky & Rayner, 2013)."

Perception: Oxford Online Dictionary defines it as "The way in which something is regarded, understood, or interpreted (Oxford, 2014)."

Strategies: Oxford Online Dictionary defines it as "a plan of action or policy designed to achieve a major or overall aim (Oxford, 2013)." This research defines it as all the tools and procedures teachers are using in differentiating assessments.

1.7 Limitations

First of all, the study is specific for Cycle two Al Ain public schools. Therefore; that might affect the generalization of the findings to other cycles. Secondly, since the interview was conducted with limited number of teachers, bias could be a weakness. However, the researcher must argue the participants in the interview to minimize the bias that could occur within the answers of the participants.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The main purpose of this chapter was to identify previous studies that tackled educational issues related to differentiated assessments and compare, discuss and review them. First of all, it identified the theoretical framework of differentiated assessments. Next, it provided an introduction about assessments. Then, it addressed the differences between differentiated assessments and traditional assessment. After that, it provided different relevant studies in the following major aspects: strategies of differentiated assessments, teachers' perception of differentiated assessments, and the relationship between differentiated assessments and students performance. Finally, it covered the position of differentiated assessments in ADEC context.

The main purpose of discussing differentiating assessments was to show its importance in relation to meeting students' needs (Dodge, 2009). Moreover, these assessments were important to test students' understanding besides directing teachers to the best instructional practices in the future, and providing students with a constructive feedback that guarantees the continuity of their learning process (Dodge, 2009).

2.1 Theoretical background

2.1.1 Constructivism

Many theories tackle and discuss the idea of assessments; however, each theory has different approach for assessment application and use. Constructivism is a theory which believes people build their own learning by themselves (Oxford, 1997). In other words, people can understand the world better by reflecting on their own experiences to create their own rules. This theory believes that students should have responsibility on their own learning since they have a prior knowledge about what they are learning.

This philosophy, more likely, encourages formative assessment while the process of learning continues (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). Eventually, this can be noticed through the different views of this philosophy.

Nezvalová (2010) summarizes the basic concepts of assessment in a constructivist approach. He argued that assessments should be meaningful to the students, include higher order thinking skills, an application of students' knowledge, and a focus on main ideas and concepts (Nezvalová, 2010). In addition, he believed that teachers must use variety of assessment techniques in their classrooms. Moreover, students acquire their knowledge while interacting with each others; however, interaction among students remains the same during assessments (Nezvalová, 2010). Teachers should understand their students' especially when they respond with incorrect answers. Then, they can understand the learning their students' acquired from their responses (Brooks & Brooks, 1993).

Abideen (2010) summarized the role of teachers in a constructive classroom. He believes that teachers should cater for and accept individual differences, use variety of tools, sources and manipulative and ask questions to check how much learning and how many concepts students' are gaining. Then, they have to change their teaching styles and content based on students' responses. Moreover, teachers may ask meaningful questions and avoid short answers. These questions should focus on higher order thinking skills and must use words such as analyzing, predicting…etc (Abideen, 2010).

The constructive approach supports collaborative work among students so that peer assessment is recommended according to this philosophy. In addition, it encourages the individual work such as self-assessment especially when teachers tend

to know how much learning each student has got in their classes. It can be used to better understand their students.

2.1.2 Socio-cultural theory

This study is based on the socio-cultural theory which has been developed by the psychologist Vygotsky. He believes that learning occurs when students interact with each others to develop their skills, strategies and knowledge. Therefore, less competent students perform better with the help of their skillful peers within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky defines the ZPD as:

> The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

Thus, the ZPD helps in identifying students' current learning level, so that teachers can identify the proper instructional strategies which are needed for pushing students to their potential development levels.

The study of Turuk (2008) reflects how learning is viewed in socio-cultural theory. His study shows that learning in socio-cultural theory means working collaboratively in a task which later on students can perform in their own. This theory believes that meaning is the center of a certain unit of study. This unit should be presented with all its intricacy rather than focusing on skills or knowledge separately. Students are considered makers of meaning and learning occurs from their interaction with teachers, peers and tasks. Thus, social interaction supports students to perform certain tasks successfully after they first have done it with the help of their others.

Moreover, this theory discusses the concept of dynamic assessments which focus on the process rather than the product. It is defined as the approach which focuses on the impact of catering individual differences within instruction and the intervention that is needed for the assessment process (Ozgur, 2008). Dynamic assessment is similar to differentiated assessments. It is the center of students' development. It allows students to get feedback related to their performance during the process of their learning (Ozgur, 2008). The study of Ozgur (2008) shows that dynamic assessment has a great impact on second language learning classrooms since it supports students' reading skills by developing varied reading strategies.

Moreover, oral and comprehension skills of the students can be improved by using different methods of dynamic assessments. Thus, the feature of dynamic assessments reflects what differentiated assessments imply in any classroom. This assessment is a continuous cycle of improvement which depends heavily on students' level and their learning needs (Ozgur, 2008). In summary, collaboration is the main key for students to learn according to Vygotsky. The purpose of such collaboration should be to build new learning among students. Eventually, students develop their knowledge from themselves and their peers.

The study of Sardareha and Saad (2012) reflects that teachers can use classroom activities as a way for assessing students. Teachers need to use concept maps, debates, role-plays, presentations, drama instead of test to monitor students' learning. Observing these activities enable teachers to assess students in real situations while they are interacting with their peers inside classrooms.

In relation to this study, assessment in socio-cultural theory reflects clearly what differentiated assessment is about. Differentiated assessment is a formative,

continuous and dynamic process. It begins with implementing appropriate assessment strategies. Then, it aims at evaluating the applied strategies. After that, it requires re-planning them to best meet the needs of the students and fill the gap in their learning of the students. Moreover, differentiated assessments rely heavily on collaboration among students. In addition, it encourages working individual with the students to guarantee meeting their specific and varied needs.

2.2 Introduction to differentiated assessment

2.2.1 Definition of differentiated assessments

Different studies provide varied definitions for assessment. According to Stefanakis, Meier and Deborah (2010), assessment is an active process of working with the learner to collect useful data that aims at supporting students in their learning, improving teaching strategies and enhancing educational choices in classrooms (Stefanakis, Meier, & Deborah, 2010). Thus, such assessments evaluate teachers' practices, students' participation and products. Also, the booklet of *Facilitator's Guide – Assessment for Learning: Getting to the Core of Teaching and Learning* (2009) defines assessment as the practice of collecting information from different sources such as tasks, daily observations, student's performance, projects, displays and exams which mirror if students are meeting the intended outcomes of the lesson. Assessments should identify the current level of students. In addition, they need to stand at their strengths as well as areas of improvement. Furthermore, they should imply whether they have met the desired learning outcomes of the curriculum or not.

However, the definition of differentiated assessment is more comprehensive. Both Chapman and King (2005) define differentiated assessment as "an ongoing process through which teachers gather data before during, and after instruction from

multiple sources to identify learners' needs and strengths." They discussed the fact that assessments have to be differentiated according to the skills and knowledge of the students because students enjoy different capabilities regarding their pace of acquiring the knowledge and their way of learning.

As it is mentioned, differentiated assessments are continuous process of gathering information about students from different sources in order to test their skills and knowledge in some aspects of the curriculum. However, these assessments should be differentiated based on the ability, skills or the cultural backgrounds of the students. Differentiated assessments "combines the best of differentiation and assessment practices, using assessments designed for specific groups of learners. Assessments can vary by purpose, 'assessor' (i.e. teacher, student or peer), cognitive level, and modality (Burish, 2010)."

2.2.2 Traditional assessments and differentiated assessments contrasted

Different studies have tackled both the traditional and the differentiated assessments. Many of them have discussed the differences between the two types. Traditional assessments were defined as onetime-event that is one-dimensional and takes the form of short-answers, multiple choice and questions etc… (Dikli, 2003). On one hand, Frank, in his study, believed that the normal testing is the traditional form of assessment which most of the teachers are still using until now.

He argued that the main problem with these tests is that teachers need support in constructing a reliable test. Also, such assessments do not indicate the actual learning students have acquired at the end of the lesson. They focus on memorization that does not support students to reach their higher thinking skills (Frank, 2012). Such practices do not support or evaluate the 21st century skills. It is easier to collect data

and analyze them about students' achievement since one test is provided to all students. Predicting trends can easily be predicted (Dikli, 2003).

However, differentiated assessments were defined as knowing students' needs, reporting their development and evaluating teachers' performance and planning to the best practice that guarantees meeting students' needs (Frank, 2012). In contrast, differentiated assessments aimed at collecting information that indicates the exact learning students have got at the end of each lesson (Frank, 2012).

They enable students to obtain knowledge more deeply and connect their learning to real-life situations. Also, they require teachers to share the rubric and criteria of assessment before tasks. However, they need more time and effort to be effectively incorporated in classrooms. In addition, it is not easy to predict or analyze data about students' achievements since students do not get one type of assessment in such classrooms (Dikli, 2003). Differentiated assessment ensure fairness among students and this can be applied by differentiating the content and the method of assessment to them (Stobart, 2005).

2.2.3 Assessment in the second language

Assessments are tools aimed to help teachers understand the learning that was acquired by their students in the classrooms. Such assessments help teachers specify students' potentials and areas of improvements, examine students' development, and prepare proper planning for students (Educational Testing Services Organization, 2003). Hanckok (1994) discussed the importance of differentiated assessments in the second language. He believed that students' performance in the second language is based on the frequency of practicing the language, the aim and the context of using the language. Therefore, in order to increase the performance of the students in the second

language, teachers need to provide them with varied contexts that facilitate flexible assessment opportunities that best match their needs. Thus, differentiated assessments could be the real opportunity for students to get different assessments in a way that guarantees the development of their learning. This in return makes teachers rely on using different types of evidence to judge students' performance. In addition, having programs which use differentiated assessments may enable students to obtain lifelong skills that are important for their learning such as critical thinking (Hanckok, 1994).

The study of Pitoniak, Young, Martiniello, King and Buteux (2009) shows that there are different educational, language and cultural factors which affect assessment in the second language. English was chosen as a second language for the study. The difference in proficiency level in the second and native languages and the variance of students' linguist backgrounds are the main language factors. However, the exposure to standardized test in addition to the different schooling levels in the second and the native languages are the educational factors. On the other hand, the diversity of cultures in the country affects hugely the type of assessments that should be provided to students when studying a second language. Therefore, teachers should keep in mind these factors when planning their assessments. They also need to differentiate them based on them. Therefore, when teachers decide to design differentiated assessments for their students, should keep in mind the importance of these factors in order to meet the need of their students. As an example, they should not use reading paragraphs that might offend the culture of one of the students in the classroom.

