Multiculturalism in Teaching Oral Communication: Experiences, Challenges, and Strategies

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Abstract: *This study explored multiculturalism in teaching oral communication: experiences, challenges, and strategies using descriptive phenomenology which allows for a thorough investigation of respondents' lived experiences by documenting not only their responses but also the underlying motivations and emotions. Participants were English teachers handling oral communication among foreign students from Higher Education in China. Major findings of the study revealed: (a) The general experiences of participants teaching foreign students in their classes yielded the subsequent generated themes: Content Integration, Equity, Knowledge Construction, and Empowering School Culture collectively yielded the multifaceted nature of teaching international students; (a) The challenges participants' encountered in teaching oral communication to students from various cultural backgrounds captured the generated themes are as follows: Content Integration that focuses on integrating relevant cultural contexts and materials to enhance understanding. Then, Knowledge Construction involves strategies to help students build knowledge and understanding through varied instructional methods. Third, Equity Pedagogy emphasizes accommodating diverse learning needs and promoting inclusivity in the classroom. Then, Prejudice Reduction which addresses cultural misunderstandings and promotes respect for diverse communication styles, and lastly, Empowering School Culture encourages supportive learning environments that foster collaboration and confidence among students; and the strategies participants employed to overcome the challenges yielded the following generated themes as follows: cultural responsiveness, effective communication, pedagogical flexibility, and engagement. These themes gleaned from participant replies highlight the need for a thorough and multidimensional method of instruction in schools with a varied student body. By putting these tactics into practice, teachers can establish a welcoming and encouraging classroom that fosters students' social and personal growth in addition to improving their academic achievement.*

Keywords: Polytechnic University of the Philippines; Doctor of Educational Management; Multiculturalism; Foreign Language; China.

1. Introduction

It has become increasingly essential to have practical oral communication skills in an ever-increasing interconnected society, especially when the society becomes multicultural and multilingual. Education, therefore, needs to infuse multicultural perspectives within the curriculum as is the case with China in recent decades as it has globally accelerated its growth. As it continues to make its mark economically and culturally, students need to achieve fluency in English while making their way in multiple cultural contexts. This need highlights the importance of accommodating multiculturalism in oral communication education, wherein language ability is fostered alongside an appreciation for a variety of cultural backgrounds (Knapp, 2021; Wang et al., 2024).

The role of English in China has shifted from being merely an academic subject to a critical tool for global interaction; educators should shift their methods to include intercultural competencies. The latter refers to the ability to understand, respect, and react to diverse cultural norms and expressions. Multiculturalism in the teaching of oral communication transcends language proficiency but focuses on developing skills needed to communicate interculturally (Zhai & Razali, 2020).

Introducing multiculturalism into the language classroom in China requires deliberate and specialized strategies

that take into account both linguistic nuances and cultural diversity. The current exposure of English learners in China to Western culture through media, textbooks, and digital platforms may limit their understanding of other cultural contexts. Instructional approaches that promote a broader awareness of global cultures while fostering effective communication skills are needed (Wolf & Phung, 2019).

China has become a more attractive study-abroad destination due to its greater emphasis on multiculturalism and international educational connection. Compared to previous years, the number of international students accepted to the country increased significantly in 2018 to 492,185 from 205 different countries. This diversified student body fosters cross-cultural communication and understanding by adding to the multicultural environment on Chinese university campuses. The Chinese government has taken steps to recruit overseas students, including establishing English-medium programs and offering many scholarships. 81,562 African students were studying in China in 2018 (a 770% increase from 1996) shows that African students have shown great interest. This inflow of international students improves China's educational system, which also promotes a more inclusive and diversified society (Ministry of Education, China, 2019).

Geographically, ethnically, and historically, China is an intrinsically multicultural country. The state officially recognizes 56 ethnic groups: the Han Chinese are in the majority, and there are 55 minority groups, including the Tibetans, Uyghurs, Zhuang, and Mongols. These minorities add vibrancy to this nation's cultural heritage (Hansen, 2020). While the government initiated policies such as cultural autonomy and representation of minorities in mainstream national events, the issues continue with specific barriers for achieving equal opportunities and maintaining the cultural heritage amidst modernization and urbanization processes (Haddad & Harrell, 2021). The open attitude of China toward multiculturalism is composed of political, social, and economic factors.

China has also been focusing on English-speaking policies, primarily through its educational system, in line with globalization demands. From primary to college levels, the language is compulsory; however, in the recent past, it shifted its focus from the traditional approach of grammar-translation methods to oral communication skills (Hu, 2005; Wang & Kirkpatrick, 2019). The English-only classroom policy gives students better fluency and confidence. Besides education, the government encourages the usage of English in urban areas, especially in international business hubs, to attract foreign investment and tourism. Initiatives like public signage in English, media content, and events like the 2008 Beijing Olympics underpin this effort (Zhang, LeGates, & Zhao, 2016). However, regional disparities in resources and resistance in rural areas persist. Despite these challenges, China's English-speaking policies demonstrate its commitment to strengthening its global presence in education, business, and diplomacy.

Though the importance of multiculturalism is well acknowledged for oral communication teaching, teaching in China faces significant challenges. Cultural differences between Chinese students and their international peers may result in miscommunications or discomfort while discussing matters with one another. Moreover, the traditional Chinese classroom, with less exposure to other cultures, also restricts the appreciation and participation of students with different views. For example, teachers may not have the resources, training, or expertise to fully incorporate multicultural themes into their lessons, instead following standardized approaches that fail to recognize the nuances of intercultural communication (Gálvez-López, 2023).

