

## THE INTERPLAY OF TEACHER PRACTICES AND STUDENT COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN DIVERSE CLASSROOMS.

***Kuvandikova Sarvinoz***

*Teacher at the Applied aspects of the English language department,  
Uzbekistan state world languages university  
e-mail: [s.qvandiqova@uzswlu.uz](mailto:s.qvandiqova@uzswlu.uz)*

**Abstract.** *In increasingly multicultural and multilingual classrooms, developing students' communicative competence is a vital educational goal. Communicative competence includes not only the ability to convey information effectively but also the skills needed to navigate diverse cultural contexts. As educators, it is essential to implement strategies that cultivate inclusive environments where all students feel empowered to express themselves and engage with their peers. This paper examines how teacher practices—particularly those that are culturally responsive, linguistically inclusive, and focused on interaction—affect the communicative competence of students in diverse learning environments. Drawing on sociocultural and communicative competence theories, the article reviews empirical findings and proposes pedagogical strategies to enhance classroom communication. The study reveals that teacher awareness, instructional methods, and patterns of classroom interaction significantly influence students' communicative development, especially for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students from diverse linguistic backgrounds.*

**Keywords:** *communicative competence, diverse classrooms, teacher practices, culturally responsive teaching, differentiated instruction, scaffolding.*

### **Introduction**

The modern classroom is a microcosm of global diversity, comprising students from varied linguistic, cultural, and social backgrounds. Communicative competence—the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in social contexts (Hymes, 1972)—is increasingly recognized as essential for academic success and social integration. Teachers play a pivotal role in cultivating this competence, especially through practices that facilitate language-rich interaction and inclusive participation (Cummins, 2001). This paper examines the dynamic relationship between teacher practices and the communicative competence of students in diverse classrooms, with a focus on pedagogical implications and areas for further research. This exploration aims to highlight effective strategies that educators can employ to enhance students' communicative skills, ultimately fostering an environment where all learners feel valued and empowered to express themselves. By identifying best practices and

potential barriers, the study seeks to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on diversity and language education.

Teacher practices—scaffolding, modeling, and encouraging peer dialogue—are essential for creating environments supporting communication development (Walqui, 2006). Teachers shape student communication through both explicit language instruction and the implicit communicative norms present in classroom discourse. Effective practices include:

***Culturally responsive teaching:*** This approach recognizes students' cultural identities and incorporates diverse linguistic practices into the classroom (Gay, 2010). By valuing and integrating these diverse linguistic practices, teachers can foster an inclusive environment that encourages all students to participate and express themselves. This not only enhances communication skills but also promotes a sense of belonging and respect for cultural diversity within the classroom. Culturally relevant pedagogy enables students to connect their lived experiences with academic language use.

***Dialogic teaching:*** Alexander (2008) highlights the significance of structured classroom dialogue, encouraging students to reason, challenge, and collaborate through conversation. This approach not only deepens students' understanding of the material but also builds critical thinking skills that are essential for their academic and personal growth. By fostering an environment where dialogue is valued, teachers empower students to become active participants in their own learning journeys.

***Scaffolding and differentiation:*** Teachers who provide scaffolding for linguistic tasks offer step-by-step support, allowing English Language Learners (ELLs) and other students to engage meaningfully in classroom interactions (Gibbons, 2002). This support can take various forms, such as visual aids, sentence starters, or collaborative group work, which cater to diverse learning needs and promote inclusivity. By implementing these strategies, educators can ensure that all students, regardless of their language proficiency, are equipped to contribute to discussions and enhance their overall learning experience. This targeted assistance enables students to gradually build their language proficiency and confidence, which is crucial for their academic success. Additionally, by differentiating instruction based on individual needs, teachers can ensure that all students, regardless of their language background, have equitable access to the curriculum.

***Formative assessment of oral language:*** Monitoring and giving feedback on student speech aids in developing both pragmatic and grammatical competence (Heritage, 2010). This ongoing assessment not only helps educators identify areas where students may struggle but also fosters a supportive environment where learners feel encouraged to take risks with their language use. By implementing targeted feedback strategies, teachers can guide students toward greater fluency and better

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communication skills, ultimately enhancing their overall academic performance and engagement.

The development of communicative competence involves the integration of multiple language skills in authentic contexts. In diverse classrooms, students benefit from:

- **Opportunities for meaningful interaction:** Group work, peer dialogue, and student-led discussions create low-stress environments for language experimentation (Swain, 2000).
- **Exposure to academic language:** Teachers who explicitly teach discourse markers, transitional phrases, and subject-specific vocabulary equip students with tools for effective communication (Zwiers, 2008).
- **Supportive feedback:** Corrective feedback, when delivered constructively, helps students refine their linguistic output and develop confidence (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

### **Challenges and considerations**

Despite their best intentions, teachers often encounter barriers such as limited training in second language acquisition, implicit bias, and rigid curriculum demands. Additionally, students' communicative competence can be underestimated due to factors like accent, limited vocabulary, or unfamiliar discourse styles (Delpit, 2006). To address these challenges, professional development and reflective practice are essential. Reflective practice enables educators to critically evaluate their teaching methods and adapt to their students' diverse needs. By participating in ongoing professional development, teachers can deepen their understanding of language acquisition and foster more inclusive learning environments that celebrate linguistic diversity.

### **Conclusion**

Cultivating communicative ability in multicultural and multilingual classrooms is essential for promoting academic achievement and social integration among students. This research highlights the crucial role of educators in fostering an inclusive atmosphere that enhances communication skills, especially for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students from varied linguistic origins. Through the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy, dialogic methodologies, scaffolding techniques, and formative evaluations, educators may cultivate inclusive learning environments that enable all students to articulate their thoughts and interact substantively with their peers. The integration of diverse linguistic practices and structured classroom dialogue not only enhances students' communicative abilities but also nurtures critical thinking and a sense of belonging. However, challenges such as limited training, implicit biases, and rigid curricula can hinder the effective implementation of these strategies. To overcome these barriers, ongoing professional

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development and reflective practices are essential for educators. By closely assessing their pedagogical approaches and accommodating the varied needs of their students, educators may cultivate settings that honor linguistic variety and enhance equal access to educational opportunities. This investigation highlights the significance of deliberate teaching methods in improving communicative skills, therefore fostering a more inclusive and successful educational environment. As classrooms increasingly embody global diversity, the dedication to enhancing students' communication competencies remains an essential educational objective that advantages both individual learners and society at large.

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