The study of Tran (2012) discusses six important principles for a second language assessment. These principles constitute the pillars for developing assessments in the second language and they are washback, practicality, equivalency, validity, reliability and authenticity. To illustrate, washback refers to the impact of

assessments on teaching and learning. Therefore, assessments should enable teachers to measure their effectiveness on meeting the objectives of the lesson. If not, teachers need to modify their assessments to better meet the learning needs of their students. In relation to differentiated assessments, such a principle requires continuous adjustments of unrelated learning for the students. Also, assessments in the second language should be practical. Practicality refers to having available human and material resources for constructing and applying the assessments. In addition, assessments should be reliable and valid. For reliability, assessments should provide the same results when they are used in different occasions. Regarding validity, assessments are considered valid when they "measure only what it claims to measure (Tran, 2012)." However, equivalency and authenticity refers to the functionality of assessments. Assessments should be related curriculum standards and objectives. Moreover, they should be meaningful, interactive and related to real-life situations.

In relation to this study, the factors and principles of second language assessments should be incorporated in any differentiated assessment provided to students. They constitute the basic concepts of developing differentiated assessments in any classroom. Differentiated assessments should be valid and meet students' needs. They should reflect whether they meet the goals and objectives of lesson plans. Moreover, they should provide real-life context for students. As a result, this will enable teachers to better meet the individual learning needs of their students.

2.3 Strategies of differentiated assessment

Teachers use different differentiated assessment strategies in their classrooms. Peer-assessments, self-assessments, grouping, students' portfolios and teacher-student conferences are examples of differentiated assessments. The study of Almond and

Case (2004) focuses on the importance of differentiating assessments for students. They believe that teachers need to differentiate their assessments in order to guarantee providing students with high learning standards, ensure fairness and equality among students, explore students to higher thinking skills and alter assessments to meet students' diverse needs. In other words, teachers' practices should be tailored to involve all students and provide equal chances for them to be fairly assessed. It should be a normal practice adopted in every lesson. Differentiated assessment strategies include peer-assessment, self-assessment, student-teacher conferences, student portfolios, grouping, etc…

a. Student's portfolios

Student's portfolios are set of students' work collected in one document to reflect the performance of the students on a specific area, knowledge, skill that is based on high standards (Almond & Case, 2004). This process requires collecting evidences throughout the learning process to measure students' achievements (Davies & Mahieu, 2003). The collected information in these portfolios should vary from one student to another depending on their needs, level of learning and how well they represent their learning (Davies & Mahieu, 2003).

Students can present their portfolios in different ways such as formal conferences with the parents and teachers, preparing PowerPoint presentation for other students inside classrooms or any other way teachers' prefer. The main purpose of the presentation is to show evidences on the learning students gained in classrooms. However, teachers should set the criteria of assessment and asses the quality of students' evidences (Davies & Mahieu, 2003).

b. Grouping students

The study of Burish (2010) offers different strategies teachers can use in classrooms with their students as part of differentiated assessments. Burish explains that teachers need to differentiate their questions when they ask students to target all students' levels. He also suggests that it is better to put students in groups of different abilities. The teacher can group them according to their abilities, interest, learning profiles, randomly or their choice (Burish, 2010). Then, teachers can establish contracts with their students explaining to them that the aim of these activities is to enable them produce works independently. Also, they should clarify that they need to know what is expected from them, the skills they will gain and the goals they will achieve. The teacher guides and supervises students' works and interferes when necessary (Burish, 2010).

c. Peer-assessment

Juwah (2003) conducted a study about peer assessment to see the effectiveness of it on students' skills and abilities. His approach was to conduct an action research. His focus was to study the contribution of participants to the course assessments, discussions, tasks and coursework. He came to a conclusion that peer-assessment and learning are effective tools to enforce the progress of the needed abilities, skills and knowledge to support the learning. Moreover, the study showed that it supports the enhancement of self-assessment practices. In addition, he emphasized the importance of providing good quality of training to have good implementation of peer-assessment. The problem with Juwah study is that it did not cover in details the participants and the place of the study. In addition, there was no mention of any negative or disadvantage of using the peer-assessment.

Spiller is a researcher who discussed peer assessment. According to Spiller (2012), peer assessment occurs when students give their feedback or grade each others' work. However, this practice should be based on certain criteria defined by the teacher. Spiller (2012) explains the importance of asking peers or classmates to work together in providing feedback to each other. It is important because it allows teachers and students to examine what they have done so far (Spiller, 2012). It encourages collaboration among students. Furthermore, it enables students to use higher order thinking skills when they critique the work of each other. It supports students in recognizing and understanding the gaps and the mistakes that are in their works (Spiller, 2012).

He discusses the process of implementing peer assessment and the importance of preparing students to conduct peer assessments by practicing or using different activities which facilitate it such as encourage discussions among them (Spiller, 2012). In addition, assessment criteria should be crystal clear to students so that they know what to assess and why. It is required that it should be enforced when teachers and students trust each other. Exchanging notes, editing each other works, giving feedback or grading works are different types of peer assessment mentioned by Spiller. Teachers need to be aware of the fact that students' learning can be highly boosted when teachers provide students a thorough feedback on their assessments they provide to their peers (Gielen & Wever, 2015).

Bostak (2002) also discusses peer assessment and its advantages. He mentions some steps that may guarantee fairness in assessments. These steps includes sharing clear objectives with students, having assessments based on what is taught in the class, using varied measurements, supporting students in doing such assessments, interpreting results properly and assessing whether students have

achieved learning objectives or not. His study was conducted on 38 students who were assessed formatively using peer-assessment strategy. His findings show that peer assessment could be best managed using computer technology especially if teachers are dealing with a big number of students. Also, it is useful since it allows students to use their thinking skills and autonomy to give their mates productive feedback of their work.

d. Self-assessment

Self-assessment is another strategy teachers can use to differentiate their assessments. Nulty (2001) defines self-assessment as a tool used to develop students' critical thinking by providing them criteria for assessing their own work. It is a way for students to judge their work, know their strengths and areas of improvement. The report suggests that students can mark their work by themselves or they can agree upon certain criteria that will help them assess themselves based on the same criteria.

In his study, Ross (2006) discusses the importance of self-assessment on students. He believes that self-assessment helps students produce the same results in all assignments and tasks. It provides data about students' results that resembles to the knowledge teachers offer to students inside the class, and allows students identify their weaknesses. Moreover, it increases students' involvement. The main finding of his study is that the practice of self-assessment can be improved through regular training for students on how to assess properly (Ross, 2006). The good thing about his study is that he discusses the advantages and disadvantages of self-assessment. However, what he suggests is an ideal work that cannot be really

reliable and valid until teachers really take into account all the factors of preparing students to the assessment.

Furthermore, there are different steps to conduct any self-assessment. Firstly, students need to be prepared by doing such self-assessments as a normal practice in the classroom. This includes challenging students to use high order thinking skills and offering opportunities of practicing different types of self-assessments (Ministry of Education, 2007). After that, students need to learn the process of assessment which includes students' asking themselves the main questions about their learning, what they want to learn, and how to assess what they have learnt. The article encompasses how self-assessment can be useful in terms of enabling teachers to communicate with parents through giving them students' reports that shows students' assessing themselves. This will not work with teachers getting support from the leadership team. Providing teachers with data, enabling parents-teachers communications, teachers meetings all these are types of supports teachers can get to establish a good system of student self-assessment practices (Ministry of Education, 2007).

e. Teacher-student conferences

A teacher-student conference is another way of implementing differentiating assessments. Belk (2010) introduces this conferences as teachers spending certain amount of time with their students to help them develop personal goals or to support them academically. His work covers different types of conferences that can be held between teachers and students. One of them is teacher-centered conferences where teacher has the authority in the meeting, prepares the agenda and makes direct corrections to students' work. The other type is student-centered

conferences where the students themselves run their own agenda, lead what they are going to talk about and ask their questions. The article also discusses a third type of differentiating assessments known as the collaborative conference that is considered a middle ground between the previously mentioned two types. This type can be directed by the teacher or the student who both share the leadership which is based on situations and needs. According to this strategy, teachers need to tailor these conferences in a way that meets the individual need of each student. The focus of these conferences in addition to the feedback provided for each one of them will differ from one to another.

The study of Zhao and Lui (2007) compares recommendations provided by three non-native speaking English teachers and three native ones. The findings of this study show that teachers in such conferences should not be very strict with students in order to maintain a good relationship with their students. Also, it suggests that teachers should deliver the message directly to their students.

According to Rogers (2013) the Director of the English Department at Pennsylvania State University, student-teacher conferences are important because they support students to come up with ideas, arrange thoughts, learn specific skills and review previous work. This in return helps teachers monitor students' progress all the time. Teacher- student conferences enable teachers to recognize the gifted students and those of disabilities (Al-Hroub, 2008).

2.4 Teachers' perceptions on differentiated assessment

Teachers have different views about differentiated assessments. Some of them support the use of these assessments in their classrooms, others may not. Those who support using differentiated assessments can see the value of them to the learning of

their students. The study of Takahashi and Sato (2003) discusses the benefits of applying differentiated assessment in high school classes. The study was conducted on a public high school in Japan. It shows that when assessment is integrated with teaching, it will enable both teachers and students to take responsibilities on their learning (Takahashi & Sato, 2003). Also, the study presents the facts that it is important to maintain the interactive process in teaching and learning knowing that these assessments are important in terms of changing the classroom culture into a positive one in order to create attractive learning environments. In addition, this study changes teachers' conception about differentiated assessment to recognize the significance of this assessment in increasing student's collaborations and meeting the diverse needs of different students.

Furthermore, the study of Benjamin and Lomofsky (2002) also perceives teachers' views on differentiated assessment. The study has been implemented in two schools in Cape Town. The result of the study indicates that teachers has more positive attitude toward differentiated assessment. They believe it is an effective tool to support the learning of the students and enhance the restrictions of using summative assessments and testing especially with low performing students.

The study of Dowrich (2008) shows that teachers are aware of the importance of using continuous assessments as effective tools in developing students' learning. They also believe it is important for using these assessments for reforming the educational system from being static to dynamic. However, they expressed their concerns that they may not be fully ready to implement continuous assessments yet in their classrooms since they need to be well trained on the best strategies for implementation.

The study of Susuwele-Banda (2005) shows that it is important to study the perceptions of teachers in using assessments since it reflects the real strategies teachers use in their classroom. Also, it reflects teachers' understanding of assessments and explains their behaviors. The study explains that teachers who incorporate differentiated assessments to their lessons have a bigger opportunity to understand students' individual learning. It also shows that these assessments help teachers to know what skills their students need to develop in classrooms. However, they believe that such assessments require extra time for application in comparison to regular testing.

2.5 Relationship between differentiated assessment and differentiated instruction

Differentiated assessments cannot be separated from differentiated instruction. They go hand in hand with each other and must be closely interrelated. In his contribution, Wormeli (2006) states that differentiated assessments inform differentiated instruction, as differentiated instruction leads to differentiated assessments. Differentiated assessment provides detailed information about students' strengths and weaknesses. However, differentiated instruction means that students need to work to achieve the same objectives but in different ways and methods (Woemeli, 2006).

