RESEARCH ARTICLE

Bridging the Gap: Effective Techniques for Teaching in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students

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Abstract

This study examines effective teaching techniques for Grade 12 students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds at Indiana Aerospace University. As classroom diversity continues to increase, educators are challenged to implement curriculum, instructional, and assessment practices that foster inclusivity and equitable learning opportunities. The primary aim of this research is to assess the effectiveness of teaching techniques used with culturally and linguistically diverse learners and to identify challenges encountered by both students and teachers. A mixed-methods research design was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected through researcher-developed questionnaires administered to 30 Grade 12 students (15 local and 15 international) and six senior high school teachers selected through random sampling. Statistical analyses, including weighted means and rankings, were used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional practices and identify key areas of concern. Findings indicate that while existing curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices are generally effective, issues related to clarity of instruction, pacing, instructional strategies, and inclusivity in assessment remain evident. Based on the findings, an action plan was proposed to address these challenges and enhance inclusive teaching practices. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on culturally responsive education and provides practical recommendations for improving instructional practices in diverse classroom settings.

Keywords: *curriculum, instruction, assessment, teaching techniques, culturally and linguistically diverse*

Introduction

The increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in contemporary classrooms has underscored the need for teaching techniques that effectively address learners' varied backgrounds. Globally, educational institutions are challenged to implement pedagogical approaches that promote inclusivity, equity, and academic success for all students. In the United States, Gay (2018) emphasized that culturally responsive teaching significantly enhances student engagement and academic achievement by valuing learners' cultural identities. Similarly, Gonzales (2020) found that incorporating students' native languages and cultural contexts into instruction improves comprehension and classroom participation, particularly in linguistically diverse settings.

At Indiana Aerospace University, where students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds converge, the adoption of inclusive teaching strategies is particularly vital. Traditional instructional approaches may not sufficiently address the unique learning needs of all students in multicultural classrooms. As such, identifying effective teaching techniques that bridge cultural and linguistic gaps is essential for fostering a supportive learning environment where all learners feel valued and empowered.

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which posits that learning is deeply influenced by social interaction and cultural context (Vygotsky, 1978). This theory highlights the importance of instructional practices that connect new knowledge to students' prior experiences and cultural backgrounds. In alignment with this perspective, Republic Act No. 10533, also known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, mandates the use of mother tongue-based multilingual education in the early years of schooling, emphasizing the integration of learners' native languages and cultural contexts to promote inclusive and effective education.

Conducting this research at Indiana Aerospace University is particularly significant due to the institution's multicultural student population. As classrooms become increasingly diverse, there is a growing need to reassess curriculum design, instructional delivery,

and assessment methods to ensure they are responsive to students' linguistic and cultural differences. This study seeks to generate insights that contribute to more equitable and dynamic teaching practices within the university's senior high school program.

The purpose of this study is to assess effective teaching techniques for culturally and linguistically diverse Grade 12 students and to identify challenges encountered by educators and learners in multicultural classrooms. These challenges may include language barriers, differing educational expectations, and cultural misunderstandings that can hinder effective teaching and learning. By identifying successful instructional strategies—such as differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and culturally relevant pedagogy—this research aims to promote meaningful learning experiences and intercultural competence among students.

As Education majors, the researchers possess foundational knowledge of educational theories, instructional strategies, and classroom management practices. Their academic background in linguistics and cultural studies equips them with an understanding of the complexities involved in teaching diverse learners. This perspective enables the researchers to critically examine teaching practices and propose informed recommendations that support inclusive education.

Research Objectives

This study aims to assess and identify effective teaching techniques for Grade 12 students from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds at Indiana Aerospace University, for the academic year 2023-2024, and to propose an action plan. Specifically, this study sought to:

1. Determine the profile of respondents in terms of gender, age, nationality, and academic level.
2. Identify the effective techniques for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students:
   2.1. curriculum;
   2.2. instruction; and
   2.3. assessment.
3. Rank the challenges encountered by the senior high school grade 12 students and senior high school teachers.
4. Propose an action plan based on the results of the study.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design to examine effective teaching techniques for culturally and linguistically diverse Grade 12 students. Quantitative data were collected using a five-point Likert-scale survey to measure perceptions of instructional effectiveness, while qualitative insights were used to contextualize and explain the quantitative findings. This approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of teaching practices and classroom experiences.

