



**Catering for Learner
Diversity in the
English Language
Curriculum at the
Secondary Level: (II)
Speaking and Writing
Skills**

**Learner
Diversity**

English

Speaking

Writing

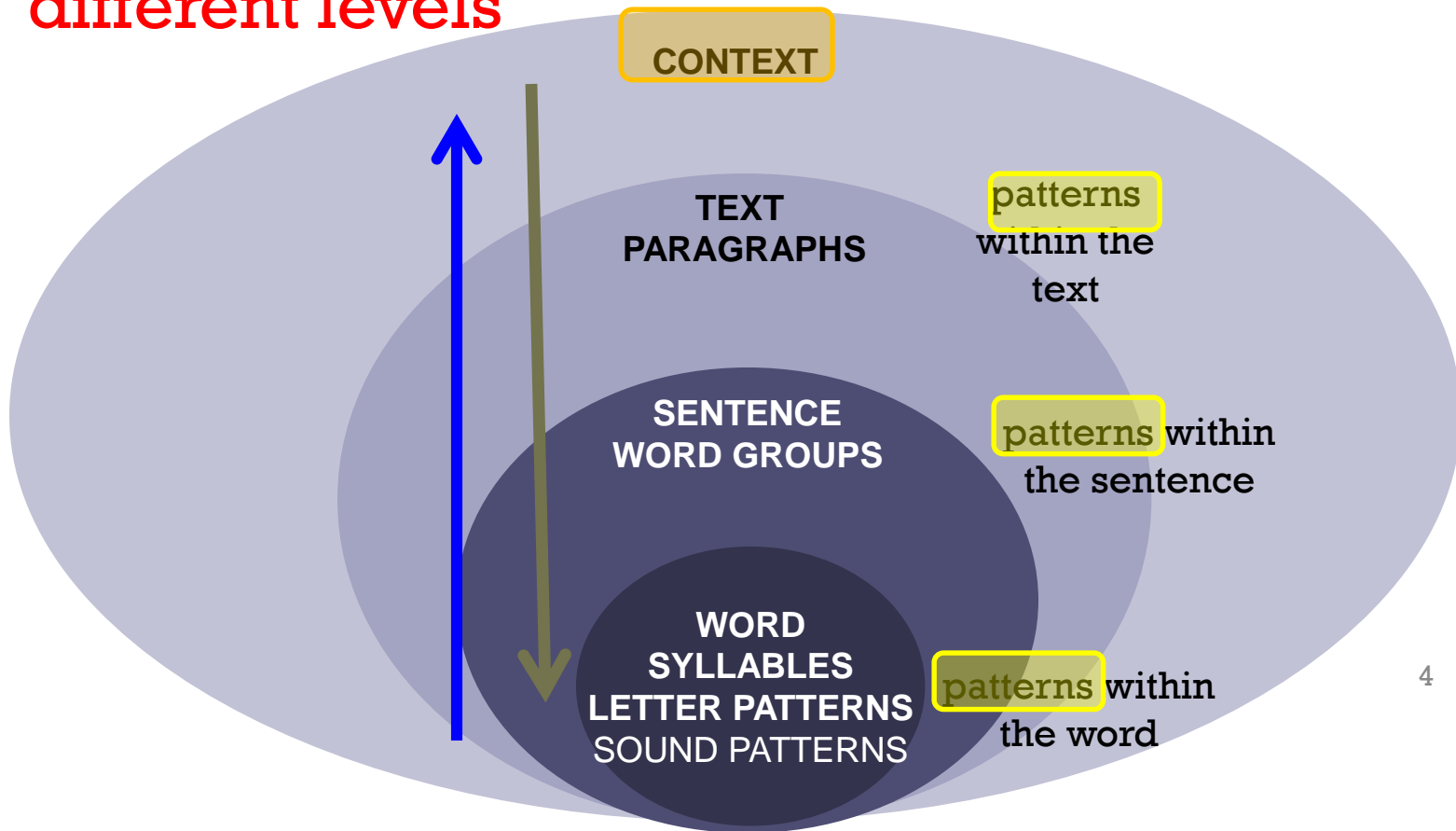
Short Reflection

- How do you cater for learner diversity in your speaking and writing lessons?
- What are the major challenges?