Knapp (2021) explains the vicious cycle in which Chinese English language learners' poor proficiency creates low confidence, further limiting practice and development. In a similar perspective, Wang et al. (2024) explore the emotional dimensions of OCA in English for Academic Purposes among Chinese and Iranian students, considering cultural adaptation in interplaying with language learning. According to Zhai and Razali (2020), other major influencing factors of Chinese students in foreign educational environments are Language anxiety, Culture shock, and Psychological adaptation.

This study explored teachers' experiences teaching **oral communication**, which refers to the ability to express ideas effectively through spoken language, a crucial skill for students in both academic and real-world settings (Chan, 2011). Given the diverse cultural backgrounds of learners, the study also examines **multiculturalism**, which acknowledges the coexistence of multiple cultural groups within a learning environment, and **interculturalism**, which goes beyond promoting meaningful interactions and exchanges between these groups (Banks, 2019). Understanding these concepts is essential for educators to navigate the challenges of fostering effective communication in culturally diverse classrooms. By addressing these challenges and highlighting adaptive strategies, this study aims to contribute to a more inclusive and globally competent educational system in China (Li and Zhang, 2021).

Sarce and Rosales (2023) revealed in their study that teachers must be aware that they teach students from different cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds. They have to be flexible in their approaches as they try to balance the needs of students in specific ways with the more general concerns that the state policies and institutional standards dictate. Navigated through each of these levels, such as following curriculum specifications with the needs of each student individually; this has a significant bearing on how to prepare lessons as teachers and how to handle students and test their progress. For instance, when teaching multicultural, educators consider not only educational standards from the state but also how students' varying cultural sensitivities and communication would affect the classes. These factors mould their perception of how effective teaching and learning are. In order to cater for the needs of all students, educators have to devise strategies that are inclusive as well as responsive. All in all, such teaching methods must be fair and accessible to learners from any background. This dynamic interplay between policy, teaching philosophy, and student diversity shapes the educational experience and outcomes, underscoring the importance of cultural competence in the classroom.

However, a large gap in understanding educators' daily experiences and adaptive strategies in multicultural classrooms in China remains. Though research has recognized the need for intercultural communication skills, little is known about how teachers handle the unique challenges of students with diverse cultural backgrounds, learning styles, and language proficiencies. For example, cultural misunderstandings and differing expectations about communication often complicate classroom interactions. There is a scarcity of research that could show which teaching techniques are the most effective in building an inclusive and productive learning environment (Wolf & Phung, 2019).

Additionally, based on the earlier study by Gálvez-López (2023) about complexities of formative feedback in a multicultural classroom setting, the study informs that feedback must be culturally responsive in light of variations in the styles of communication, emotional dynamics, and relationships among the peers. Solutions of such problems would inform the teaching education curriculums to develop effective supportive mechanisms that allow teachers to facilitate effective multicultural oral communication.

1.1 Research Objectives

The study aimed to explore the experiences of teachers teaching oral communication to students from various cultural backgrounds.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1) What are the experiences of participants teaching international students in their classes?
2) What challenges do they encounter in teaching oral communication to students from various cultural backgrounds?
3) What strategies do the participants employ to overcome these challenges?

2. Materials and Methods

Being a qualitative research design, phenomenology allows for a deep exploration of respondents' experiences so that the researcher can look not only at the responses but also at the motivations and emotions beneath them. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), "qualitative research uses interpretive and theoretical frameworks to study the connection between individuals or groups and social or human issues.". This method of collecting data involves describing it according to a specified set of criteria, formulating goals towards such descriptions, and setting a plan of action for their achievement.

Qualitative research aims to understand the problem or phenomenon observed thoroughly. It is therefore focused on providing diverse perspectives, identifying elements that lead to the situation, and providing a background for the findings. Data in qualitative research often entails text, stories, and tales from individuals who have first-hand experience of the phenomena under investigation, usually documented digitally, on tape, or through field notes. Qualitative research is carried out in natural settings. Hence, it offers elaborate, descriptive explanations that are a rich source for understanding participants' lived experiences.

This phenomenological study explores teachers' lived experiences teaching international students in oral communication. It aims to understand the challenges teachers face in incorporating multiculturalism into their teaching practices and their perceptions of the support they need to overcome these challenges. In addition, the

study explores the strategies teachers employ to address these challenges, thus providing a comprehensive view of their experiences in a multicultural educational environment.

2.1 Tradition of Inquiry and Data Generation Method

The research design used in this study was phenomenology, which is especially well-suited for investigating the lived experiences of people involved in a particular occurrence (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The main goal of this study was to investigate the experiences of instructors instructing international students in oral communication. The study used this design to record extensive, in-depth descriptions of the participants' interactions, difficulties, and achievements in multicultural classrooms.

Researchers used a phenomenological approach to record and analyze participants' attitudes, ideas, and emotions on their teaching experiences. Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis was used to examine the gathered data. This approach is well-known for finding, analyzing, and summarizing patterns (themes) in qualitative data, which helps researchers arrange and thoroughly explain the data. Thematic analysis is particularly effective for revealing recurring themes by processing information from interviews, focus groups, and various text sources (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis, as put forward by Braun and Clarke in 2006, was the approach used here to systematically examine and interpret data derived from interviews and other sources. This thematic analysis method has been widely utilized in qualitative research for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns in the data. By focusing on recurring themes, thematic analysis allows researchers to make sense of complex qualitative data and present it in a structured and coherent manner. This flexibility makes the approach particularly suitable for exploring a wide range of experiences and perspectives, which is crucial in understanding the nuanced and multifaceted nature of teaching oral communication to students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Thematic analysis effectively revealed the underlying patterns and shared experiences among the participants. It involves several stages: first, getting familiar with the data, followed by generating initial codes. These codes are then grouped into potential themes that reflect the key aspects of the participants' experiences, challenges, and strategies in teaching international students. Organizing the data into themes allowed the researcher to find commonalities across different participants and differences that highlighted the complexity of teaching in a multicultural classroom. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of the issues at hand, providing rich insights into the teaching practices and perceptions of the instructors.