Participants

The participants of the study included 30 Grade 12 students, consisting of 15 local students and 15 international students, as well as six senior high school teachers at Indiana Aerospace University. All participants were selected through random sampling to ensure objectivity and representation. The inclusion of both students and teachers provided a balanced perspective on instructional effectiveness and classroom inclusivity.

Instrument

Data were collected using researcher-developed questionnaires designed to assess the effectiveness of teaching techniques in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The instrument utilized a five-point Likert scale with the following descriptors: 5 – Very Effective, 4 – Effective, 3 – Moderately Effective, 2 – Slightly Effective, and 1 – Not Effective. Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout the study.

Procedure

A formal request for approval to conduct the study was submitted to the Research Director of Indiana Aerospace University. Prior to full implementation, the questionnaire underwent preliminary testing to identify ambiguous or unclear items. Upon approval, the questionnaires were administered to the selected participants. Library personnel assisted in organizing and tabulating the collected data, which were categorized according to the study's sub-problems and presented in tabular form. The data were then prepared for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved the use of descriptive statistical techniques, including simple frequency counts, weighted means, and ranking. The five-point Likert scale responses were assigned numerical values and interpreted using descriptive equivalents. These analyses were used to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching techniques and assess perceptions of inclusivity within the classroom environment.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered strictly to ethical research standards. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants after clearly explaining the study's purpose and procedures. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any

time without penalty. Privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity were ensured by securely handling all data and excluding identifying information from reports. The study respected the dignity, rights, and well-being of all participants and was conducted in accordance with institutional ethical guidelines.

Results and Discussion

The study, "Bridging the Gap: Effective Techniques for Teaching in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students," explores strategies to enhance the learning experience of Grade 12 students and is presented and tabulated under curriculum, instruction, and assessment. These key areas are examined to develop methods that support students' diverse needs, ensuring an inclusive and effective educational environment.

Curriculum

Curriculum is the organized framework of subjects, skills, and learning experiences that guides students' educational journey. It serves as a road map, outlining what is to be taught and learned at various stages of education. In a culturally and linguistically diverse classroom, the curriculum must be flexible and inclusive, integrating materials that reflect students' diverse backgrounds and experiences. This means incorporating multicultural texts, examples, and activities that resonate with students from different cultures and linguistic backgrounds, ensuring they feel seen and valued in the learning environment.

Relating to our study, an effective curriculum for Grade 12 students addresses their diverse cultural and linguistic needs through relevant, inclusive content. By reflecting students' cultural identities, lessons enhance engagement and meaning, aligning with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of connecting new knowledge to social contexts. Republic Act No. 10533 (MTB-MLE) supports this integration of native languages, improving comprehension and participation. Culturally responsive teaching helps bridge gaps between backgrounds and academic content, fostering equity and preparing students for success in a multicultural world.

Table 1 and Table 2 presents the effective techniques in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students in terms of curriculum.

Table 1. *Students Curriculum n=30*

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. The curriculum is well-aligned with the learning needs of students from different linguistic backgrounds.	4.67	Very Effective
2. Curriculum materials are regularly updated to include the latest developments in the field.	4.27	Very Effective
3. The curriculum incorporate real-world examples that are relevant to students' diverse experiences.	4.23	Very Effective
4. The curriculum content successfully reflects the cultural diversity of the student population.	4.10	Effective
5. The curriculum structure provides a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.	4.10	Effective
Average Weighted Mean	4.27	Very Effective

Legend: 3.4 – 5.00 - Very Effective; 3.41 – 4.20 - Effective; 2.61 – 3.40 - Moderately Effective; 1.81 – 2.60 - Slightly Effective; 1.00 – 1.80 - Not Effective.

Table 2. *Teachers Curriculum n=6*

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. The curriculum encourages the integration of students' cultural experiences into classroom discussions and activities.	4.17	Effective
2. The curriculum content is successful in supporting the inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives in the classroom.	4.00	Effective
3. The curriculum structure is well-suited for addressing the needs of students from different linguistic backgrounds.	4.00	Effective
4. The curriculum provides teachers with appropriate tools and resources to engage students from diverse backgrounds.	4.00	Effective
5. The curriculum's flexibility allows for meaningful adjustments to cater to the varying learning needs of diverse students.	4.00	Effective
Average Weighted Mean	4.03	Effective

Legend: 3.4 – 5.00 - Very Effective; 3.41 – 4.20 - Effective; 2.61 – 3.40 - Moderately Effective; 1.81 – 2.60 - Slightly Effective; 1.00 – 1.80 - Not Effective.