In order for teachers to differentiate their assessments or instruction, they need to know their students first. According the Ministry of Education at Ontario, Canada (2011) the powerful planning of any lesson begins with teachers knowing the students. The report suggests certain steps that would help teachers know their students. First, teachers can collect data about their students from parents, social workers or students themselves. Next, teachers need to analyze collected information and data in order to

develop a comprehensive understanding about the student in terms of strengths, weakness and needs. Then, teachers can develop plans that fit into students' needs and abilities. These plans should include strategies that will enable students to achieve better. Differentiated assessments require following high standards with all students despite their academic achievement (Stefanakis, 2010). Therefore, "designing appropriate and varied assessment activities is thus imperative to good learning and teaching (Koshy, 2013)." As a result this will motivate students to learn and achieve the targeted objectives and learning outcomes.

2.6 The relationship between students' performance and differentiated assessments

Differentiated assessment can affect students' achievement. Usually, students respond differently to assessments. According to Tomlinson and McTighe (2006) "Assessment becomes responsive when students are given appropriate options for demonstrating knowledge, skill, and understanding." This reflects the importance of giving students different options and a variety of assessments that matches their needs and abilities. Students can be reflected in their engagement. Students' productivity increases when they are more engaged. Differentiated assessments increase the engagement of the students when they understand "the quality of their work and how they will be assessed (Jones, 2009)."

Moreover, differentiated assessment increases students' motivation, this is stated clearly in the Oshawa Central Collegiate Institute report that has been done by a group of teachers (Lepine, et al., 2010). The report studied applying differentiated assessments on certain classes accompanied with differentiated instruction. Students and teachers were surveyed and interviewed for the purpose of the study. The main aim of the study was to identify the effect of differentiated assessment on students'

achievement and engagement. The study shows that these assessments create positive classroom atmosphere and increase positive students' attitude toward learning. In addition, such assessments give teachers appropriate data that inform their planning (Lepine, et al., 2010). The report shows that the increase in students' achievement is due to students' knowing their strengths and areas of improvement. The effect of differentiated assessments is shown in improving students' difficulties (Lepine, et al., 2010).

2.7 The place of differentiated assessments within ADEC schools

ADEC adopts variety of strategies in its attempt to assess the progress in students' attainment. It implements national and international assessment procedures to stand at the actual levels of students' achievement and to adjust the instructional practices accordingly.

According to ADEC Policy Manual (2014), ADEC initiates Continuous Assessment as the basic tool for assessment. Students should be evaluated in a continuous manner throughout the whole trimester. This process must meet the diverse levels of students to facilitate their evaluation and to cope with differentiated instruction and assessment. Pupils are assessed individually, in pair and in groups according to the previously determined instructional learning outcomes. It is an obligatory step that every teacher needs to start every trimester with a placement or diagnostic test followed by analysis to determine the points of weakness and strength of his students and to be able to measure their progress during their course of study. ADEC also requires teachers to apply differentiated assessment tools like asking individual students to prepare some portfolios, reports or research studies to judge their command of certain subject matters, assess their understanding and measure students'

progress in their performance. Joining interviews is another assessment technique teachers make best use of while differentiating assessment or instruction (ADEC Policy Manual, 2014).

It is ADEC's policy to consider assessment as part of instruction. It is meant to supplement the instructional process adjusting planning and teaching based on comparative and contrastive analysis of assessment results. The study of BuchlerEden (2012) reflects how ADEC insists on using assessments as a way to inform teaching and learning not only evaluating the performance of the students. Also, they help in planning the needed learning experiences to students.

In addition, daily, weekly and monthly exams as well as drop quizzes are used frequently by teachers of ADEC in order to evaluate the performance of their students as planned in advance and previously. Peer-assessment is widely adopted to help students assess each others' work and reinforce collaborative learning and assessment. ADEC encourages teachers to use their own external work and activities as means of assessment. For example, teachers are advised to make students prepare some displays like charts, wallsheets or posters to check their progress and learning outcomes attainment. Such products represent their achievement of the desired instructional objectives. Moreover, ADEC calls for reinforcing the role of parental involvement while preparing these products which reflect what their children have learnt and achieved. This is due to the fact that parents have an important role in developing the learning of their students (Plessis, Prouty, Schubert, Habib & George, 2003). Also, according to the ADEC Policy Manual (2014), a report is sent regularly to parents to keep them updated with the achievement of their students. All supervisors as well as cluster managers who visit schools insist on using the method of making final products to assess students' learning. Different training courses, sessions, and workshops are

implemented to help teachers improve their assessment techniques, especially newly adopted ones like differentiated assessments and final product assessment technique.

Likewise, ADEC adopts international standards in its endeavor to implement a successful assessment policy that measures the real progress of students' attainment and stands at their varied levels during assessment. For example, ADEC implements at the end of the second trimester EMSA exam to check the progress in students' attainment. The results are analyzed to help teachers adjust their planning and instruction according to the given results. A comparative analysis of the results of different years is initiated to have a global look at the performance of students and their attainment in chronological order. This technique helps teachers and curriculum designers to initiate successful instruction and identify appropriate learning outcomes that would cope with result analysis of students.

Thus, assessment is considered as part of instruction. Different techniques are implemented to measure students' attainment and progress. Result analysis are continuously studied to enhance planning and instruction. Assessment is a continuous process that involves a variety of techniques to meet the diverse needs and levels of students and to cope with ADEC's endeavor and tendency to initiate and apply differentiated instruction and assessment.

2.8 Challenges of applying differentiated assessments

There are some challenges which hinder the implementing differentiated assessments in classrooms. The main challenge is the time. The preparation and the implementation of differentiated assessments require more time. This could be a challenge. Teachers need "more time to initiate these collaborative, creative assessments practices in their classrooms (Moore, Iafrate, Neligan, & Lamy, 2010)."

In addition, students need to be motivated to do these assessments (O'Connor & McTighe, 2005). This can be done if the provided assessments are clear, related to their learning and if they feel that they will achieve the expected goals. Classroom sizes can be an obstacle in some school.

2.9 Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter reviews some of the literature that tackles the effects of differentiated assessments on students' achievement. It covers different aspects such as introduction about differentiated assessments, strategies of differentiated assessments, peer assessment, self-assessment and teacher-student conferences. In addition, it covers the relationship between differentiated assessment and differentiated instruction. Moreover, it discusses the effect of differentiated assessment on students' achievement. All assessment strategies could be of a good use if teachers know when and how to use them appropriately. Using more than one strategy in assessing students may help teachers to be fair in providing students with appropriate assessment regardless of their levels and backgrounds.

The researcher agrees with what is provided earlier. She believes that clear framework of differentiated assessment should be provided to guide teacher to better apply differentiated assessment in classrooms. Following the best international practices and a clear guidelines provided by ADEC will enable teachers to implement these assessment in a professional and valuable way.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of English teachers toward differentiated assessments in Cycle 2 at Al Ain public schools. Also, the study will identify how differentiated assessments inform teaching and learning. This chapter aims at explaining the research design, instrumentation, validity and reliability, site, population, participants, data collection and analysis, and the ethical consideration. The researcher used a mixed approach in conducting the study and aimed to answer the following questions:

- What are the perceptions of English teachers toward differentiated assessments?

- What type of differentiated assessment strategies do teachers use in their classes?

- How do differentiated assessments inform teachers to enhance teaching and learning?

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used a mixed approach in conducting the study. A mixture of qualitative and quantitative research designs was applied. For the quantitative design, the researcher mainly used one main tool which was the questionnaire. The main purpose of choosing such a design was the fact that it is easier to ask teachers in schools to fill in questionnaires due to the fact that they are busy and have classes to teach. Moreover, questionnaires allow teachers to have more time in considering their responses.

The researcher used the interviews as a tool for the qualitative design. The researcher interviewed different teachers to get detailed information and data about the differentiated assessments. It supported the researcher to understand the story behind teachers' experiences and get more information that the questionnaires did not provide. The detailed data obtained from the interviews supported the findings of the questionnaires.

3.3 Instrumentation

3.3.1 Questionnaire

The researcher used a questionnaire as a quantitative instrument and conducted interviews as a qualitative instrument. The researcher decided to use a 5 Likert-scale questionnaire. It was first written by the researcher. Then, it was given to her supervisor for several revisions and edits. When the final version was approved by the supervisor, the questionnaire was shared with eleven referees to provide their feedback on the quality of the questionnaire, to what extent it meets the research questions and if the questions need further changes and amendments. The researcher received different comments such as adding more items, correcting spelling mistakes, and changing the order of the items. The researcher took into considerations all the comments. All spelling mistakes were corrected. In addition, the new suggested items were added by the researcher. She believed that referees feedback increased the validity of the questionnaire and made it more trustworthy.

The questionnaire started by giving the general purposes of conducting it. Then, it ensured the confidentiality of information provided by teachers. After that, it moved to the demographic information of teachers such as their gender, native language and their years of experiences. After that, it was divided into three main

sections each one of them represents one of the research questions. The options available for each item were 5= strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree. The divisions were presented as the following:

a. Perception of teachers toward differentiated assessments: this section encompassed 17 items which reflect assessment practices teachers use in their classes. Teachers' responses supported the researcher to formulate a clear picture of their perceptions toward differentiated assessments.

b. Differentiated assessments strategies: this section consisted of 10 items which gave the researcher an idea on the main beliefs teachers have about differentiated assessments and its difficulty in application, preparation and feedback.

c. Differentiated assessments enhance teaching and learning: this section included 10 items which tackled how teachers perceived the effectiveness of differentiated assessments in enhancing teaching and learning. It gave an idea on knowing teachers' opinions and perceptions about the usefulness and the effectiveness of using differentiated assessment in classrooms. In addition to the outcomes of using such assessments in the learning cycle.

3.3.2 Semi- Structured Interviews

As for the qualitative instrument, the researcher employed semi-structured interviews (see appendix E). 16 teachers of different schools were interviewed. This type of interviews engaged both the researcher and the participants in a formal setting. It enabled the researcher to get authentic data that can easily be used to support the results of the quantitative data. This enabled her to cover all the topics that she was unable to collect from the questionnaire (Cohen, 2006). When developing the

questions, the researcher aimed at answering the three main questions of the research. Teachers were interviewed at their schools to better manage their times. The length of the interviews varied from one teacher to another but mainly they lasted from 30 to 45 minutes. The timing of the interview was chosen based on the teachers' convenience; however, they all were during the working hours of the teachers. The researcher made her questions simple and clear. She aimed to allow teachers to give answers comfortably and using terms from their daily teaching life. She kept taking notes during the interviews in order to make sure that she did not miss any important information that might support the findings of the research.

Each teacher was interviewed separately. The researcher started the interview by welcoming the teacher and thanking them for participating in the study. Then, she briefed the teacher about the research study. After that, she asked the teacher to sign a consent form that was adopted from Stanford University. However, it was modified to meet the requirements of this study (appendix D). She showed her welling to clarify any point. Each teacher was given a code which is a number to ensure confidentiality to the participants.

The interview consisted of 10 main questions (see appendix E). These questions evolved around three main research questions of the study. These questions investigated teachers' understanding of differentiated assessments, current differentiated assessment strategies, challenges of implementation, stakeholder's support, means of improvement, reinforcement of 21st century skills, the relationship between differentiated assessments and instructional strategies, assessing English language skills using differentiated assessment techniques, used resources, professional development sessions.