2.2 Sources of Data

Participants for this study were carefully selected to ensure that the sample was relevant to the context and in line with the research objectives. A non-probability sampling method, which is convenience sampling in this case, is favoured for this kind of exploratory research where further information regarding the phenomenon under study is being sought. Convenience sampling enables a researcher to study individuals who can be reached quickly and want to participate; this is an advantage of a qualitative study because it focuses on lived experiences and perceptions (Rahi, 2017).

The ten participants in this study who taught oral communication to international students were chosen from the following selection criteria. These participants were selected based on specific inclusion criteria to ensure they had research experience and knowledge. The entry point in this study was that the teachers must have taught oral communication to international students for at least five years at North China University of Science and Technology. The following are the foreign students in their classrooms: Participant 1: Pakistani, Nigerian, Kenyan, German; P2: Nigerian, Kenyan; P3 Hungarian, Pakistani, South African; P4: German, Pakistani, Indian; P5 Bangladeshi, Nigerian; P6:Kenyan, Nigerian, Indian, Pakistani, Hungarian; P7: Pakistani, Russian; P8: South African, Bangladeshi; P9: Kenyan, Nigerian, Pakistani; and P10: Pakistani, Kenyan, Nigerian.

Qualitative interviews were chosen as the primary method for data collection, as they offer an in-depth exploration of participants' personal experiences, perceptions, and insights. In-person interviews were conducted to establish rapport with participants, encouraging them to share candid and detailed responses. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), this approach enabled the gathering of data rich in nuance and context, which may have otherwise not been easily accessible using other forms of data gathering like questionnaires or surveys. By interviewing, the researcher dug deeper into what participants could be experiencing to provide information specific to teaching oral

communication, which is part of a broader set of issues surrounding multicultural education. This helped to build an all-inclusive understanding of the intricacies involved in teaching international students and also took forward the general aims of the research.

For this study, the in-person interview method was employed. The qualitative interviews complemented the study's objective of examining individual experiences, obstacles, and methods for teaching international students oral communication, yielding solid and thorough results.

In conclusion, convenience sampling, qualitative interviews, and the non-probability sampling procedure proved to be an appropriate and successful strategy for this study. Teachers who fulfilled specific requirements and key informants with in-depth knowledge were included to guarantee that the data gathered was thorough and pertinent. To better understand the challenges of teaching oral communication in a multicultural school setting, the qualitative interview method allowed for a thorough examination of the participants' experiences.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Experiences of Participants Teaching Foreign Students in their Classes

The experiences of participants teaching international students in their classes presents a rich tapestry of teaching experiences with international students, both the enriching opportunities and the intricate complexities involved in such intercultural classrooms.

Table 1: General Experiences of Participants Teaching Foreign Students in their Classes

Participant	Responses	Initial Codes	SubThemes	Themes
1	*"Foreign students who come from Nigeria and Kenya are more direct and open in discussions, while Chinese students are more reserved."*	Directness, Cultural Norms, Classroom Dynamics	Communication Styles	**Prejudice Reduction**
2	*"Unique perspectives and cultural diversity enhance classroom discussions. This is what I observe especially from my students coming from Kenya and Kenya".*	Diverse Backgrounds, Collaborative Learning	Value of Diverse Perspectives	**Prejudice Reduction**
3	*"Cultural perspectives lead to enriching conversations; foreign students from Hungary, Pakistan, South Africa face language barriers."*	Language Barriers, Collaboration Styles	Language & Communication Challenges	**Equity Pedagogy**
4	*"Foreign students like Nigerians, Kenyans and Indians are active in classroom discussion in oral communication, while Chinese students prefer listening."*	Participation, Time Perception	Classroom Participation Styles	**Prejudice Reduction**
5	*"Most of the foreign students (Bangladesh, Nigeria) have outstanding personality and can directly raise questions, and are more willing to express their ideas and communicate with each other."*	Language construction	Communication Confidence	**Knowledge Construction**
6	*"For foreign students from India and Pakistan, experiences with diverse cultural backgrounds are rewarding yet challenging, especially with language proficiency differences."*	Language Proficiency, Motivation	Impact of Language Proficiency	**Equity Pedagogy**
7	*I think the biggest difference is communication difficulties, there are many knowledge points can not be explained thoroughly, understand. Because when teaching knowledge with foreign students (Pakistan, Russia) at times, they can express very light and clear, I don't know where to start in English.*	Communication Barriers, Examination Methods	Teacher Communication Challenges	**Equity Pedagogy**
8	*"Foreign students (South Africa and Bangladesh) prefer discussion-based learning; Chinese students focus on memorization."*	Study Habits, Individual vs. Collective Perspectives	Learning Preferences	**Content Integration, Knowledge Construction**
9	*"Foreign students prioritize process over conclusions, while local students focus on memorization especially for* Kenyas, Nigerians Pakistanis.*"*	Engagement, Learning Approaches	Learning Approaches & Focus	**Content Integration, Knowledge Construction**
10	*"Differences in learning environment and language impact the experiences of foreign and local students."*	Learning Environment,	Impact of Learning Environment & Language	**Equity Pedagogy**

The findings indicate Content Integration, with teachers acknowledging the importance of varied viewpoints, to wit:

Participant 2: *"Unique perspectives and cultural diversity enrich classroom discussions." Participant 3: "Cultural viewpoints result in enriching conversations."*

These answers concur with Bank's theory on formulating culturally relevant pedagogy, which emphasizes making learning significant and accessible for learners from various cultural backgrounds. Diversity in perspectives in the curriculum enhances all students' learning.