Instruction

Instruction encompasses the methods and strategies teachers use to deliver the curriculum and engage students in the learning process. It involves everything from lesson planning, teaching techniques, and classroom management to how educators communicate with students. In a diverse classroom, instruction must be adaptable, using techniques that accommodate different learning styles, language abilities, and cultural backgrounds. This might involve using visual aids, group work, storytelling, or hands-on activities that make the material accessible and understandable to all students, regardless of their linguistic or cultural differences. Within our study, focusing on instruction means identifying methods that support Grade 12 students from diverse backgrounds. Culturally responsive teaching, aligned with Vygotsky's (1978) theory, connects learning with students' cultural contexts. Supported by Republic Act No. 10533 (MTB-MLE), these practices reduce language barriers and promote participation, ensuring all students can engage and succeed academically.

Tables 3 and 4 present effective instructional techniques for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Table 3. *Students Instruction n=30*

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. Instructional strategies are successful in promoting active participation among students.	4.33	Very Effective
2. The use of technology in instruction significantly enhances students learning experiences.	4.30	Very Effective
3. Instructional materials are well-adapted to meet the linguistic needs of all students.	4.13	Effective
4. The instructional techniques use in the classroom engage students from diverse, cultural backgrounds.	4.07	Effective
5. The pace of instruction is appropriate in ensuring that all students understand the content.	4.00	Effective
Average Weighted Mean	4.17	Effective

Legend: 3.4 – 5.00 - Very Effective; 3.41 – 4.20 - Effective; 2.61 – 3.40 - Moderately Effective; 1.81 – 2.60 - Slightly Effective; 1.00 – 1.80 - Not Effective.

Table 4. *Teachers Instruction n=6*

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. The instructional materials provided are well-suited for supporting students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.	4.33	Very Effective
2. The pacing of instruction is well-adjusted to accommodate the varied learning speeds of students with diverse linguistic abilities.	4.17	Effective
3. The instructional strategies were successful in fostering inclusivity among students from different cultural backgrounds.	4.00	Effective
4. The use of culturally responsive teaching techniques effectively promotes student engagement and participation in the classroom.	4.00	Effective
5. The integration of technology in my instructional methods significantly enhances the learning experiences of culturally diverse students.	3.50	Effective
Average Weighted Mean	4	Effective

Legend: 3.4 – 5.00 - Very Effective; 3.41 – 4.20 - Effective; 2.61 – 3.40 - Moderately Effective; 1.81 – 2.60 - Slightly Effective; 1.00 – 1.80 - Not Effective.

Assessment

Assessment is the process of evaluating and measuring students' understanding, skills, and progress throughout their educational journey. It includes various methods, such as quizzes, tests, projects, and observations, that help determine how well students are grasping the material. In a culturally and linguistically diverse setting, assessments must be designed to be fair and reflective of students' diverse backgrounds, ensuring that language proficiency does not hinder their ability to demonstrate their understanding.

In our study, assessment is vital for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching strategies for Grade 12 students from diverse backgrounds. By using varied methods such as presentations, visual projects, and group activities, educators can recognize and accommodate the multiple ways students learn, aligning with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of social interaction and learning. This approach encourages collaboration and active engagement among students, allowing them to showcase their knowledge in ways that resonate with their individual strengths.

Additionally, supported by Republic Act No. 10533 (MTB-MLE), this framework promotes inclusivity in assessments, ensuring that evaluations reflect students' diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. By providing a fair representation of each student's abilities, these inclusive assessment practices contribute to a more equitable educational experience, ultimately enhancing academic outcomes for all learners.

Tables 5 and 6 present effective assessment techniques for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Table 5. *Students Assessment n=30*

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. The assessment used by the instructor is well-suited for evaluating student performance.	4.27	Very Effective
2. The feedback provided through assessment is useful in guiding student improvement.	4.17	Effective
3. The timing and frequency of assessments aligned with the learning objectives.	4.07	Effective
4. The variety assessment types (e.g… quizzes, projects, presentations) evaluates different learning styles.	4.03	Effective
5. Assessments are designed to accommodate the diverse, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds of the students.	3.83	Effective
Average Weighted Mean	4.07	Effective

Legend: 3.4 – 5.00 - Very Effective; 3.41 – 4.20 - Effective; 2.61 – 3.40 - Moderately Effective; 1.81 – 2.60 - Slightly Effective; 1.00 – 1.80 - Not Effective.