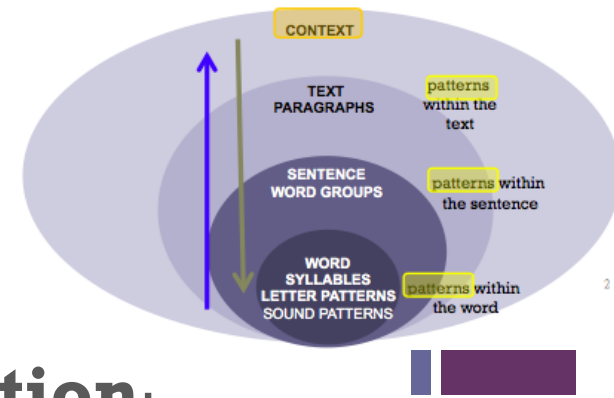
Some principles for catering for learner diversity in the language classroom:

+ A Functional View of Language in Context (Rose, 2005) (The Genre Egg Approach)

→ Provide scaffolding to students through different levels



+ For example...

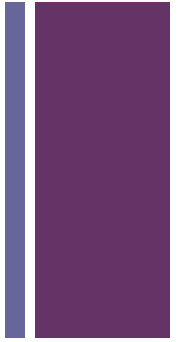
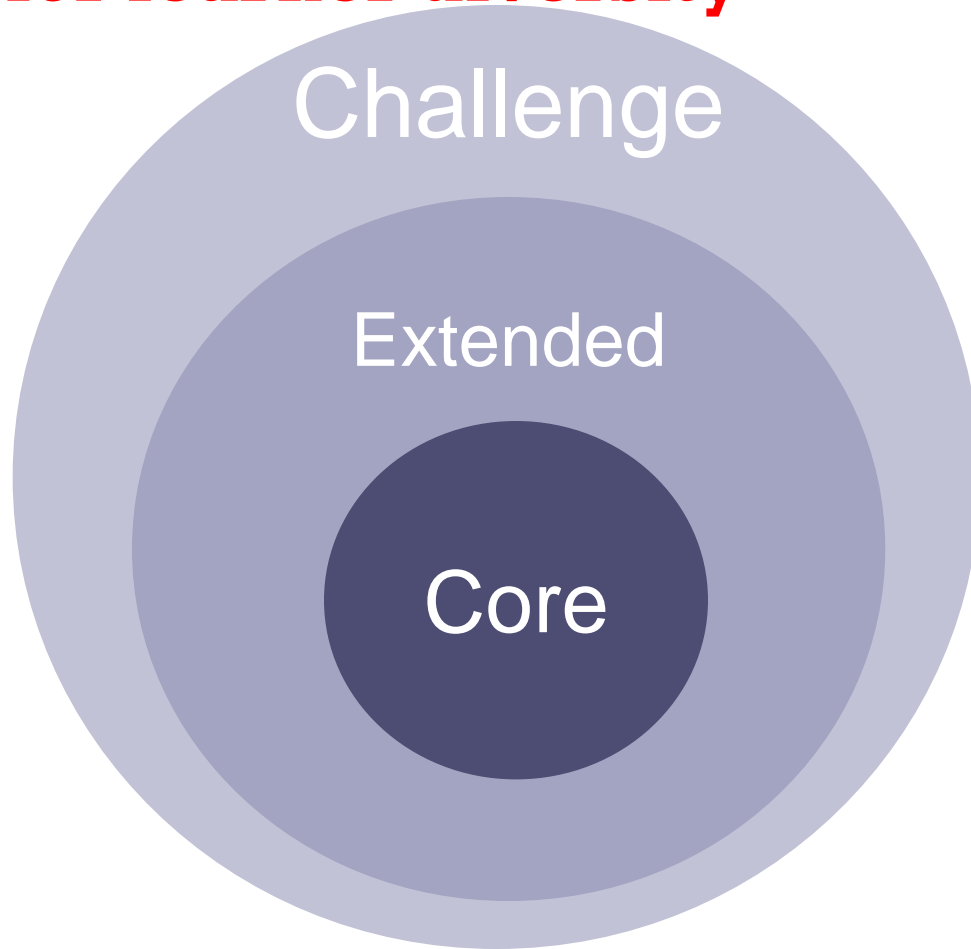


■ Writing a **consequential explanation**:

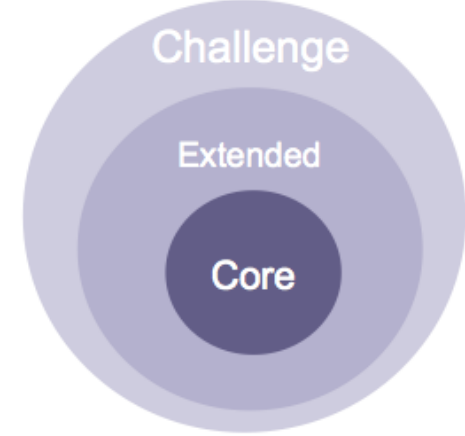
- **Context level:** Teacher familiarises students with the writing topic/background (through videos/pictures/pre-task)
- **Text level:** Show a model consequential explanation text and analyse the structure with students (phenomenon → effect 1 → effect 2 → effect 3 → conclusion)
- **Sentence level:** teach students cause-and-effect sentence pattern (i.e. X leads to Y, Y results from X...)
- **Word level:** teach students the words used for the topic, and linking words that can show the logic of the text (i.e. First and foremost, in addition ...)