Further, the Knowledge Construction theme brings forth varied learning styles and preferences.

Participant 8: *"Foreign students like discussion learning; Chinese students emphasize memorization."* Participant 9: *"Foreign students emphasize process over conclusions, and local students emphasize memorization." Participant 5: "Foreign students generally have excellent personality and can directly ask questions, and are more likely to speak out and communicate with one another.*

These answers indicate different learning styles and strategies. Gay (2022) highlighted the need for culturally responsive teaching, which involves adapting instruction to address the different learning styles of students from various cultural backgrounds. Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) promote deeper learning, which goes beyond memorization and encourages critical thinking.

Though not mentioned in many verbatim answers, prejudice reduction is indirectly associated with Content Integration.

Participant 2: *"Unique perspectives and cultural diversity enrich classroom discussions."* This is supported by intergroup contact research (Pettigrew, 2021) which indicates that prejudice can be diminished by positive interaction between members of different groups. Developing a classroom where students' diverse perspectives are appreciated is vital to establishing intercultural understanding. The presence of diverse students does not necessarily ensure the reduction of prejudice; intentional methods of building understanding and respect are necessary.

Then, Equity Pedagogy emerges as a critical theme, with numerous responses highlighting challenges related to language barriers and cultural adjustment.

Participant 3 shares, "Foreign students encounter language barriers." Then, Participant 7: "I believe the largest difference is communication challenges." Participant 6: "For foreign students, encounters with different cultural backgrounds are rewarding but challenging, primarily due to differences in language skills." Next, Participant 10: "Learning environment and language differences influence foreign and local students' experiences."

These answers call out the difficulty of language issues and cultural adaptation. García and Kleifgen (2020) underscore the necessity of specific language assistance and culturally responsive classrooms for English language learners. These answers also refer to the broader issue of cultural adaptation and the necessity of culturally sensitive support systems, as Lee and Lee (2020) argued.

The research depicts a sophisticated view of the education of international students. Educators understand diversity and are, in certain instances, adopting it into classrooms. Nonetheless, enormous challenges lie in language support, differentiated instruction, and the generation of appropriately equitable learning settings. Data portrays the demand for professional growth geared towards culturally responsive teaching, learning of a new language, and approaches toward treating cultural adjustment matters. In addition, the failure to find more explicit prejudice reduction strategies implies a distinct area of improvement in developing intercultural understanding. Presenting participant numbers reinforces that these issues are not ideological abstractions but lived realities of individual teachers.

The results concur with some main multicultural education theories and culturally responsive pedagogy. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) have established a foundation of culturally relevant pedagogy through their research on making learning relevant and available to students across various cultural backgrounds. The verbatim quotes corresponding to Content Integration agree with this theory, identifying the worth of including diverse voices in the curriculum.

Gay's (2022) culturally responsive teaching highlights the necessity of instruction that caters to the varying learning styles and needs of learners across diverse cultures. The responses in terms of Knowledge Construction, identifying differences in learning preferences and methods further underscore the relevance of this theory. Darling-Hammond, Schachner, Wojcikiewicz, and Flook, (2023) also highlight the necessity of culturally responsive instructional practices that recognize and appreciate cultural variations in communication patterns.

García and Kleifgen's (2020) book on bilingual education directly applies to the findings concerning Equity Pedagogy. As these authors underscore, the sheer volume of responses referencing language challenges indicates the need for specialized language support and culturally responsive classrooms for English language learners. Lee and Lee (2020) examine international students' acculturation and adjustment experiences and the significance of language skills and cultural adaptation to their overall achievement. The verbatim comments concerning the difficulties encountered by international students are consistent with this study.

Finally, Pettigrew (2021) study of intergroup contact offers the theoretical framework to explain the potential for prejudice reduction in multicultural classrooms. Although the data does not present direct evidence of overt prejudice reduction strategies, identifying diverse viewpoints indicates the potential for positive intergroup contact to promote intercultural understanding. Adding participant numbers enables us to link specific experiences to these theoretical frameworks.

Table 1 brings to light participants' experience in teaching international students in their own classes and gives rich insight into the teaching experience, both enriching and intricate. The outcomes reveal a predominant theme of Content Integration, and teachers recognized the significance of multiple perspectives. Participant 2 comments, "Unique views and cultural diversity enhance classroom discussion," and Participant 3 states, "Cultural perspectives lead to enriching discussions." These answers, coded initially as "Diverse Backgrounds" and "Collaborative Learning" and classified under the sub-themes of "Value of Diverse Views" and "Enriching Discussions," align with Banks' culturally relevant pedagogy theory. This theory focuses on rendering learning meaningful and available to learners from different cultures because multiple points of view within the curriculum improve the learning of all students.