3.4 Validity and reliability

3.4.1 Questionnaire

With respect to the validity of the quantitative approach of the study, eleven referees were asked to assess the validity of the questionnaire. Nine of them were professors at the United Arab Emirates University who are specialized in Education. The other two were supervisors from ADEC. The reason for having them review the questionnaire was to see if the questions support the researcher to obtain the required information that will answer the research questions. In addition, their reviews help the researcher edit the technicality and the layout of the questions such as using small or capital letters. Moreover, some of them suggested removing and adding some questions and editing others linguistically. After collecting their feedback, the researcher made the necessary changes and finalized the questionnaire. Then, the final version was ready to be published.

In order to measure the reliability of the questionnaire, the researcher decided to use the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. For any questionnaire to be reliable, the results of the reliability analysis which is the Crobach's Alpha should be above 0.7 (Field, 2005). As for the reliability of the research questionnaire, the results from the SPSS showed that the reliability analysis of the Crobach's Alpha was 0.94. This number is higher than 0.7. Therefore, this meant that the questionnaire was very reliable. The reliability was measured for each research questions and each showed that the questions are reliable.

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interview

With regards to the validity of the qualitative data, questions were developed by the researcher. It was reviewed by the supervisor. Different edits and versions were

developed to reach one preferred version of the questions. After that, the questions were given to 8 professors to assess the validity of the content through evaluating the items and whether they support the collection of the required findings. Also, the researcher followed the guidelines of structuring the semi-structured interviews by Cohen and Crabtree 2006 "Qualitative Research Guidelines Project". These guidelines gave a general framework to the researcher on how to ensure the validity of the questions.

However, with regard to the reliability of the qualitative approach, the interviews should be reliable when the results are trustworthy (Golafshani,2003). Therefore, ensuring trustworthiness of the meaning, in addition to the correct interpretation of the results increased the reliability of the qualitative results. By using the questionnaire and the interview, the researcher was able to integrate the findings and drew the results qualitatively not only quantitatively. She was able to gather authentic, reliable, varied and detailed data from the participants. The researcher used an inter-rater who guided her in the steps that she needs in her analysis. Also, his role was to help her avoid bias. She compared her results with his results and realized that her results are reliable.

3.5 Site

The study was conducted at Cycle two of Al Ain public schools. Schools were selected by the simple random sampling method. Schools were selected from the list of the cycle two schools in Al Ain. The targeted schools were both male and female ones.

3.6 Population

According to ADEC's Research center, Al Ain has 107 public schools (35 male and 29 female schools). However, the total number of cycle two schools in Al Ain is 17 schools (6 males and 11 females). The total number of teachers in these schools is around 870 teachers (306 male teachers and 546 female teachers).

3.7 Participants

The participant of the study were English Teachers of Cycle two at Al Ain public schools 182 teachers for the questionnaire and 16 teachers for the interview. The English teachers who participated in the questionnaire were from different cultures and have different experiences. Some of them were English native teachers (105 teachers), 68 were Arabs and 2 from other origins. Their experiences varied from one to another. The questionnaire showed that 61 of them had teaching experience of less than 10 years and 116 had teaching experience of more than 10 years. Therefore, once schools were contacted and voluntary accepted to participate, all their English teachers in those schools were invited to participate in the questionnaire. 16 teachers who participated in the questionnaire were asked to participate in the interview. They were chosen due to their availability. Six of them were English native teachers and the rest were Arabs.

3.8 Data collection

In order to distribute the questionnaire to the schools, the researcher had to get permission from ADEC to allow her enter the schools and get the required data. An Electronic form has been submitted electronically and she had to wait for getting the approval. The researcher was able to get the permission three weeks later. Once the permission was received, the researcher prepared 210 questionnaires to be distributed

in schools; only 182 of them were received back (84 of them were from male schools and 98 from female schools). The beginning of the questionnaire required some demographic information from the responders such as the grade they teach, their experiences, first language and the gender. The process of the distribution was as the following. First of all, the researcher had some teachers in many schools. She asked them for their help in distributing and collecting the questionnaires especially in the schools that are far away from the city.

Those contacts were teachers from different schools took the initiative to distribute and collect the questionnaires at their schools and give them back to the researcher. Once the participants of those schools confirmed that they have finished completing the questionnaires, those contacts collected and sent the questionnaires to the researchers. Mainly, the researcher put a timeframe of one week for each school to finish the questionnaire. She confirmed to the teachers that their participation is voluntary and they can fill it out on their convenience. Some schools had requested more time, so they were given one more week to finish the questionnaires. However, the data from the interview were recorded in notes that were used for analysis. Teachers who accepted to participate in the interviews were interviewed in their schools and time was chosen according to their convenience.

3.9 Data analysis

As for the questionnaire, the data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed through SPSS program. This had been done in order to obtain descriptive statistics for the research. The researcher decided to use descriptive statistics because it enabled her to sample, analyze and summarize multiple data in a simple way. The target was to obtain data about the mean, standard deviation, and the rank of the questionnaire's

results. The main purpose of obtaining such information was to answer the research questions.

With regard to the interview, the researcher was able to analyze data following the Grounded Theory which entails the Theoretical Sampling. Theoretical Sampling refers to "the initial data collection and analysis leads to subsequent data collection and analysis (Cho & Lee, 2014)." In other words, the researcher should be clear enough with the analyses of the data which would enable them to know how to go forward with the obtained results.

Therefore, the researcher analyzed the data using different stages. First of all, she reviewed all the notes and the written responses of the participant carefully. Then, she transcribed the interviews. After that, she used Microsoft Office Word to add the answers and annotate them to organize her themes. This preferred to use this method since it was simple and focus. She focused on the meaning. The main and common themes were considered. The researcher highlighted the repeated words and focused on the common trends in the answers. She used a table to highlight the most important themes (appendix F). Quotes inserted in this table represented the common answers that were given by the participants while answering the questions. Participants were given codes from 1 to 16.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

The research methodology aimed at protecting the participants from any physical or emotional harm. Therefore, it was written at the beginning of the questionnaire that the researcher will preserve the confidentiality of the names of the participants. They were assured that they can leave any questions they are not comfortable with. The researcher also explained in the questionnaire that she will not

share the data with anyone and all collected data will be written in general. Also, teachers were asked to join the study willingly without any force to prevent abuse. For the interviews, the teachers were asked to sign the consent form which ensured them the confidentiality of their information. It protects their rights of being anonymous and to end the interviews once they did not feel comfortable.

3.11 Conclusion

In conclusion, the purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology that was used to conduct the study. It explained the research design, instrumentation, validity and reliability, site, population, participants, data collection and analysis, and the ethical consideration the researcher had used to conduct the study. The researcher used a mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative methods. Interviews were conducted with teachers as a qualitative approach and questionnaires were distributed for the quantitative data.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter represents the findings of the quantitative and qualitative approaches of this research study. A questionnaire and interviews were developed and conducted to investigate the research questions. The main goal of those instruments was to be processed in response to the main questions of the research. This chapter highlighted the main results the researcher had found after collecting the date. The results formed a base knowledge about the perceptions of the teachers toward differentiated assessments, differentiated assessments strategies and their impact on teaching and learning.

4.1 Results of the questionnaire

4.1.1 What are the perceptions of English teachers toward differentiated assessments?

With reference to table 1, results show that the total mean for question one was 2.01. The highest mean was 3.16 which meant that most of the teachers agreed that differentiated assessments might not be welcomed by parents (M= 3.16, SD= 1.3). The lowest mean was for item one which was differentiated assessments help teachers examine students' development (M= 1.41, SD= 0.55). Many teachers perceived that differentiated assessments enhance students' thinking skills, support individual differences and require extra resources and varied environments (M= 1.7). In addition, many teachers believed that differentiated assessments help in figuring out students with learning difficulties by scoring a high mean (M= 2.01, SD= 1.05). There was a little support to the argument that differentiated assessments help in paying attention to issues such as diversity and fairness (M= 1.66, SD= 0.69).

In contrast, many teachers believed that differentiated assessments need more time for implementation and extra work from teachers with equal means (M = 2.4, SD= 1.3, 1.4 consecutively). A surprising result was that not many teachers believe that they need to get a training to be able to implement differentiated assessments in classrooms (M= 1.9, SD= 1.13). Another interesting result was that the researcher had expected teachers to support the argument that differentiated assessments help in examining students' progress. However, this item has recorded a low mean score (M= 1.6, SD = 0.75).

Table 1: Perceptions of English teachers toward differentiated assessments

Items	Mean	SD	Rank	Number
helps teachers examine students' development.	1.41	0.55	17	182
helps in paying attention to some issues such as fairness and diversity.	1.66	0.69	16	182
stimulates students' thinking.	1.79	0.73	12	181
supports dealing with individual differences.	1.70	0.79	14	180
reflects students' experiences in learning.	2.01	0.91	8	182
increases students collaboration.	2.13	1.05	6	182
provides sufficient time for students to think and reflect.	2.28	1.05	5	182
allows students to share and discuss ideas.	2.30	1.12	4	181
provides feedback to students once they finish tasks.	2.11	1.04	7	182
helps in identifying students with learning difficulties.	2.00	1.05	9	181
creates student-centered lessons.	1.92	0.99	10	182
examines students' progress.	1.67	0.75	15	182
demands more time for actual implementation.	2.46	1.37	2	182
needs more work from teachers.	2.44	1.44	3	182
may not be welcomed by parents.	3.16	1.32	1	182
requires extra resources and better classroom environments.	1.71	1.02	13	181
requires teachers to be well-trained to apply it appropriately.	1.91	1.13	11	180
Total	**2.01**	**0.72**		

4.1.2 What type of differentiated assessment strategies teachers use in their classes?

The purpose of the items presented in this part was to define the most preferable differentiated assessment strategies teachers were using in their classrooms. Mainly, most of the results scored very close mean results around 2. With reference to table 2, results show that the total mean of all items was 2.19. Teachers agreed that the most usable differentiated assessment strategy was using Edmodo program as an online assessment for students (M = 2.3, SD = 1.2), and this represented the highest mean in the table. However, the lowest mean was scored for using projects as an assessment for students (M = 1.8, SD = 0.9).

Teachers believed that using displays to measure academic achievements and observation techniques to assess students' engagement had the same importance since they both recorded the same mean (M=2.04). An interesting result was that a high mean was scored for using standardized tests as differentiated assessments tool (M = 2.1, SD = 1.16). Peer assessment had really recorded a high score for the mean (M = 2.2, SD = 1.12). Teachers didn't believe that using different quizzes to evaluate students' understanding was a good strategy of differentiated assessments (M = 2.08, SD = 1.14).