Table 6. *Teachers Assessment n=6*

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. The timing and frequency of the instructor's assessments align with the needs of students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.	4.33	Very Effective
2. The feedback provided through assessments is constructive in guiding students from different cultural backgrounds toward improvement.	4.17	Effective

3. The assessments designed by the instructor are successful in evaluating students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.	4.00	Effective
4. The instructor's assessments are adaptable enough to accommodate students with varying language proficiency levels.	4.00	Effective
5. The instructor uses a variety of assessment types to ensure that students' diverse learning styles are thoroughly evaluated.	4.00	Effective
Average Weighted Mean	4.10	Effective

Legend: 3.4 – 5.00 - Very Effective; 3.41 – 4.20 - Effective; 2.61 – 3.40 - Moderately Effective; 1.81 – 2.60 - Slightly Effective; 1.00 – 1.80 - Not Effective.

Problems Encountered

The problems encountered by Grade 12 students and senior high school teachers who struggle to adapt teaching methods to cater to students' varied cultural backgrounds make it challenging to create an inclusive learning environment. These issues highlight the need for effective strategies to close the educational gap for diverse learners.

Table 7 lists the problems encountered by grade 12 students.

Table 7. *Problems Encountered by the Students (Multiple Responses)*

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
1. Instruction provided does not make complex concepts easy to understand.	19	1
2. The pace of instruction does not meet the needs of all students.	18	2
3. Instructional methods does not accommodate different learning styles.	15	3
4. Assessments are not designed to accommodate the diverse, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds of the students.	7	4.5
5. The feedback provided through assessment is not useful in guiding student improvement.	7	4.5
6. Curriculum materials are rarely updated to include the latest developments in the field.	6	6
7. The curriculum is not aligned with the learning needs of students from different linguistic backgrounds.	5	8
8. The curriculum structure does not provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter	5	8
9. The instructional strategies do not promote active participation among students.	5	8
10. Instructional materials used are not relevant to the students cultural backgrounds.	4	10

Table 7 shows the top-ranked problems encountered by grade 12 students: (a) instruction provided does not make complex concepts easy to understand. (b) The pace of instruction does not meet the needs of all students. (c) Instructional methods do not accommodate different learning styles. (d) Assessments are not designed to accommodate students' diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. (e) The feedback provided through assessment is not useful in guiding student improvement.

The first-ranked problem was that the instructions provided did not make complex concepts easy to understand, with a frequency of 19. This issue affects student comprehension, especially when dealing with abstract or difficult topics, resulting in knowledge gaps. When instruction fails to simplify challenging concepts, students may become disengaged or frustrated, ultimately hindering their academic progress.

The second rank problem was that the pace of instruction did not meet the needs of all students at a frequency of 18. A one-size-fits-all approach to pacing disregards students' varying learning speeds, leaving slower learners behind while faster learners become disengaged. This imbalance can cause some students to struggle to understand the material, while others may lose interest due to a lack of challenge.

The third rank problem was that instructional methods do not accommodate different learning styles with a frequency 15. Ignoring the diverse ways in which students learn can prevent many from reaching their full potential. Without differentiated instruction tailored to visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners, some students may struggle to grasp material presented in a single format.

The fourth-rank problem was that assessments are not designed to accommodate students' diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, with a frequency of 7. This lack of inclusivity can result in unfair evaluation and prevent some students from demonstrating their true knowledge and skills. When assessments don't consider cultural and linguistic diversity, they may unintentionally disadvantage students, leading to inaccurate reflections of their abilities.

The fifth rank problem was that the feedback provided through assessment is not useful in guiding student improvement with a frequency of 7. Ineffective feedback fails to provide students with clear guidance on how to improve their performance or understand their mistakes. Without constructive feedback, students miss opportunities for growth and may continue to struggle with the same challenges.

Table 8 contains the following problems encountered by the senior high school teachers..