Additionally, the theme of Knowledge Construction arises, underscoring multiple learning styles and preferences. Participant 8 says, "Foreign students prefer discussion learning; Chinese students focus on memorization," and Participant 9 says, "Foreign students focus on process rather than conclusions, and local students focus on memorization." These answers, coded initially as "Study Habits," "Individual vs. Collective Views," "Engagement," and "Learning Strategies," and themed under the sub-themes of "Learning Preferences" and "Learning Strategies and focus," reflect varying learning styles and strategies. Also, Participant 5's statement, "Foreign students tend to have an outstanding personality and could speak out directly and ask questions, and are more likely to communicate and interact with each other," which was initially coded as "Language construction" and under the sub-theme "Communication Confidence," implies diversified communication styles. These varied methodologies in constructing knowledge concur with Gay's (2022) focus on culturally responsive teaching or tailoring teaching to cater to the disparate learning styles of pupils from differing cultures.

The themes identified in the responses reflect key aspects of the classroom experiences of international students. These include Content Integration, where the diverse perspectives of international students contribute to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the content. Empowering School Culture emphasizes the importance of creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment that values the contributions of all students. Equity highlights a need for fairness and equal opportunity for all students so that participation and learning are not limited by language and cultural differences. Knowledge Construction forms the nucleus of the learning process where the students, through discussions and interaction, construct their understanding of the material. These themes together reflect the idea of making the pedagogic process responsive to diverse student needs by creating a classroom where every learner feels welcome and has opportunities to positively.

3.2 Challenges Participants' Encounter in Teaching Oral Communication to Students From Various Cultural Backgrounds

As to the difficulties participants face in teaching oral communication to students with diverse cultural backgrounds, offers a rich perspective on the intricacies of intercultural pedagogy. A close analysis of the verbatim responses, combined with prevailing theoretical models and current scholarship, sheds light on these difficulties'

complex dynamics and suggests possible pedagogical development directions.

Table 2: Challenges Participants' Encounter in Teaching Oral Communication To Students From Various Cultural Backgrounds

Participant	Responses	Initial Codes	Sub-Themes	Themes
1	*"Foreign students like from Pakistan, Nigeria, Kenya, Germany and other diverse backgrounds face challenges in articulating their thoughts in English, which affects their ability to fully engage in discussions."*	Language Barriers, Engagement Challenges	Difficulty Expressing Thoughts, Limited Participation	**Communication Barriers, Equity Pedagogy**
2	*"Integrating content from different cultures into oral communication lessons is difficult because of the varying cultural perspectives and language barriers."*	Cultural Differences, Language Barriers	Content Integration Challenges, Varying Perspectives	**Content Integration, Communication Barriers**
3	*There is often a lack of understanding between students from different cultures, leading to miscommunication and difficulties in collaboration."*	Miscommunication, Cultural Differences Prejudice Reduction	Intercultural Misunderstanding, Collaboration Difficulties	**Intercultural Competence, Communication Barriers**
4	*Some students struggle with the approach to oral communication, as they come from educational systems that focus more on rote memorization rather than interactive discussions."*	Study Habits, Learning Approaches	Differing Learning Styles, Rote Memorization Background	**Learning Approaches, Equity Pedagogy**
5	*Cultural norms inhibit some foreign students from freely airing their opinion in class due to the values against open expression of opinion and participation".*	Cultural Norms, Reluctance to Participate Power	Cultural Inhibition, Participation Anxiety	**Cultural Factors, Communication Barriers**
6	*"There exists a linguistic competence gap as well, creating barriers in communicating due to their linguistic proficiency not matching of other students.*	Language Proficieny Barriers to Communicate	Impact of Language Proficiency	Equity Pedagogy
7	*"The difficulty will be to find good strategies for enabling students from different cultural backgrounds to make contributions to discussions without feeling dominated by language problems."*	Language Barriers, Participation Challenges	Teacher Communication Challenges	Equity Pedagogy
8	*"The greatest challenge would be accommodating diverse learning styles and their preferred way of learning, such as students from collectivist cultures who prefer group discussions over individual presentations."*	Learning Preferences, Group Dynamics	Learning Preferences	**Content Integration, Knowledge Construction**
9	*"There is a tendency to overlook the uniqueness of foreign students' perspectives, and thus the appreciation for what they contribute to the class discussion."*	Cultural Insensitivity Lack of Recognition	Learning Approaches & Focus	**Content Integration, Knowledge Construction**
10	*"Sometimes prejudices and stereotypes influence how students are perceived in the classroom. The unequal treatment sometimes makes them avoid participation."*	Stereotyping, Unconscious Bias	Impact of Learning Environment & Language	Equity Pedagogy

Participant 1: "Foreign students from Pakistan, Nigeria, Kenya, Germany, and other diverse backgrounds face challenges in articulating their thoughts in English, which affects their ability to engage in discussions fully." The **initial codes are** language barriers, engagement challenges with **themes such as communication** barriers, and equity pedagogy. This participant highlights the direct obstacle of language proficiency impacting students' ability to participate in classroom discussions. This aligns with **Banks' Level 1: Contributions Approach** (Banks, 2004), where the focus is on acknowledging contributions from different cultures, but the systemic issues hindering equitable participation are not addressed. The participant's observation points toward the need to move beyond surface-level inclusion towards **Banks' Level 4: Social Action Approach** (Banks, 2004), where students are empowered to challenge the status quo and advocate for equitable educational opportunities. The language barrier creates an inequitable learning environment, impacting students' access to knowledge and ability to demonstrate understanding.