Table 2: Types of differentiated assessment strategies teachers use in their classes

Items	Mean	SD	Rank	Number
peer assessment to test students' oral skills.	2.27	1.12	2	180
observation techniques to assess students' engagement.	2.04	1.05	9	181
classroom presentations to assess students' performance.	2.15	1.16	5	180
different quizzes to evaluate students' understanding .	2.08	1.14	7	180
self-assessment strategies to enhance students' self-confidence.	2.22	1.05	3	180
students-teacher conferences to provide students with detailed feedback.	2.11	1.00	6	181
standardized tests such as EMSA to measure students' learning.	2.18	1.16	4	180
projects to assess learning outcomes.	1.85	0.97	10	181
displays to measure academic achievements.	2.04	1.06	8	180
online assessments such as Edmodo to monitor students' progress individually.	2.30	1.20	1	181
Total	**2.19**	**0.77**		

4.1.3 How do differentiated assessments may inform teachers to enhance teaching and learning?

With reference to table 3, the total mean score for this question was 2.01. Results show that differentiated assessments enable teachers to create attractive classroom environments (M = 2.2, SD= 1.1) which has got the highest mean. However, the lowest mean score was for modifying teaching strategies and techniques (M = 1.8, SD = 0.93). The results showed that many teachers agreed that reviewing lesson plans and teaching strategies, setting new goals to meet students' needs, planning remedial techniques and activities and reflecting on students' performance shared the same importance in enhancing teaching strategies (M = 1.9); although the researcher expected that these items will rank a higher mean score. Many teachers also believed that differentiated assessments play a major role in supporting teachers to maintain better classroom management (M= 2.09, SD = 1.02). They also believed that

differentiated assessments do not support them to re-plan their lesson plans and modify the desired learning outcomes (M = 1.8, SD = 0.9).

Table 3: How differentiated assessments may inform teachers to enhance teaching and learning

Items	Mean	SD	Rank	Number
review lesson plans and teaching strategies.	1.90	0.88	8	181
re-plan some lessons to modify the desired learning outcomes.	1.83	0.93	9	180
modify teaching strategies and techniques.	1.82	0.93	10	181
set new goals to meet students' needs	1.95	0.98	6	180
plan remedial techniques and activities.	1.95	1.07	5	181
reflect on students' performance.	1.91	0.98	7	181
create attractive classroom environment.	2.20	1.11	1	181
maintain better classroom management.	2.09	1.02	2	181
decide on appropriate types of assessment methods.	2.07	0.99	3	181
initiate appropriate collaborative learning through group and pair work.	2.00	0.98	4	181
Total	**2.01**	**0.74**		

4.2 Results of the semi-structured interview

The researcher conducted interviews with 16 teachers. They were given a consent form to sign and a brief about the study. The main goal of choosing this type of interviews was to give the participants a chance to elaborate on their responses in comparison to the questionnaire. The researcher transcribed all the responses and 10 main themes were noticed in the results. Those themes covered the three main research questions in addition the most important topics that evolved around differentiated assessments such as: understanding of differentiated assessment, current differentiated

assessment strategies, challenges of implementation, stakeholder's support, means of improvement, reinforcement of 21st century skills, the relationship between differentiated assessments and instructional strategies, assessing English language skills using differentiated assessment techniques, used resources, professional development sessions. The following results were found:

Questions 1: What is your own definition of differentiated assessment?

With regards to the first question in the interview on checking how teachers define differentiated assessments, the following theme was found:

Theme 1: mutual understanding of differentiated assessment

The results showed that there is a common understanding among teachers regarding the differentiated assessments. Teachers believed that differentiated assessment is a process of assessing students considering their individual differences, varied needs and cognitive abilities. For example, Teacher 1 said that "Differentiated assessment is a process whereby students are assessed in the same skill using tools geared to meet individual differences; different difficulty levels." In addition, Teacher 5 believed that differentiated assessment is "a mean of finding out how each student in your classroom learn best. It is a way to discover the best learning abilities of your students to choose the best learning style for them." These assessments required teachers to identify the best instructional strategies that best meet the targeted objectives. Teachers in their responses discussed how differentiated assessments support them to assess students' language skills in terms of fluency and accuracy. To illustrate, Teacher 9 discussed how differentiated assessments supports "evaluating students depending on their language skills using different types of activities."

As an overall trend, teachers believed that using differentiated assessment is crucial to the learning of the students and ensuring fairness in providing students with fair assessments that guarantees meeting their education and learning needs.

Question 2: what are the current differentiated assessment strategies do you use in your classroom?

This question aimed at investigating the current assessment strategies teachers are using as differentiated assessment in their classroom. In response to this question, one theme gave rise as the below:

Theme 2: differentiated assessments and the current assessment strategies

Teachers mentioned different assessment strategies they were using with their students. They focused on saying that the idea was not to use many assessment tools with the students. However, the focus was to use assessment strategies that would meet students' levels and needs to enhance their performance in the classroom. Their responses showed that the commonly used differentiated assessment tools were Edmodo program, peer assessments, interviews with the teachers and students' portfolios. Teacher 14 believed that "Portfolios, Edmodo, exams, observation techniques, interviews, final products, presentation, oral, written and listening tasks and displays are some strategies." Teachers emphasized that it is not necessary to use all these strategies at once. Teacher should use what best enabled them meet the targets of their lessons and meet the varied needs of the students. Teacher 3 revealed that "the use of peer to peer sharing, modification, and the inclusion of technological variation in lesson implementation are but a few of differentiated strategies."

Teachers elaborated that they need to know their students first to be able to determine the best strategies that would work well with them. That would enable them

to verify the accurate needs of their students to identify the way forward. Moreover, using online software or application with the students was apriority for the teachers. Teacher 1 said "I use an online platform "schoology" which enables me to choose the difficulty level of different groups of students. I usually assign four different versions of the test."

Question 3: what challenges do you face while implementing differentiated assessment?

The researcher aimed at identifying the main obstacles that may hinder the implementation of differentiated assessment properly in schools. In response to this question one theme was found:

Theme 3: differentiated assessments and challenges of implementation

Almost all of interview participants agreed that they face challenges while implementing differentiated assessments in classrooms. The most dominant challenge was the time. The all agreed that the application of differentiated assessments in classrooms required more time than the 45 minutes of a normal classroom time. Teacher 2 believed that "time spent on differentiated activities – requires sufficient amount of time to explain, implement, assess and provide feedback." He also believed that time can be saved if schools assign a admin assistant or teacher assistant who can do some of the preparation work to allow the teacher to focus on doing the actual assessment. However, classroom timing should be expanded to allow teachers apply these assessments appropriately. In addition, some teachers believed that there are other obstacles for the proper application of differentiated assessments. Teacher 3has summarized them into "classroom size, language barrier, lack of potential support, special needs consideration and overall motivation of students." To illustrate, teachers believed that some schools had small classrooms that do not support using different

assessment stations with students. That also hindered grouping students according to their levels. Moreover, many teachers believed that students are not motivated or interested in doing these assessments. They prefer the traditional way of assessment. Also, many teachers did not have sufficient knowledge. Teacher 4 believed that "more knowledge is needed and students' cooperation."

Question 4: what support do you get from stakeholders for implementing differentiated assessment?

In response to this interview question, the following theme arose:

Theme 4: differentiated assessment and stakeholders' support

All teachers showed their disappointment with the lack of support they need to implement differentiated assessment in classrooms. They discussed that they need different types of support such as trainings, human resources and exchanging knowledge with peers. Those were the most important points mentioned by teachers. Teacher 6 explained that they have only some resources, however, "I have to do everything on my own. We need a special person to handle data. Also, we need assistant." In addition, Teacher 8 said that they need more support in terms of "trainings, workshops, video conferences and peer visits feedbacks." Those will dramatically support the right implementation of differentiated assessment in their classrooms.

Teacher 10 elaborated that they need to get training on "how and when to initiate appropriate differentiated assessment that include the four skills of English language; such as assessing pupils' progress in such skills and analyze data and forming learning outcomes based on such analysis." Therefore, teachers believed that

without the above mentioned support, they would not be able to apply differentiated assessment in a proper way.

Question 5: how can teachers improve the use of differentiated assessments in their instructional practices?

In response to the fifth question in the interview, which focus on the things teachers do to enhance the application of differentiated assessment in their instructions, the following theme gave arise:

Theme 5: differentiated assessment and the means of improvement

Teachers reflected in their responses that the most important pillar for improving differentiated assessment to enhance instruction was the good planning. Teacher 13 said that in order to have good planning, teachers need to "develop plans based on analyzing the results of differentiated assessments to stand at pupil's needs, demands and abilities to improve them." Teacher 14 also supported the same argument. He believed that "using the results of the differentiated assessment analysis in guiding them to plan well and teach better." Moreover, teacher 11 said that teachers can improve their differentiated assessment by "sharing their experiences and conducting classroom observations." Teachers who teach the same grade level, might cooperate together to ease the process on them.

Question 6: How can teachers reinforce 21st century skills (such as critical thinking, problem solving, global citizenship, applied knowledge and communication) through appropriate implementation of differentiated assessment?

With regards to the sixth interview questions, the following theme was discussed:

Theme 6: differentiated assessment and the reinforcement of 21st century skills.

Although focusing on the 21st century skills was one of ADEC requirements as the researcher had discussed earlier in chapter two, many teachers believed it was very critical to reinforce these skills through differentiated assessments. Teacher 12 believed the reinforcement can be applied by "including such skills in their daily lesson plans, then set up tasks to evaluate pupils' progress in such skills, one by one through varied tasks." Therefore, having excellent plans with smart objectives can achieve this goal. Also, Teacher 13 explained that they "can focus on these skills in their daily instruction. Then, they can decide upon the best ways to measure pupil's progress in these skills." To elaborate, teachers can focus their assessment in investigating the mastery of students to these skills. Moreover, they can create their assessments based on these skills. For example, "problem solving was a great example on assessing students' oral skills", said Teacher 16.

Question 7: what is the relationship between your teaching and the differentiated assessment strategies you use in your classroom?

The researcher aimed at investigating teachers' understanding of the relationship between differentiated assessment and instruction. The following theme gave arise:

Theme 7: differentiated assessment and its relation to differentiated instruction

The 16 participants agreed that the relationship between differentiated assessment and instruction was interrelated. Both of them fed each other. The results teachers got form these assessments could be analyzed and used for planning instruction in the best way to meet students' need. They could be considered as diagnosis to alter the new learning to ensure good quality learning for the students. Teacher 16 supported this argument and said "we cannot initiate appropriate

instructional strategies without standing at the diverse levels and needs of students which can be obtained through this type of assessment." The nature of this relationship made it clear that differentiated assessment is not only a summative assessment. It is an informative assessment which support in feeding the instructional practices in a way the guarantee efficiency of teaching and learning.

Teacher 4 believed that "differentiated assessment was a perquisite for appropriate instructional strategies." "Teacher performs different styles of teaching according to the students' learning style this leads to diverse assessment", said Teacher 7. This way of teaching made the lesson student-centered where students could have some control over their learning. Therefore, teachers' role was limited to be a facilitator of students' learning. The inclusion of differentiating assessments and instruction would result in providing students with a learning of their interest.

Question 8: How do you implement differentiated assessment in assessing English language skills such as reading, writing, listening, speaking?

The following theme arose when analyzing the implementation of differentiated assessments in assessing English language skills:

Theme 8: differentiated assessment and the assessment of English language skills

The responses of the teachers showed that differentiated assessments supported them in assessing the English language skills. However, the application differed from one teacher to another. For example, Teacher 15 said "I asses the varied levels of students' skills individually through tests or task completion. Next, I adjust my goals and practices according to pupils needs taking into consideration their strengths and weaknesses." Moreover, Teacher 13 used a different approach "I make a test to have knowledge of my pupils' levels and make a test to have knowledge of my pupil's levels

of such skills. Then, I design objectives and learning outcomes. I implement instructional practices. Then I evaluate students' progress as a whole and individually to make a comparison between the findings."