Table 8. *Problems Encountered by the Teachers (Multiple Responses)*

Indicators	Frequency	Rank
1. The instructional materials provided are not suited for supporting students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.	3	1
2. The feedback provided by the instructor through assessments does not adequately guide students from different cultural backgrounds toward improvement.	2	2.5
3. The timing and frequency of the instructor's assessments are not aligned with the learning objectives of students from diverse backgrounds.	2	2.5

4. The integration of technology in the instructor's teaching methods does not significantly enhance the learning experiences of culturally diverse students.	1	5
5. The instructional strategies used by the instructor are not successful in promoting active participation among students.	1	5
6. The variety of assessment types used by the instructor does not thoroughly evaluate students' diverse learning styles.	1	5
7. The curriculum does not encourage the integration of students' cultural experiences into classroom discussions and activities.	0	8.5
8. The curriculum content does not adequately support the inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives in the classroom.	0	8.5
9. The curriculum lacks the flexibility needed to make adjustments for diverse student learning needs	0	8.5
10. The curriculum structure does not allow teachers to address the needs of students from different linguistic backgrounds.	0	8.5

Table 8 shows the top-ranked problems encountered by senior high school teachers. (a) The instructional materials provided are not suited to support students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. (b) The instructor's feedback through assessments does not adequately guide students from diverse cultural backgrounds toward improvement. (c) The timing and frequency of the instructor's assessments are not aligned with students' diverse learning objectives. (d) The integration of technology in the instructor's teaching methods does not significantly enhance the learning experiences of culturally diverse students. (e) The instructor's instructional strategies are not effective at promoting active student participation.

The first-ranked problem was that the instructional materials provided are not suited to supporting students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, with a frequency of 3. This issue can lead to misunderstandings or disengagement, as students may find it difficult to relate to content that doesn't reflect their experiences. Without culturally inclusive materials, students may struggle to connect with the lessons, impacting their overall learning outcomes.

The second-rank problem was that the instructor's feedback through assessments did not adequately guide students from different cultural backgrounds toward improvement, with a frequency of 2. When feedback is not tailored to consider cultural differences, students may find it confusing or unhelpful in addressing their specific learning challenges. This can hinder their ability to progress, as they may not fully understand how to apply the feedback to improve.

The third rank problem was that the timing and frequency of the instructor's assessments are not aligned with the learning objectives of students from diverse backgrounds, with a frequency of 2. This misalignment can create unnecessary stress or hinder the accurate evaluation of students' knowledge and skills. If assessments are not scheduled appropriately, students may feel overwhelmed or unprepared, preventing them from demonstrating their true potential.

The fourth rank problem was that integrating technology into the instructor's teaching methods did not significantly enhance the learning experiences of culturally diverse students, with a frequency of 1. This issue suggests that technology is not being used to address students' diverse needs and backgrounds, limiting its effectiveness as a learning tool. As a result, students may not be fully engaged or struggle to connect with the material presented through technology.

The fifth rank problem was that the instructional strategies used by the instructor were not successful in promoting active participation among students with a frequency of 1. When teaching strategies fail to engage students, it leads to passive learning, where students are less likely to contribute or interact with the content. This lack of active participation can hinder students' understanding and retention of the material, making it difficult for them to fully benefit from the learning experience.

Conclusion

The effective techniques for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students were effective for grade 12 students and senior high school teachers in terms of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

The instruction provided does not make complex concepts easy to understand. To address this issue, teachers should employ scaffolding techniques that break down complex concepts into smaller, more manageable parts. The pace of instruction does not meet the needs of all students. To accommodate diverse learning speeds, teachers can implement differentiated instruction strategies, enabling flexible pacing in the classroom. Instructional methods do not accommodate different learning styles. Teachers should adopt a variety of instructional methods, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches, to engage all learners. Assessments are not designed to accommodate students' diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Developing culturally responsive assessments that reflect students' diverse backgrounds is crucial for fair evaluation. The feedback provided through assessment is not useful in guiding student improvement. To improve the utility of feedback, educators should focus on providing specific, actionable comments rather than general remarks. Incorporating self-assessment and peer-assessment opportunities can empower students to reflect on their learning and identify areas for improvement.

The instructional materials provided are not suited to support students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Teachers should incorporate culturally diverse materials, such as texts, visuals, and examples that reflect their students' backgrounds. The instructor's feedback through assessments does not adequately guide students from diverse cultural backgrounds toward improvement. Instructors should provide specific, culturally sensitive feedback aligned with students' individual learning experiences. The timing and

frequency of the instructor's assessments are not aligned with students' diverse learning objectives. Teachers should implement more flexible assessment schedules that allow students ample time to prepare based on their unique learning needs and backgrounds. The integration of technology in the instructor's teaching methods does not significantly enhance the learning experiences of culturally diverse students. Teachers should select technology tools and platforms that are user-friendly and accessible to students from diverse backgrounds, ensuring that language options and culturally relevant content are available. The instructor's instructional strategies are not effective at promoting active student participation. Teachers should adopt interactive teaching strategies, such as group discussions, role-playing, and collaborative projects, to encourage active participation.

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