Participant 2: "Integrating content from different cultures into oral communication lessons is difficult because of

the varying cultural perspectives and language barriers." **Initial Codes are** Cultural Differences, Language Barriers with **Themes of content** Integration, and Communication Barriers. This response focuses on the challenges of curriculum design and implementation. The participant notes the difficulty of incorporating diverse cultural perspectives due to language barriers and varying worldviews. This reflects **Banks' Level 2: Additive Approach** (Banks, 2004), where cultural content is added to the curriculum without fundamentally altering its structure or dominant narratives. While acknowledging cultural diversity, this approach may still lead to a "superficial" understanding of different cultures. The participant's concern about varying perspectives suggests a need for pedagogical strategies that facilitate respectful dialogue and critical engagement with diverse viewpoints, moving towards **Banks' Level 3: Transformation Approach** (Banks, 2004), where the curriculum is restructured to incorporate diverse perspectives and challenge dominant narratives.

Participant 3: "There is often a lack of understanding between students from different cultures, leading to miscommunication and difficulties in collaboration." **Initial codes are** miscommunication, cultural differences, prejudice reduction, and **themes such as intercultural** competence and communication barriers. This participant identifies a critical issue of intercultural misunderstanding leading to miscommunication and hindering collaborative learning. This resonates with **Banks' emphasis on reducing prejudice and fostering positive intergroup relations** (Banks, 2004). The lack of understanding suggests explicit instruction in intercultural communication, empathy development, and strategies for challenging stereotypes and prejudice. This aligns with **Banks' Level 3: Transformation Approach** (Banks, 2004) as it requires a shift in classroom dynamics to promote mutual respect and understanding.

Participant 4: "Some students struggle with the approach to oral communication used in the classroom because it may be rooted in Western communication styles, which are unfamiliar to them." **Initial Codes are** Study Habits, Learning Approaches and themes Differing Learning Styles, Communication Barriers

This response highlights the potential mismatch between teaching methodologies and students' prior learning experiences. If the classroom's approach to oral communication is rooted in Western styles, students from different cultural backgrounds may find it challenging to adapt. This reflects **Banks' concern for culturally responsive teaching** (Banks, 2004). It underscores the need for educators to be aware of diverse communication styles and adapt their pedagogy to accommodate different learning preferences. This aligns with **Banks' Level 3: Transformation Approach** (Banks, 2004) as it calls for a fundamental shift in instructional practices to address the diverse needs of learners.

Participant 4: "Some students struggle with the approach to oral communication as they come from educational systems that focus more on rote memorization rather than interactive discussions." **Initial Codes are** Study Habits, Learning Approaches, and Rote Memorization, and **Themes are** Learning Approaches and equity Pedagogy. This participant highlights a mismatch between teaching methods and students' prior learning experiences. Coming from educational systems prioritizing rote learning, some students may find adapting to interactive, discussion-based oral communication approaches challenging. This reflects **Banks' Level 3: Transformation Approach** (Banks, 2004) as it necessitates a shift in pedagogical approaches to recognize and accommodate diverse learning styles. The focus on rote memorization suggests a lack of experience with critical thinking and expressing opinions in an interactive setting, which impacts their ability to engage effectively in classroom discussions.

Participant 5: "Cultural norms inhibit some foreign students from freely airing their opinion in class due to the values against open expression of opinion and participation." **Initial Codes are** Cultural Norms, Reluctance to Participate, Power, **Themes**, Cultural Factors, and Communication Barriers. This response delves into the influence of cultural norms on classroom participation. Students from cultures that discourage open expression of opinions or prioritize respect for authority may be hesitant to participate actively in class discussions. This aligns with **Banks' focus on creating culturally responsive classrooms** (Banks, 2004). It also highlights the power dynamics inherent in classroom interactions and the potential for cultural norms to silence certain voices. This links to **Banks' Level 4: Social Action Approach** (Banks, 2004) as it requires educators to challenge traditional power structures and create space for diverse perspectives.

Participant 6: "There exists a linguistic competence gap as well, creating barriers in communicating due to their linguistic proficiency not matching that of other students." **Initial Codes**: Language Proficiency, Barriers to Communicating and **Themes:** Equity Pedagogy. This participant points out the linguistic challenges faced by students whose language proficiency does not match their peers. This "linguistic competence gap" creates significant barriers to communication and equitable participation. This directly relates to **Banks' concern for**

equity in education (Banks, 2004). It underscores the need for targeted language support and scaffolding to ensure all students have equal learning opportunities.

Participant 7: "The difficulty will be finding good strategies for enabling students from different cultural backgrounds to contribute to discussions without feeling dominated by language problems." **Initial Codes:** Language Barriers, Participation Challenges and **Themes:** Equity Pedagogy. This response focuses on the practical challenge of finding effective strategies to support students from diverse cultural backgrounds in contributing to class discussions. The participant acknowledges that language problems can be dominating, potentially leading to participation anxiety and a lack of voice and agency. This aligns with **Banks' emphasis on empowering students** (Banks, 2004) and highlights the need for pedagogical approaches that foster inclusion and create a safe space for students to express themselves.

Participant 8: "The greatest challenge would be..." (This response is incomplete in the provided excerpt.). **Initial Codes:** Learning Preferences and **Themes:** Content Integration (Likely, based on the previous responses). Without a complete response, providing a thorough analysis is difficult. However, based on the mention of "learning preferences," it is likely that this participant would have discussed the challenge of accommodating diverse learning styles and preferences in the classroom, potentially related to content integration.