In other words, teachers showed that they use differ techniques such as question bank, adjustments of writing outcomes to accommodate low achievers, the use of modified questions and texts to match students' levels, the use of illustration, the inclusion of various literacy points of view, using varied online assessment tools, the use of leveled reading passages in reading, etc… Those were some of the strategies teachers use to assess the language skills.

Question 9: What resources do you use to get more information about differentiated assessment strategies?

In response to this interview questions, the following theme appeared:

Theme 9: differentiated assessments and the used resources

Technology and the internet have recorded the highest score as resources for getting information on differentiated assessments. According to Teacher 9, he said that "I use the internet a lot. I go to English language websites and use resources available by ADEC." However, Teacher 10 said that he preferred "reading books, articles or essays related to this, workshops, training sessions, collaborative teaching and surfing the internet." Others mentioned different resources such as attending professional development sessions, peer to peer collaboration, consulting colleagues and supervisors and reading periodic.

Question 10: What training do you need as an English teacher in the field of assessment?

With regards to the training teachers need in the field of assessment, the following theme was found:

Theme 10: differentiated assessment and the professional development sessions

Teachers' responses showed that they need more training on the application of Assessment for learning and Assessment of Learning as Teacher 6 was explaining. Many of them said that they need more training on how to utilize technology in implementing assessments. Teacher 10 said that he needed more training on "how to use technology in differentiated assessment, in addition to know more about the collaborative teaching and its relation to differentiated assessment." Moreover, some teachers wanted to get trainings on how to identify students' levels. Others explained their need to get training on how to plan properly in a way that guarantee including all students' levels. Some teachers wanted training on the appropriate methods to stands at students' needs and levels as pre-requisite for successful differentiated assessment

4.3 Conclusion

Results from the questionnaire and the interview outlined in chapter four were presented. Discussing these results will be followed in chapter 5. The results of the questionnaire showed that question 1 and 3 share the same total mean value which is (M = 2.01). However, question 2 had a mean of (M = 2.19), which is the highest among the questions. The data showed that most teachers perceive differentiated assessment as a good way for allowing students to share knowledge and discuss ideas. In addition, result analysis showed that teachers value using technology such as Edmodo as a strategy inside the classroom however; they believe that projects may not be of great

help. Moreover, they perceived differentiated assessments as excellent tools for creating attractive classroom environment.

The results of the interview were similar to the questionnaire. The results showed that teachers had a mutual understanding of differentiated assessments. They believed it is the process of evaluating students' taking into account their learning styles, abilities and difficulties. Teachers mentioned that they are using different strategies in the application of differentiated assessments such as Edmodo, peer assessments, teacher-student conferences and portfolios. However, they stated that they faced some challenges such as time constrains, lack of resources, classroom sizes and environment. They even lack the stakeholder support they need. They suggested that improving the planning process based on the assessments would enhance their practices. They mentioned that reinforcing the 21st century skills is critical. In addition, teachers believed that the relationship between differentiated assessment and instruction is interrelated. They relied on varied resources to know more about assessments. The internet and technology were the most important ones for them. Finally, they believed that they need more training in the field of assessment to guarantee the proper implementation.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify English teachers perceptions toward differentiated assessments in cycle 2 schools at Al Ain public schools. To attain thorough answers, the researcher conducted interviews and distributed questionnaires. 182 questionnaires were collected and 16 interviews were conducted. The results of this study were interpreted in this chapter. The researcher divided this chapter into three main sections. Each section is devoted to discuss and answer one research questions.

5.2 Perceptions of english teachers toward differentiated assessments

Question one in the research investigated the perception of English teachers toward differentiated assessment. With regards to the questionnaire, the results showed that teachers perceive the differentiated assessments positively. However, they believed that the parents did not support those assessments. The data showed that the highest mean was (M=3.1, SD= 1.3) which is differentiated assessments may not be welcomed by parents. In other words, teachers believed that parents may not realize the importance of differentiated assessments in supporting the leaning of their children. This is due to parents' lack of awareness of the value of differentiated assessments in improving their students learning. Also, differentiated assessments require continuous change in assessment methods and some parents do not like such changes; especially those who studied in old schooling systems. In addition, they might feel that they do not know exactly what their children are learning in the schools. Similar to this study, the study of Plessis, Prouty, Schubert, Habib and George (2003) discusses the importance of explaining to parents the reasons for using differentiated assessments in

schools. This study explains the importance of enforcing the partnership with the parents by sending them regular feedback reports about the performance of the students. In addition, these reports should include the new learning students have taken.

However, the second important conception teachers had regarding differentiated assessments was that differentiated assessments would help them figure out students' learning difficulties (M= 2.01, SD= 1.05). This in turn would support them to better differentiate their teaching styles and strategies to meet their students' needs. Teacher 1 from the interview discussed that differentiated assessment "is a mean of finding out how each student in your classroom learn best. It is a way to discover the best learning abilities of your students to choose the best learning style for them."

The study of Al-Hroub (2008) supported the results presented in the research. He believed that differentiated assessments enable students to develop cognitively and reduce their depression. In addition, they enable teachers to assess the gifted and disabled students in classrooms. As a result, teachers on these assessments can focus on one particular problem each student has. Thus, differentiated assessment can assist the learning of those students and reduces the chance of moving students with learning difficulties to special classes unless for the severe cases.

Moreover, the third important value of differentiated assessments as perceived by teachers is that these assessments would enhance students' thinking skills and support individual differences despite the fact that they require extra resources and varied environments (M= 1.7). Teacher 10 in the interview believed that "it is the process of evaluating pupils' language skills on individual basis." The questionnaire

showed that teachers believed that differentiated assessments had great value in varying the different learning skills of students. One of these skills was thinking skills. Thinking skills were considered as very major aspects that not all teachers were capable of dealing with during instructional practices and teaching strategies to enhance students' learning cycle. The study of Chapman and King (2012) provided similar results to this research study. They believed that differentiated assessments do not enhance students' thinking skills only. However, other skills could be gained as a result of differentiated assessments. To illustrate, differentiated assessments teach students to be "reflective, self-assessing, internally motivated learners capable of reaching their potentials (Chapman & King, 2012)." This was due to the fact that differentiated assessments promote students' self-confidence when collaborating and interacting with each others. Moreover, students gain the skill of being reflective and critical thinkers when they assess their own work and the work of their peers.

Although teachers believed that such assessments had great value to the learning of the students, they required extra efforts from teacher to be exerted in order to make them more efficient and effective. Changing classroom environment from time to time and using extra resources that might require more money and work was not an easy thing to do for students in relation to differentiated assessments. The study of Dowrich (2008) supported this argument. He believed that the extra time is needed to create new assessments and tasks. Teachers need to be innovative in creating these assessments so that they encompass the individual needs of the students. Therefore, schools should allocate enough time, resources and fund for teachers to prepare these assessments. Another important point was that teachers needed to understand their students very well and know their weaknesses and strengths in order to implement differentiated assessments very well in their lessons. This strategy would meet the

diverse needs of students very well. Similarly, Chapman and King (2012) believed that teachers should know students' feelings and wishes, previous experiences and background when teaching them.

However, teachers didn't perceive differentiated assessment as an important tool for tackling important issues such as fairness and diversity among students (M= 1.66, SD= 0.69). Thus, they might believe fairness and diversity among students is a must especially when dealing with students from a multicultural backgrounds. Therefore, teachers should consider these issues whether they implement differentiated assessments or not in their classrooms. However, this practice should not be happening as a result of differentiated assessments because it was one of the most important pillars for appropriate classroom practices. In relation to this study, Shepard (2000) believed that implementing differentiated assessment in classrooms require teachers to have good control of their classrooms. Therefore, if they want to guarantee fairness among students, teachers need to believe that assessments had to be regularly managed. As a result, they had to prepare a specific objective that is easier for students to achieve in their classroom.

Teachers did not perceive examining students' development as one of the most effective tool for differentiated assessments. Thus, it got the lowest score in the descriptive statistics (M= 1.4, SD= 0.55). Probably, the rationale behind their thinking was that not all teachers understand the real meaning of differentiated assessments. Therefore, there was no good implementation of it inside classrooms. As a result, there was no chance for teachers to realize its importance in examining students' developments. Therefore, it should be supported by other tools.

Generally, the results of the interview came to support the result from the questionnaire. Teachers showed common understanding of differentiated assessments. They all perceived it as a way of assessing students based on their learning needs and difficulties, levels and individual differences. It should be tailored to match how students learn best. It reflects what students had achieved, makes them involved with real-life tasks, enables them to use their high level thinking skills and develops their reflective thinking (AlBasheer & Barhum, 2010).

Linking the results from the questionnaire and the interview with the literature review, the study of Stefanakis, Meier and Deborah (2010) described how assessment should be altered to serve all students' levels. They elaborated that these assessments provide a comprehensive data about the students' weaknesses and strength. Therefore, teachers would properly manage their instruction to overcome those weaknesses and develop those strengths. Moreover, the study of Chapman and King (2005) defined differentiated assessments as a way for meeting students' needs using a wide range of assessment strategies that inform teachers' planning.

Linking the results of the questionnaire and the interviews with the theoretical framework presented in chapter two, the study of Nezvalova (2010) described how the constructivist approach emphasizes on the importance of assessment to cater for the different needs of students including their individual differences. This is in order to measure the amount of learning and concepts students had gained from instruction. Also, the study of Ozgur (2008) which described assessment in the socio-cultural theory discussed the importance of catering individual differences within the instruction and assessment to develop students' learning. As a result, this can serve and support different English Language skills such as the reading and speaking by developing different reading and speaking strategies.

5.3 Types of differentiated assessment strategies teachers use in their classes

The questionnaire focused on understanding all assessment strategies teachers are using as differentiated assessments in their classrooms. As the results showed, that the highest mean was scored for using Edmodo program as an online assessment strategy which had scored a mean of $M = 2.3$ with a standard deviation of 1.2. Teachers might believe that this program enabled them to better manage their classrooms, provide students with feedback and enable parents' involvement. In addition, Edmodo probably got the highest mean score because ADEC obligate teachers to use it in their classrooms. Teacher 14 said that "portfolios, Edmodo, exams, observation techniques, interviews, final products, presentation, oral, written, and listening tasks and displays are some strategies."

Moreover, teachers agreed with the idea that peer assessment should be used as an efficient tool for differentiating assessments as it scored a mean of 2.2. Teachers believed that peer assessments might involve students' engagement with each other, which required students to assess each other's work with the simple understanding they had got from teachers. Also, teachers believed that peer assessments should reflect the outcomes teachers intended to promote in their classroom objectives. The use of peer assessments was highly supported by many studies. For example, Gielen and Wever (2015) believed that peer assessments could be used as a "constructive technique to enhance students learning." They believed that students motivate each other when working together. They also can be very strict when evaluating each others' work. Therefore, they can notice the mistakes and errors their peers have made. With a proper guidance from teachers, students can learn how to provide suitable feedback to each other in order to enhance the learning among them. Teacher 3 said "The use of peer to

peer sharing, modification and the inclusion of technology variation in lesson implementation are but a few of differentiated strategies.