+ Core, Extended and Challenge

→ **Design differentiated materials to cater for learner diversity**



+ For example...



■ **Speaking: student presentation**

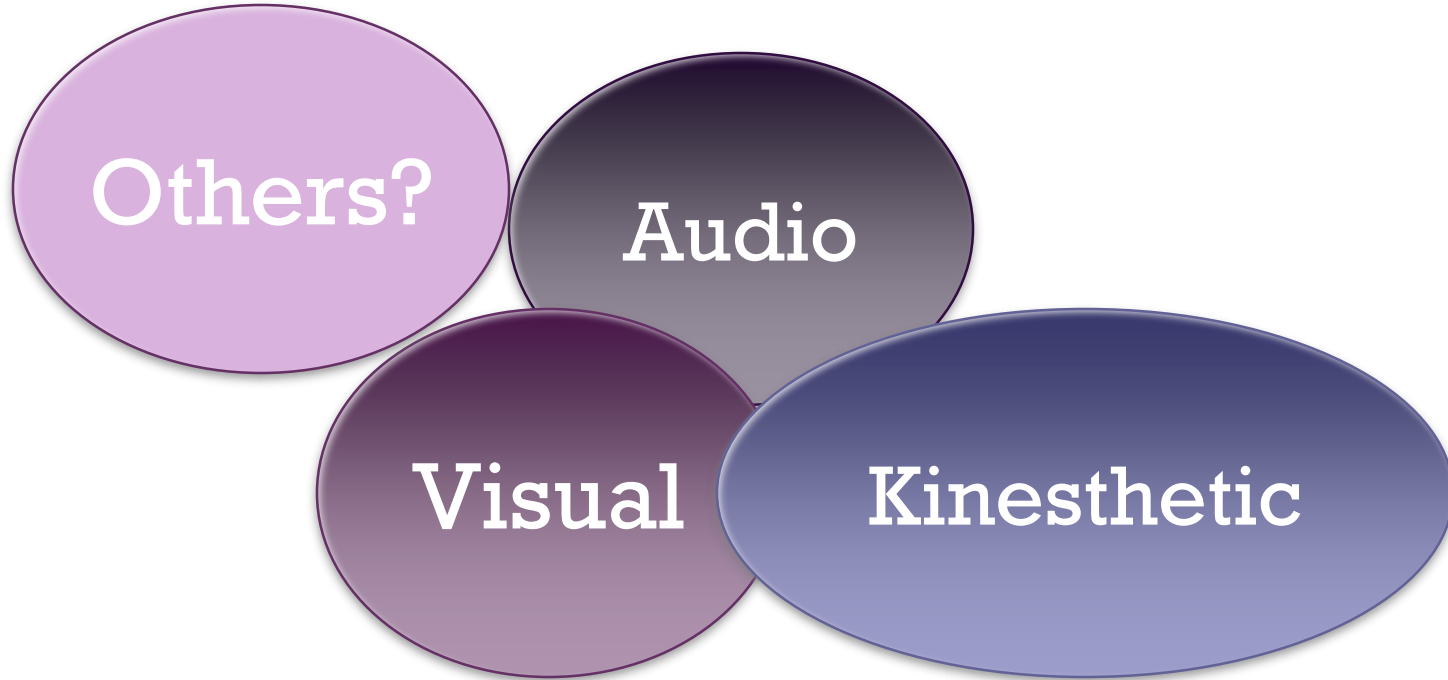
→ **Core:** Get students to present what they know/they have learnt about a topic

→ **Extended:** Get students to present what they know and ask peers questions which require critical thinking

→ **Challenge:** Get students to present a topic in order to debate with other groups of students