Participants' feedback identifies interrelated challenges in teaching oral communication to students from multicultural backgrounds. These challenges are centered around Equity Pedagogy: Overcoming linguistic barriers, cultural variations in learning styles, and anxiety in participation calls for equitable pedagogy that appreciates and acknowledges diversity. Cultural Factors: Cultural values, norms, and communication patterns can influence students' willingness and capability to engage in class discussions. Communication Obstacles: The gaps in language skills, cultural miscommunication, and differences in communication are barriers to successful communication and cooperation. Participants' feedback identifies interrelated challenges in teaching oral communication to students from multicultural backgrounds. These challenges are centered around equity pedagogy, which involves overcoming linguistic barriers, cultural variations in learning styles, and anxiety in participation, which calls for equitable pedagogy that appreciates and acknowledges diversity. Cultural Factors: Cultural values, norms, and communication patterns can influence students' willingness and capability to engage in class discussions. Communication Obstacles: The gaps in language skills, cultural miscommunication, and differences in communication are barriers to successful communication and cooperation.

Such themes closely resonate with James Banks' multicultural education theory (Banks, 2004). Banks stresses the significance of cultivating culturally responsive classrooms where students of all backgrounds feel valued, respected, and empowered to learn. The participants' responses highlight teachers' need to go beyond tokenistic inclusion and resort to transformational pedagogy that problematizes the dominant discourses, is attentive to systemic injustices, and facilitates critical reflection and social action. Teachers can build inclusive and equitable learning environments where all students can achieve styles by recognizing and meeting the challenges of language, culture, and learning style.

3.3 Strategies' Participants Employ to Overcome the Challenges

Table 3: Strategies' Participants Employ to Overcome the Challenges

Participant	Responses	Initial Codes	Sub-Themes	Themes
1	*"I chose a neutral material and introduced some materials from students' cultural background."*	Neutral Materials, Cultural Inclusion	Culturally Relevant Materials, Inclusive Content	**Content Integration, Equity Pedagogy**
2	*"Used clear and straightforward language... Avoided idiomatic expressions."* *"Adopted diverse teaching methods... interactive teaching..."*	Simplified Language, Clarity Diverse Methods, Adaptability	Clear Communication, Varied Instruction	**Communication Strategies, Equity Pedagogy**
3	*"Concepts explained more thoroughly and repeated..."*	Additional Explanation, Repetition	Enhanced Clarity, Repetitive Instruction	Communication Strategies
4	*"I have introduced a multilingual online communication platform..."*	Multilingual Platforms, Confidence Building	Multimodal Communication, Confidence Building	**Communication Strategies, Equity Pedagogy**
5	*"Referred to some foreign books... seek suitable teaching methods..."*	Foreign books	External Resources, Adapted Methods	**Resource Utilization, Equity Pedagogy**

6	*"Incorporated peer review sessions... self-reflection through journal entries..."*	Peer Review Sessions	Collaborative Learning, Reflective Practice	**Collaborative Learning, Metacognitive Development**
7	*"I checked the cultural differences... find communication methods..."*	Cultural Awareness, Planning	Cultural Sensitivity, Strategic Planning	**Cultural Competence, Communication Strategies**
8		Variety of Methods, Global Topics Global Content	Diverse Instructional Strategies, Global Perspectives	**Communication Strategies, Content Integration**
9	*"Played some short films and videos, especially English short films..."*	Short films	Multimedia Resources, Authentic Materials	**Resource Utilization, Communication Strategies**
10	*"Clarified teaching objectives... promoting interactive discussions..."*	Clear Objectives, Interactive Discussion	Focused Instruction, Interactive Learning Environment	**Communication Strategies, Equity Pedagogy**

Table 3 presents the approaches participants use to manage difficulties in teaching oral communication to diverse students, providing important insights into successful intercultural pedagogy. Close examination of the verbatim responses, contextualized within relevant theoretical models and contemporary scholarship, highlights the complexity of effective teaching methods in diverse classrooms.

The strategies participants utilize group together under a few broad themes. Content Integration can be seen in Participant 1's strategy: "I used a neutral material and added some students' cultural background materials." This culturally responsive strategy acknowledges the value of drawing students' experiential and cultural knowledge into the curriculum and, thus, making the Learning more authentic and engaging. Communication Strategies represent a variety of methods utilized to make communication more transparent and engaging. Participant 2's emphasis on "clear and simple language" and avoidance of "idiomatic expressions" stresses the significance of clear language for multiple learners. The same participant's implementation of "diverse teaching approaches. interactive instruction" reflects a dedication to multiple forms of instruction, accommodating different learning styles and needs. Participant 3's approach of detailing "concepts. in depth and repeated" underscores the benefits of redundancy and repetition for understanding. Participant 4's presentation of a "multilingual online communication platform" is an imaginative solution to overcoming language differences and facilitating communication. Participant 7's conscious attempt to "check the cultural differences. find communication methods" indicates the need for cultural awareness and flexibility in communication. Participant 8's mention of "a variety of teaching methodologies, including visual aids, role-playing" and Participant 10's emphasis on "clearly stated teaching goals. encouraging interactive discussions" also highlight the completeness of effective communication strategies.

Resource Utilization is an important strategy, with Participant 5 mentioning "some foreign books" and looking for "appropriate teaching methods." Participant 9 uses "short films and videos, particularly English short films." These instances show the merit of using outside resources to enhance teaching and offer accurate materials for language study.

