

TEACHING ENGLISH ACROSS CULTURES

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Annotation. Teaching English across cultures involves not only language instruction but also navigating cultural diversity within the classroom. Language learning is deeply connected with culture, influencing communication styles, motivation, and learner behavior. This article explores how cultural differences affect English language teaching and learning in multicultural classrooms. The study involved observations and interviews with teachers and students in international schools, identifying challenges such as communication barriers and varied expectations. Results indicate that culturally responsive teaching—incorporating students’ cultural backgrounds, adjusting interaction patterns, and using multicultural materials—enhances student engagement and learning outcomes. The article advocates for teacher training programs focused on developing intercultural competence to improve English teaching effectiveness in culturally diverse environments.

Keywords Teaching English, intercultural communication, cultural diversity, multicultural classrooms, learner engagement, teacher training, language acquisition

Annotatsiya

Madaniyatlararo ingliz tilini o‘qitish faqatgina tilni o‘rgatish emas, balki sinf ichidagi madaniy xilma-xillikni boshqarishni ham o‘z ichiga oladi. Til o‘rganish madaniyat bilan chambarchas bog‘liq bo‘lib, muloqot uslublari, motivatsiya va o‘quvchilar xatti-harakatlariga ta‘sir qiladi. Ushbu maqolada madaniy farqlar ingliz tili o‘qitishi va o‘rganishiga qanday ta‘sir ko‘rsatishi ko‘rib chiqiladi. Tadqiqot xalqaro maktablardagi o‘qituvchilar va o‘quvchilar bilan kuzatuv va suhbatlar asosida olib borildi, bunda muloqotdagi to‘siqlar va turli kutishlar kabi muammolar aniqlangan. Natijalar madaniyatga moslashgan o‘qitish — o‘quvchilarning madaniy merosini hisobga olish, muloqot uslublarini moslashtirish va ko‘p madaniyatli materiallardan foydalanish — o‘quvchilarning faolligini va ta‘lim natijalarini yaxshilashini ko‘rsatdi. Maqola ingliz tilini madaniyatlararo muhitda samarali o‘qitishni oshirish uchun o‘qituvchilarni intercultural kompetensiyalarni rivojlantirish bo‘yicha treninglarga jalb qilishni tavsiya qiladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Ingliz tilini o‘qitish, madaniyatlararo muloqot, madaniy xilma-xillik, ko‘p madaniyatli sinflar, o‘quvchi faolligi, o‘qituvchi tayyorlash, til o‘zlashtirish

Introduction

English is widely regarded as a global lingua franca, spoken and learned by people from diverse cultural backgrounds. As English classrooms become more culturally heterogeneous, the traditional one-size-fits-all teaching methods often prove insufficient. Cultural values shape how learners interact, participate, and process information, which in turn affects their language acquisition.

For instance, learners from collectivist cultures might prioritize group harmony and avoid direct disagreement, while learners from individualist cultures may prefer open debate. Such differences impact classroom participation, feedback reception, and collaborative learning activities. Teachers who are unaware of these cultural factors may face difficulties maintaining student motivation and effective communication. Therefore, teaching English across cultures requires educators to develop intercultural awareness and adapt their teaching methods to meet learners' cultural and linguistic needs. This means recognizing cultural differences, using culturally relevant materials, and fostering an inclusive environment that respects and celebrates diversity. This article examines the experiences of teachers and students in multicultural classrooms and proposes strategies to enhance intercultural competence in English language teaching.

Materials and Methods

Participants and Setting

The study was conducted at two international secondary schools known for their diverse student populations. The participants included 60 students, aged 13 to 17, representing over ten different cultural backgrounds, and 10 English teachers with varied international teaching experiences.

Data Collection Procedures

-Classroom Observations: Conducted over eight weeks, focusing on teaching styles, classroom interaction, and student responses to different teaching approaches.

-Teacher Interviews: Semi-structured interviews explored teachers' perspectives on cultural challenges, instructional strategies, and professional development needs.

-Student Surveys: Surveys assessed students' perceptions of cultural inclusiveness, comfort in participation, and learning support. Qualitative data from observations and interviews were coded for themes related to intercultural communication, student engagement, and teaching adaptations. Quantitative survey data were analyzed to gauge overall student satisfaction and perceived effectiveness of culturally responsive teaching.

Results

Teaching Adaptations

Teachers commonly adapted their methods to be more culturally sensitive by:

-Modifying questioning techniques to encourage participation from quieter students.

-Using culturally diverse texts and examples to make lessons more relatable.

Allowing different communication styles, such as group discussions or written reflections, to accommodate varying preferences.

Student Engagement and Feedback

-Students reported feeling more respected and motivated when their cultures were acknowledged.

-Classroom observations showed increased participation and enthusiasm during activities involving peer collaboration and cultural sharing.

-Challenges included language proficiency gaps and occasional misunderstandings arising from different cultural norms regarding teacher-student interaction.

Discussion

The findings affirm the importance of intercultural competence in English language teaching. Teaching across cultures requires awareness of how culture influences learning behaviors and communication. Culturally responsive teaching fosters an inclusive classroom climate where students feel valued and understood, which enhances motivation and language acquisition. Incorporating multicultural content enriches lessons and validates students' identities, strengthening their engagement. Moreover, adapting interaction patterns to accommodate cultural preferences helps minimize communication barriers and fosters trust between teachers and students. Teacher training programs must emphasize intercultural awareness, cultural empathy, and flexible pedagogical approaches. Equipping educators with these skills prepares them to effectively address the complexities of multicultural classrooms, ultimately improving learner outcomes and fostering global citizenship.

Conclusion

Teaching English across cultures is both challenging and rewarding. Effective English teaching in diverse classrooms requires more than language expertise; it demands cultural sensitivity and adaptability. Recognizing and embracing cultural differences allows teachers to create supportive, engaging, and inclusive learning environments. Professional development focused on intercultural competence is essential for preparing teachers to meet the needs of culturally diverse learners. Such efforts will not only improve language proficiency but also promote mutual respect and understanding in an increasingly interconnected world.

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