Teachers perceived other strategies as types of differentiated assessments such as using displays to measure the academic achievement of the students, in addition to observation techniques to measure students' engagement. Those two types were important and had scored a mean of M= 2.04. Displays became a very effective tool once a well defined rubric and criteria were put in place to measure the learning outcomes of students. Moreover, observation techniques should be well structured to guarantee students engagement in the classrooms. This is because students might look engaged during class time; however, in reality they might be preoccupied with other affairs. Similarly, Jones (2009) believed that observation techniques were helpful in supporting the engagement of students in classrooms by allowing them to acquire more information about their students' engagement. In order for the observation to be effective, teachers need to prepare a checklist with specific criteria such as body language of the students, confidence, participation, etc… Teachers also need to walk among students and talk to them to check their mental involvement with the lesson.

In contrast, using quizzes was not encouraged by teachers as a differentiated assessment strategy M= 2.08. Teachers believed that some of them might use one sample of quizzes which would not include any type of differentiated assessments. This result is consistent with the study of Chappuis (2009) who believed that using one type of quizzes with all students only indicates students' competence. However, these quizzes do not reflect the individual learning needs of each student.

Moreover, using projects as an assessment tool for students scored the lowest mean M= 1.8. This might occur as a result of different factors. For example, some

students might use a third party to do these projects on behalf of them. Also, they might get ready made projects from online sources. In addition, students might copy-paste the work from each others.

As for the results of the interview, teachers believed that Edmodo, students' portfolios and peer assessments were the most usable strategies in their classrooms. They believed that these strategies provided students with fair assessment that cater their different needs. Therefore, they have to teach their students how to do their tasks (Suskie, 2002). Other strategies were mentioned such as displays, teacher student conferences, presentations, and modification. Many teachers believed that examinations were not really an important strategy of differentiated assessments. They believed that it is just a way of assessing the basic skills and abilities of the students (Stobart, 2005). He believed that these strategies provide students with dynamic environment in which would guarantee their engagement in the classroom.

Linking the results of the questionnaire and the interview with the literature review, the study of Frank (2012) explained how teachers needed to apply a variety of assessment tools to in order to support students in knowing how they are developing in their learning. Also, that would help them understand how to measure the efficacy of teachers' methods and tools. Moreover, the literature review discussed different effective strategies of differentiated assessments such as peer assessment. The study of Spiller (2012) showed that peer assessment was effective in terms of students providing feedback to their peers based on specific criteria developed by the teachers which guarantee the fair assessments and the involvement of the students in their learning. In addition, the study of Ross (2006) clarified how self-assessment increased the interest of students in their learning. Also, Ross explained the efforts students exerted when conducting self-assessments.

Linking the theoretical framework of the research with the results of the study, the constructive approach and the socio-cultural theory believed that using varied assessment strategies is the best way of measuring students' learning. Oral and comprehension skills could be best measured when using different dynamic assessment strategies (Ozgur, 2008). Strategies such role plays, collaboration, presentations and maps are essential to enhance students' learning.

5.4 Differentiated assessments may inform teachers to enhance teaching and learning

This part of the questionnaire focused on investigating how differentiated assessments supported the process of teaching students. Results from chapter four showed that teachers believed that such assessments enabled them to create attractive classroom environment (M= 2.2, SD= 1.1). It would create an environment that is full of fun and attractions. As a result, students would be motivated and enjoy coming to the classroom and learn new things. Therefore, students' motivation to learning would increase. Similarly, Koshy (2013) in her study agreed that motivation is the initial step to guarantee student's engagement and understanding in classrooms. She elaborated that teachers can increase students' motivation by using different teaching styles, changing classroom environment and using technology.

The other important factor teachers believed in was that differentiated assessments could create a better classroom management (M= 2.09). Teachers had that belief because such assessments support teachers to better organize their work inside the classroom and better utilize their classroom time in an efficient manner. Moreover, the other important factors which were perceived by teachers as important for enhancing teaching and learning processes were reviewing lesson plans and teaching strategies, setting new goals to meet students' diverse needs, planning remedial

techniques and activities and reflecting on students' performance (M = 1.9). Those factors were essential because they guarantee the continuous cycle of improvement in teaching students what meet their needs. These ideas were also supported in Koshy's work (2013) which was very related to this study. In her study, Koshy (2013) discussed that "the practice of using differentiated assessments warrants reflection, planning, preparation, consultation with students and on the whole much more dedication and time investment from the instructor." Therefore, this process would guarantee the continuous change of instruction methods to meet students' needs.

The results showed that teachers did not support the idea that such assessments would inform them to modify their teaching strategies (M= 1.8). That was a surprising result for the researcher since modifying teaching strategies would guarantee the best benefit and learning outcomes to students. In addition to the fact that the best practice of assessment encompasses teachers' understanding that the main goal of assessment for teachers is to develop effective planning and implement efficient instruction (AISACT, 2011). With difference to this result, the National Council of Teachers of English (2013) in the United States (NCTE) had an opposite view to the one presented in the study. NCTE believed that teachers should have "assessment literacy". This literacy allows them to understand the reason behind their assessments and to what extent their assessments are effective in classrooms. Also, it refers to teachers who use different assessments strategies to test what best suit their students and adjust their assessment practices based on the needs and requirements of their students.

The results of the interview supported the result of the questionnaire. Teachers believed that differentiated assessment helped them to identify students' levels. Their responses showed that they used those assessments to inform their instructional practices. They explained that they used these assessments as the base to develop their

instructional objectives and plans. After planning, they have applied these instructional methods with their students. Then, students were assessed using differentiated assessments. Teachers mentioned that that was a continuous cycle to improve the learning of the students.

Linking the results of the questionnaire and the interview to the literature review, the researcher revisited the findings of Moon regarding assessment (2003). She explained how differentiating assessments was a matter of decision making. First of all, there should be an "alignment among curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Moon, 2003)." She clarified that teachers should start with a planning phase. The role of assessment was important in terms of identifying students' needs in regards to knowledge and skills. In addition, to identify what they need to know in relation to the instructional objectives. The data from the assessments would inform the planning. However, the miss alignment among those components would result in averting students from achieving the intended learning objectives. Also, students would not involve in their learning. Thus, this would increase their learning gap (Moon, 2003).

In addition to the above mentioned results of the interview and questionnaire, teachers discussed some of the main challenges they face when implementing the differentiated assessment. Lack of physical and human resources, sizes of the classrooms, students' motivations were some of those challenges. They also mentioned that they need more training on those assessments to apply them properly in the classrooms.

Linking the theoretical framework with the results of the study, both the constructivism and the socio-cultural theory agreed that differentiated assessments inform teaching by providing students with feedback related to their performance.

Those assessments were considered formative and continuous by implementing the appropriate assessment strategies and evaluating them. After that, teachers should re-plan and modify their strategies to best meet students' needs (Sardareha & Saad, 2012).

5.5 Conclusion

As a summary, this study discussed the perception of English teachers toward differentiated assessments in cycle two at Al-Ain public schools. The study aimed at examining the perception of teachers toward differentiated assessments, identifying differentiated assessments strategies teachers are using in their classroom, and identifying how differentiated assessments inform teaching and learning. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used. A Likert-scale questionnaire was developed and distributed to the schools to collect the required data. In addition, interviews were conducted to gain more data.

The findings of the research showed that most of the teachers perceived differentiated assessments in a positive way. They believed that differentiated assessments were important in terms of supporting teachers to understand students' learning difficulties, promote students thinking skills, allow students to share knowledge and feedback, and support students' individual differences. However, such assessments required extra efforts and time for implementation and might not be welcomed by parents. In addition, they required changing learning environments. Also, teachers didn't believe that differentiated assessments would guarantee fairness among students.

The study examined strategies of differentiated assessments teachers frequently use in their classrooms. Using Edmodo program, peer assessments, displays, presentations, students-teacher conferences and observation techniques are

some of the strategies that were perceived as good strategies for differentiating assessments. The data shows that Edmodo was the most preferable strategies for teachers. However, quizzes and projects failed to be welcomed by teachers as preferable strategies of differentiated assessments.

Moreover, the study concluded that differentiated assessment could enhance teaching and learning by creating effective classroom environment, enabling teachers to better manage their classrooms in terms of time and work, reviewing lesson plans, setting new goals, planning remedial actions and providing constructive feedback on students' performance.

Finally, although teachers believed that differentiated assessment had great impact on enhancing the process of teaching and learning, the study showed that modifying lesson plans and teaching strategies do not guarantee the best implementation of these assessments.

5.6 Recommendations

Different recommendations can be provided in order to have an effective practice of differentiated assessments in classrooms. First of all, schools need to increase parents' awareness on the importance of differentiated assessments to their children. School can do that by holding meetings with parents or inviting them to attend and observe classes which apply differentiated assessments.

Secondly, since the results showed that teachers believe that differentiated assessments help in recognizing students with learning difficulties, professional development sessions should be prepared for teachers to enhance their knowledge on the right implementation of differentiated assessments in classrooms. This is in order to promote teachers' abilities in recognizing students' with learning difficulties and

developing students' thinking skills. Such professional development can focus on the importance of understanding students' needs and identifying their weaknesses and strengthens.

Thirdly, since the result of the study showed that teachers believe that differentiated assessments require extra time and effort from teacher, schools are advised to provide teachers with teaching assistants that support them to create better classroom environments and prepare differentiated assessments materials. The reason is to avoid having the teachers spent all their time preparing materials and resources for the students. To illustrate, teachers should be provided an access to different resources and learning materials that supports the application of differentiated assessment inside classrooms. Also, they should have sufficient funding to buy the required resources for these assessments. Teachers should be encouraged to use different software beside Edmodo to attract students' attention in the classroom.

Finally, the results of the study showed that teachers did not perceive the importance of changing teaching strategies as a priority for differentiating assessments. Therefore, school leader should provide them with awareness sessions to increase their knowledge on the matter. Teachers should be given instructions on how to plan well for these assessments. After that, they should be trained on the implementation of these assessments by choosing strategies that suits students' needs. Then, teachers trained on how to evaluate these strategies and re-plan their work according to the feedback they have got from the implementation part. This cycle of improvement should not be interrupted and should be continuous all the time to guarantee the best implementation of differentiated assessments inside classrooms.

5.7 Call for future studies

More studies about the importance of differentiated assessments to school stakeholder should be conducted. Future studies should focus on the impact of differentiated assessments on students' achievements. There is a need to study the importance of creating curriculum that is designed and based on differentiating assessments. Also, creating studies about differentiating assessment for subject-related skills can be conducted, too.

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Appendices

Appendix A: UAE University request to conduct the study in ADEC schools

UAEU College of Education

جامعة الإمارات العربية المتحدة
United Arab Emirates University

التاريخ: 2015/09/7

السيد / مدير منطقة العين التعليمية   المحترم

تحية طيبة، وبعد...