Participant 6's use of "peer review sessions " exemplifies collaborative learning. This approach not only gives students a chance for practice and feedback but also builds a sense of community and communal Learning. Participant 6 also covers metacognitive development, speaking of "self-reflection through journal entries." This practice promotes students' being more aware of their own learning processes, strengths, and weaknesses, empowering them to own their Learning.

Cultural Competence can be seen in Participant 7's conscious attempt to "check the cultural differences" and change communication strategies accordingly. This shows respect for cultural diversity and a commitment to understanding it, which is crucial for successful intercultural teaching.

These approaches are consistent with Banks' multicultural education theory, which calls for content integration, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, empowering school culture and social structure, and knowledge construction. The emphasis on culturally relevant material, multiple teaching techniques, and inclusive communication practices points to a commitment to equitable learning environments in which all students can thrive. The push toward intercultural understanding and cultural competence is consistent with Banks' demand for reducing prejudice and creating positive intergroup relations.

Gay (2022) highlighted the importance of culturally responsive teaching, which meets the varied needs of learners, encompassing language competence, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles. The participants' varied strategies exemplify this approach. Hall, Rose and Meyer (2012, as quoted in Darling-Hammond et al., 2020) emphasize the provision of multiple means of representation, action, expression, and engagement. Most of the participants' strategies, e.g., varied teaching approaches and multimodal communication platforms, correspond to UDL principles. Star & Strickland (2007) refer to the significance of teacher noticing, which is paying attention to student thinking and responding in a manner that facilitates Learning. Participants' strategies, including checking cultural differences and modifying communication approaches, emphasize noticing and responding to students' needs.

These results have important implications for teacher education, curriculum design, and classroom practices. Teachers require professional development that provides the knowledge and skills to apply culturally responsive teaching practices, use diverse resources, and promote intercultural understanding in the classroom. Curricula must be culturally relevant and accessible, reflecting diverse perspectives and learning styles. Classroom practices must emphasize clear communication, varied instruction, collaborative Learning, and opportunities for metacognitive growth.

Table 3 demonstrates the innovative and productive approaches instructors use to counteract issues in teaching oral communication to diverse students. The approaches group under content integration, communication strategies, utilization of resources, collaborative Learning, metacognitive awareness, and cultural proficiency. Such findings highlight the significance of culturally responsive teaching, universal design for Learning, and teacher noticing in promoting inclusive and equitable learning environments where all learners succeed.

4. Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

1) The themes identified in the responses reflected key aspects of the classroom experiences of international students. These included Content Integration, where the diverse perspectives of international students contributed to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the content. Empowering School Culture emphasizes the importance of creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment that values the contributions of all students. Equity highlighted that all students need fairness and equal opportunity so that participation and learning are not limited by language and cultural differences. Knowledge Construction forms the nucleus of the learning process where the students, through discussions and interaction, construct their understanding of the material. These themes together reflected the idea of making the pedagogic process responsive to diverse student needs by creating a classroom where every learner feels welcome and has opportunities to contribute to learning positively.

2) The challenges participants encountered in teaching oral communication to students from various cultural backgrounds captured the generated themes: Equity Pedagogy: Overcoming linguistic barriers, cultural variations in learning styles, and anxiety in participation calls for equitable pedagogy that appreciates and acknowledges diversity. Cultural Factors: Cultural values, norms, and communication patterns can influence students' willingness and capability to engage in class discussions. Communication Obstacles: The gaps in language skills, cultural miscommunication, and differences in communication are barriers to successful communication and cooperation.

3) The strategies participants employed to overcome the challenges yielded the following themes: cultural responsiveness, effective communication, pedagogical flexibility, and engagement, focusing on addressing the varied needs of international students. The recurring themes were cultural responsiveness, effective communication, and flexibility, thus underlining the need to be flexible in the teaching practice according to students' needs. Cultural awareness infused with pedagogical flexibility allows teachers to effectively address language and cultural barriers by creating a more inclusive and practical learning experience.

4.2 Recommendations

To maximize the research on Multiculturalism in Teaching Oral Communication: Experiences, Challenges, and Strategies, the following recommendations are proposed by the researcher:

1) Teachers and oral communication instructors can incorporate professional development activities aimed at Equity Pedagogy and Reducing Prejudice. Some of these may be workshops on communication skills, cultural

competence, and inclusive pedagogy.

2) Oral communication instructors can support and enact classroom-based policies that include culturally responsive teaching practices. Such policies should facilitate the inclusion of diverse viewpoints and balanced teaching methods in oral communication courses.

3) Structured training to develop cultural responsiveness and readiness is suggested for instructors. Co-operation with cultural experts and use of digital tools for language assistance and fluent communication can improve instruction approaches and resource development.

4) Foreign language and oral communication professors can develop interactive learning environments that promote student involvement and peer to peer interaction. Group discussions, peer teaching, and multicultural critique sessions can build a better sense of understanding for different communication approaches.

5) Teachers can integrate experiential learning techniques, including field trips, community projects, and role-playing activities. These techniques enable students to interact with various cultural populations and rehearse actual communication situations in multicultural environments.

6) Seasoned teachers can participate in mentorship schemes to assist less experienced teachers in developing an Empowering School Culture. Moreover, having formal feedback systems in place can allow for ongoing discussion between students and teachers, enhancing multicultural teaching practices over time.

7) Teachers may also assist in crafting multicultural educational materials and resources. Having a pool of common, varied instructional materials can enhance Cultural Relevance and Methodological Diversity. A handy guide or toolkit condensing the strategies from this research can also be developed, giving classroom application tips.

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