

TEACHING ENGLISH IN MULTICULTURAL CLASSROOMS:

A CASE STUDY OF SAYFOL INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Education has become increasingly international these days and English teachers face new challenges in the classroom with students from various nationalities and cultures. This study is designed to explore multiculturalism in English classrooms in Sayfol International School as a descriptive, qualitative case study. To achieve this, three objectives are identified. First, exploring teachers' perspectives on English language learning (ELL) in multicultural classrooms; second, discovering the effective strategies English teachers use to enhance students' learning process; third, understanding students' perceptions of their cultural backgrounds and the teachers' strategies in the classroom. To elicit information from the two teacher-informants and the two student-informants, an interview schedule was developed. Their views were recorded, transcribed, decoded and analysed based on the research questions.

The findings show that language is one of the most recognizable characteristics of multicultural classrooms which affects students' intercultural communication. Teachers attempt to facilitate ELL students' understanding of lessons using different methods. Educators appear to be mediators of intercultural communication when a problem arises amongst students. They cater for ELL students' understanding of lessons and learning of English language through repetition of lessons, using simple vocabulary and short sentences, comprehensible concepts, group projects, technology assisted presentation, and dictionary. The students agree that the teachers are aware of cultural differences. They admit that teachers help students whenever they miss a lesson by more explanation, repetition of concepts and giving extra worksheets. The research findings suggest that Sayfol International School promotes intercultural communication in the classrooms; besides, culturally responsive teaching is applied in the classroom by teachers.