بداية يطيب لنا أن نتقدم لكم بأطيب تحياتنا متمنين لكم كل التوفيق والنجاح في الارتقاء بالعملية التعليمية التعلمية،

هذا وفي إطار التعاون بين منطقة العين التعليمية وكلية التربية بجامعة الإمارات العربية المتحدة، نود إفادتكم علماً

بأن الطالبة/ ريم محمد صالحية ، مسجله في برنامج الماجستير تخصص" مناهج وطرق تدريس" وتقوم بإعداد

بحث بعنوان:

English Teachers' Perceptions toward Differentiated Assessments in Cycle 2 in Al Ain's Schools.

من ضمن متطلبات الماجستير. لذا نرجو التكرم بالموافقة على تسهيل مهمتها البحثية.

شاكرين ومقدرين حسن تعاونكم.
هذا وتفضلوا بقبول فائق التحية والتقدير .

نسخة إلى:
قسم المناهج وطرق التدريس

College of Education
Assistant Dean for Research and Graduate Studies
PO BOX 15551, Al Ain UAE
T +971 3 713 5221   T +971 3 713 6248
www.cedu.uaeu.ac.ae/graduateprogram/

كلية التربية
مساعد العميد لشؤون البحث العلمي والدراسات العليا
ص.ب: 15551، العين، الإمارات العربية المتحدة
ت 971 3 713 6248 + ـ 971 3 713 6260
www.cedu.uaeu.ac.ae/graduateprogram/

Appendix B: ADEC permission to coduct the questionnaire

مجلس أبوظبي للتعليم
Abu Dhabi Education Council
التعليم أولاً Education First

Date: 12th November 2015	التاريخ: 12 نوفمبر 2015
Ref:	الرقم:
To: Public Schools Principals,	السادة/ مديري المدارس الحكومية
Subject: Letter of Permission	الموضوع: تسهيل مهمة باحثين
Dear Principals,	تحية طيبة وبعد،،،

The Abu Dhabi Education Council would like to express its gratitude for your generous efforts & sincere cooperation in serving our dear students.

يطيبُ لمجلس أبوظبي للتعليم أن يتوجه لكم بخالص الشكر والتقدير لجهودكم الكريمة والتعاون الصادق لخدمة أبنائنا الطلبة.

You are kindly requested to allow the researcher/ **REEM MOHAMMAD KAMIL SALHYYIEH**, to complete her research on:

ونود إعلامكم بموافقة مجلس أبو ظبي للتعليم على موضوع الدراسة التي سيجريها الباحث/ ريم محمد كامل صالحية ، بعنوان:

ENGLISH TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS TOWARD DIFFERENTIAED ASSMENTS IN CYCLE 2 IN AL AIN'S SCHOOLS

ENGLISH TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS TOWARD DIFFERENTIAED ASSMENTS IN CYCLE 2 IN AL AIN'S SCHOOLS

Please indicate your approval of this permission by facilitating her meetings with the sample groups at your respected schools.

لذا، يرجى التكرم بتسهيل مهمة الباحثة ومساعدتها على إجراء الدراسة المشار إليها.

For further information: please contact **Mr Helmy Seada** on 02/6150140

للاستفسار: يرجى الاتصال بالسيد/ حلمي سعدة على الهاتف 02/6150140

Thank you for your cooperation.

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم

Sincerely yours,

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير،،،

محمد سالم محمد الظاهري
المدير التنفيذي لقطاع العمليات المدرسية

Appendix C: Sample of the questionnaire

<u>English Teachers' Perceptions of Differentiated Assessments in Cycle Two at</u>
<u>AlAin Schools</u>

I would like to thank you for taking part in my research questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire is to know the perceptions of English teachers toward differentiated assessments, the type of differentiated assessment strategies they use in their classes and to understand how differentiated assessments inform teachers to enhance teaching and learning.

Please note that all your responses are valued and will be treated with high confidentiality. I am looking forward to receiving your responses. Thank you again for your cooperation.

Name: Reem Salhyyieh   Phone: 0503348819   Email 200734494@uaeu.ac.ac.

<u>Kindly fill in your personal information:</u>

Grade		6	7		8		9
Gender		Male			Female		
First Language		Arabic		English		Others	
Years of Experience		1 - 5		6 – 10		More than 10	

<u>Please tick (√) the answer that best represents your view.</u>

#	Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Differentiated Assessment:						
1	helps teachers examine students' development.					
2	helps in paying attention to some issues such as fairness and diversity.					
3	stimulates students' thinking.					
4	supports dealing with individual differences.					
5	reflects students' experiences in learning.					
6	increases students collaboration.					
7	provides sufficient time for students to think and reflect.					
8	allows students to share and discuss ideas.					
9	provides feedback to students once they finish tasks.					
10	helps in identifying students with learning difficulties.					
11	creates student-centered lessons.					
12	examines students' progress.					
13	demands more time for actual implementation.					
14	needs more work from teachers.					
15	may not be welcomed by parents.					

16	requires extra resources and better classroom environments.					
17	requires teachers to be well-trained to apply it appropriately.					

I use the following differentiated assessment strategies:

18	peer assessment to test students' oral skills.					
19	observation techniques to assess students' engagement.					
20	classroom presentations to assess students' performance.					
21	different quizzes to evaluate students' understanding .					
22	self-assessment strategies to enhance students' self-confidence.					
23	students-teacher conferences to provide students with detailed feedback.					
24	standardized tests such as EMSA to measure students' learning.					
25	projects to assess learning outcomes.					
26	displays to measure academic achievements.					
27	online assessments such as Edmodo to monitor students' progress individually.					

Differentiated assessments provide me with opportunities to:

28	review lesson plans and teaching strategies.					
29	re-plan some lessons to modify the desired learning outcomes.					
30	modify teaching strategies and techniques.					
31	set new goals to meet students' needs					
32	plan remedial techniques and activities.					
33	reflect on students' performance.					
34	create attractive classroom environment.					
35	maintain better classroom management.					
36	decide on appropriate types of assessment methods.					
37	initiate appropriate collaborative learning through group and pair work.					

Appendix D: Consent form for the interview

<u>**Consent for Participation in Interview Research**</u>

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Mrs. Reem Salhyyieh from United Arab Emirates University. I understand that the project is designed to gather information about Teachers' Perception towards Differentiated Assessments in Cycle 2 schools in Al Ain. I will be one of approximately 16 people being interviewed for this research.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

2. I understand that most interviewees in will find the discussion interesting and thought-provoking. If, however, I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.

3. Participation involves being interviewed by Mrs. Reem Salhyyieh, a master student at UAE University to fill her master graduation requirements. The interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes. Notes will be written during the interview.

4. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals.

5. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

6. For further information, I can contact Mrs. Reem Salhyyieh at 0503348819 or via email: 200734494@uaeu.ac.ae

7. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

Teacher_____

Signature_____

Date_____

Appendix E: Interview questions

Interview Questions:

1. What is your own definition of differentiated assessment?

2. What are the current differentiated assessment strategies do you use in your classroom?

3. What challenges do you face while implementing differentiated assessments?

4. What support do you get from stakeholders for implementing differentiated assessments?

5. How can teachers improve the use of differentiated assessments in their instructional practices?

6. How can teachers reinforce 21st century skills (such as critical thinking, problem solving, global citizenship, applied knowledge and communication) through appropriate implementation of differentiated assessment?

7. What is the relationship between your teaching and the differentiated assessment strategies you use in your classes?

8. How do you implement differentiated assessment in assessing English language skills such as reading, writing, listening, speaking, etc.?

9. What resources do you use to get more information about differentiated assessment strategies?

10. What training do you need as an English teacher in the field of assessment?

Appendix F: Themes of the Interview

Teacher	Quotes	Theme
Teacher 1	Differentiated assessment is a process whereby students are assessed in the same skill using tools geared to meet individual differences; different difficulty levels	**Mutual understanding of differentiated assessment**
Teacher 5	It is a mean of finding out how each student in your classroom learn best. It is a way to discover the best learning abilities of your students to choose the best learning style for them.	
Teacher 10	It is the process of evaluating pupils' language skills on individual basis. It includes language mastery, fluency and accuracy.	
Teacher 14	Portfolios, Edmodo, exams, observation techniques, interviews, final products, presentation, oral, written and listening tasks and displays are some strategies.	**Current differentiated assessment strategies**
Teacher 3	The use of peer to peer sharing, modification, and the inclusion of technological variation in lesson implementation are but a few of differentiated strategies	
Teacher 2	- Time spent on differentiated activities – requires sufficient amount of time to explain, implement, assess and provide feedback - Administrative support	**Challenges of implementation**
Teacher 3	These challenges are classroom size, language barrier, lack of potential support, special needs consideration and overall motivation of students	
Teacher 4	More knowledge is needed and students' cooperation	
Teacher 6	Only the resources and I have to do everything on my own. We need a special person to handle data. Also, we need assistant	**Stakeholder's support**
Teacher 8	Trainings, workshops, video conferences, peer visits feedbacks	
Teacher 10	- How and when to initiate appropriate differentiated assessment that include the four skills of English language - Assessing pupils' progress in such skills - Analyze data and forming learning outcomes based on such analysis	

Teacher 11	They can share their experiences and do some observation classes	**Means of improvement**
Teacher 13	They can develop plans based on analyzing the results of differentiated assessments to stand at pupil's needs, demands and abilities to improve them.	
Teacher 14	Using the results of the differentiated assessment analysis in guiding them to plan well and teach better	
Teacher 12	Teachers can include such skills in their daily lesson plans then set up tasks to evaluate pupils' progress in such skills, one by one through varied tasks	**Reinforcement of 21st century skills**
Teacher 13	Teachers can focus on these skills in their daily instruction, then decide upon the best ways to measure pupil's progress in these skills	
Teacher 16	We cannot initiate appropriate instructional strategies without standing at the diverse levels and needs of students which can be obtained through this type of assessment	**The relationship between differentiated assessments and instructional strategies**
Teacher 4	Differentiated assessment is a perquisite for appropriate instructional strategies	
Teacher 7	Teacher performs different styles of teaching according to the students' learning style this leads to diverse assessment	
Teacher 15	I asses the varied levels of students' skills individually through tests or task completion. Next, I adjust my goals and practices according to pupils needs taking into consideration their strengths & weaknesses	**Assessing English language skills using differentiated assessment techniques**
Teacher 13	I make a test to have knowledge of my pupils' levels and make a test to have knowledge of my pupil's levels of such skills. Then, I design objectives and learning outcomes. I implement instructional practices. Then I evaluate students' progress as a whole and individually to make a comparison between the findings.	
Teacher 9	I use the internet a lot. I go to English language websites and use resources available by ADEC	**Used resources**
Teacher 10	Reading books, articles or essays related to this. Workshops, training sessions, collaborative teaching and surfing the internet.	
Teacher 6	Assessment for Learning/ Assessment of Learning	**Professional development sessions**
Teacher 10	- How to use technology in differentiated assessment - Collaborative teaching and its relation to differentiated assessment - Appropriate methods to stands at students' needs and levels as pre-requisite for successful differentiated assessment	