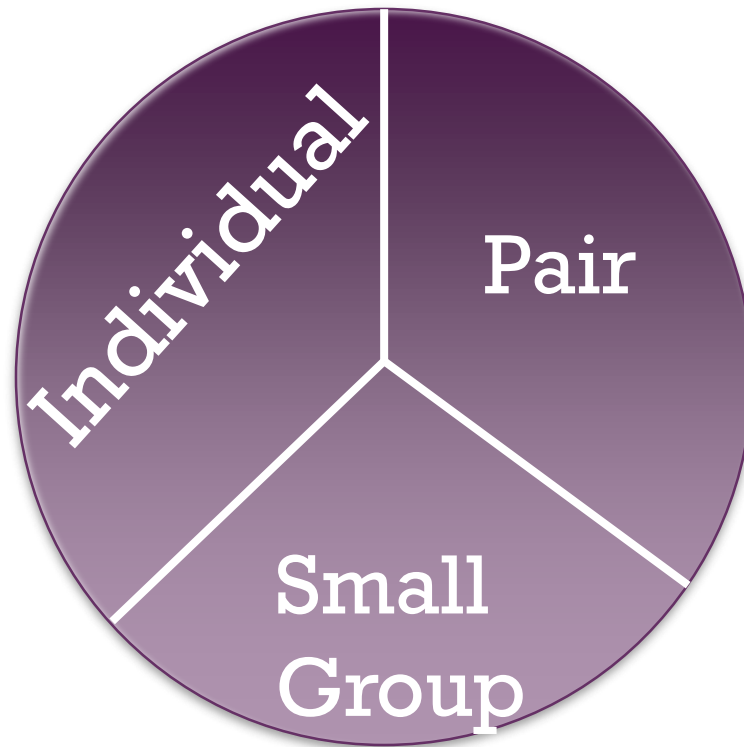
+ Audio, Visual, and Kinesthetic

→ Design learning and teaching materials to cater for different learning styles



+ Flexible Grouping

→ Design learning and teaching materials to cater for different learning styles



Examination of a Teaching Sequence

Process Preparation for Speaking and
Writing Tasks

Discussion 1

Read the TSA S3 Group Interaction Question below:

The Dance Club is organising a joint-school dance. You and two other members of the club are talking about the dance.

In your discussion, you may include:

- who can join
- when and where to hold the dance
- activities e.g. ice-breaking games, election of the dancing king and queen...
- dress code e.g. colour, style...
- anything else that you think is important

What do you think would be the challenges to average and low-ability students in Hong Kong?

Ideas? Grammar? Vocabulary? ...

Discussion 1 (Cont'd)

- How about task completion? And fulfilling the overall purpose of the interaction as a communicative event?
- To what extent are our students familiar with the topic 'joint-school dance' and the rationale behind this activity?
- How can we help them achieve the communicative purpose of the task?

“Process Preparation” for the Speaking Task:

- What are the reasons why some people would like to participate in a joint-school dance?
Think for a minute and jot down the reasons.

- Now watch a short video and add other reasons to your list.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3IbY0xL>
[LMU](#)

- What kinds of dancing activities do you think would satisfy the above reasons (e.g. dance classes, dance competitions, dance parades)?

| Reasons for Joining Joint School Dance | Activities |
|--|------------|
| | |

- Where would people do joint-school dance? What would they wear? Watch another short video and jot down as many places and clothing items shown as possible.
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=jF9MAAk7BOA
- Can you think of any other places and clothing items that are also suitable? Add to the list.

- Complete the following mind map (on task sheet) to discuss details of a joint-school dance event that you're most interested in joining. In your mind map, you should link as many of the above aspects as possible, e.g. what people do at the event and the reason why you're interested in it, and when and where it would be best held. Don't forget to mention who can join this event!
- With the help of your mind map, share your suggestion with a partner in two minutes.

Discussion 2

- Reflect on the design of the previous stages for preparing students for the speaking task. What do you think would be the rationale behind each stage and how do they contribute to addressing learner diversity in the classroom?

Some Food for Thoughts:

- Multi-modal input
- Mini-IP before GI
- Activating schemata (content + language)
- Use of graphic organisers
- Apprenticing language use
- Meaning before form
- Linking aspects to be covered

Discussion 3

- Now compare the three versions of the task sheet for the speaking task.
- How do they differ from each other?
- How could those differences allow the teacher to cater for individual differences among the students?

Some Food for Thoughts:

- Same task, varying types and amount of support
- Different 'products' to be expected from different students (e.g. the final graphic organiser)
- Different language input (e.g. vocab, sentence patterns)

Now let's go back to the teaching sequence

- Read Letters 1 and 2 and answer the questions below each text
- Then compare Letter 1 to Letter 2 and answer the questions
- Next, complete the table summarising the main structure of Letter 2

| Section | Function in the text | Typical language Patterns (examples) |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Subject | To state what the letter is about | A noun phrase beginning with 'Proposal to...' e.g. Proposal To Hold An ELT Book Fair At Your School |
| Introduction (first two paragraphs) | To... | |
| Objectives | To... | |
| Benefits | To... | |
| Arrangements | To... | |
| Conclusion (the last two paragraphs) | To... | |

Discussion 4

- Reflect on the design of the previous stages for preparing students for the writing task. To what extent were the previously discussed strategies for catering for learner diversity applied in the preparation stages and how would you further modify the tasks to suit the needs of your own students?

A Wrap up

Catering for learner diversity by going beyond:

- setting graded tasks
- lowering task demands
- looking solely at variation in abilities

Possible dimensions to look at:

Task

Text

Support (material + classroom language)