

*Original Research*

# Intercultural Awareness in English Education: Bridging Cultures for Effective Teaching and Learning in Ghana

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**Abstract (English: 10 PT)**

Teachers understanding of culture diversity in the classroom is key to promoting learning. Therefore, there is the need for teachers to develop and implement effective pedagogical practices that foster intercultural competence in the Classroom. However, available literature suggests that while abundant anecdotal and perceptual evidence exists about the importance of understanding diversity in English as a second language classroom, information on teachers' intercultural competence and prevalence of culturally responsive teaching practices among English language teachers is inadequate. This study therefore examined the intercultural competence teaching practices in English language classrooms in Ghanaian classrooms. Adopting the Socio-cultural Theory within a quantitative approach with a descriptive survey design, a sample of 154 English language teachers were randomly sampled from basic schools in Awutu-Senya-East municipality of Ghana. The results reveal that English language teachers in the municipality recognize the significance of intercultural competence and demonstrate capabilities to integrate culturally responsive teaching strategies within their classrooms. Furthermore, the findings indicate variations in confidence levels and practical implementation, particularly in adapting teaching methods to diverse cultural learning styles and accessing support and resources necessary for these adaptations. The findings imply that occasional but frequent professional development seminars and training sessions centred on intercultural competency teaching methods for English language teachers be carried out. Additionally, School Improvement and Support Officers (SISOs) should be trained to equip them with the knowledge to ensure constant prompting of teachers.

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## 1. Introduction

Globalisation and societal shift which is prompted by the increase movement of people from one culture to another has become a prominent issue in educational sectors (Ramstrand et al., 2024). In today's increasingly interconnected world, globalisation has reshaped societies and redefined the nature of classrooms, making cultural diversity a common feature rather than an exception. As people move across borders for work, education, and resettlement, classrooms have become melting pots of languages, values, customs, and worldviews. In this context, the role of teachers is more complex than ever, requiring them not only to be subject matter experts but also culturally responsive facilitators who can support learners from diverse backgrounds. According to Ramstrand et al. (2024), the rise in transnational mobility has made intercultural competence a fundamental skill in education, particularly in language classrooms where communication is central.

This cultural shift presents both an opportunity and a challenge for English language education. On one hand, the English language serves as a bridge for communication among learners from varied backgrounds. On the other hand, it exposes learners and educators to complex intercultural dynamics that, if not managed properly, can hinder effective teaching and learning. As [Rumbley et al. \(2019\)](#) explain, teaching in multicultural classrooms demands more than traditional pedagogy. It requires teachers to possess a deep understanding of cultural diversity and to incorporate inclusive practices that validate students' identities. In line with UNESCO's Goal 17 on global partnerships and collaboration, teachers must be equipped to foster mutual respect and understanding among learners from diverse communities ([Guillén-Yparrea & Ramírez-Montoya, 2023](#)).

A growing body of literature highlights the importance of intercultural competence in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom. Studies such as [Horvat et al. \(2014\)](#) and [Eden et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasize that cultural competence plays a vital role in promoting inclusive learning environments where students feel respected and empowered. Furthermore, [Eden et al. \(2024\)](#) argue that culturally responsive teaching not only improves academic outcomes but also nurtures collaborative learning among students, families, and communities. Research by [Erling et al. \(2017\)](#) has shown that teachers' awareness of cultural dynamics can positively influence classroom management, student engagement, and content delivery. Yet, [Knauer et al. \(2019\)](#) caution that the lack of intercultural skills can impede effective instruction, especially in multilingual and multicultural settings.

Despite the theoretical advancements, significant gaps remain. As [Kern \(2020\)](#) notes, most studies on intercultural competence have been framed within contexts dominated by native English-speaking teachers and learners, overlooking the realities faced by ESL educators in linguistically diverse regions like Ghana. Furthermore, empirical investigations into how ESL teachers implement culturally responsive pedagogy in African classrooms remain limited ([Wolf & Avornyo, 2022](#)). Prior studies in Ghana, including those by [Adu-Gyamfi \(2014\)](#), [Akyeampong \(2017\)](#), and [Owusu-Acheampong and Kwapong \(2021\)](#), tend to focus on general educational practices and challenges rather than the nuanced strategies employed to address cultural diversity in English language teaching. Although [Vu and Dinh \(2021\)](#) and [Hesan \(2019\)](#) have explored intercultural attitudes in classroom practices, their findings are mostly situated in Asian or Western contexts. Consequently, there is a need for context-specific research that captures the realities of teachers operating in multilingual African environments.

This study addresses these research gaps by investigating how English language teachers in Ghana's Awutu Senya East municipality demonstrate intercultural competence and employ culturally responsive teaching practices. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on ESL classrooms in a uniquely diverse Ghanaian setting, where teachers interact daily with students from a multitude of ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. By exploring how educators perceive and implement intercultural strategies, the study contributes fresh empirical evidence from a sub-Saharan African context, which has been underrepresented in intercultural education research. Moreover, it bridges the gap between theoretical constructs of intercultural competence and the practical realities faced by teachers in resource-constrained, multilingual classrooms.

The main aim of this study is to assess the intercultural competence of English language teachers and the extent to which they apply culturally responsive strategies in their classrooms. Guided by [Vygotsky's \(1978\)](#) socio-cultural theory, the study also seeks to uncover how social and cultural contexts influence teaching practices in diverse learning environments. Specifically, it seeks to answer two key questions: How proficient are English language teachers in demonstrating intercultural competence? And what is the prevalence of culturally responsive teaching practices among these teachers? These objectives are significant because they provide insights into the preparedness of teachers to meet the educational needs of culturally diverse learners and offer evidence-based recommendations for teacher training and policy development.

This study is structured as follows. After this introduction, the literature review discusses foundational concepts and frameworks related to intercultural competence and culturally responsive teaching in language education. The methodology section outlines the research design, sampling, data collection procedures, and analysis techniques. The results are presented in two main thematic areas: teachers' self-reported intercultural competence and the prevalence of culturally responsive practices. The discussion interprets these findings in relation to previous studies and highlights the practical implications for teacher development and classroom practice. By situating the research within a Ghanaian context, this study advances the discourse on intercultural awareness in ELT and underscores the importance of equipping teachers with the tools to navigate cultural diversity in an increasingly globalized world.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Intercultural competence in English Language Classrooms**

Intercultural competence, the ability to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries, is increasingly recognized as essential in English language education (Abugre & Debrah, 2019). It involves knowledge of cultural differences, adaptability in communication, and meaningful intercultural engagement (gender, and class (Leersnyder et al., 2021; Wahidah et al., 2023; Atmaja, 2020). Byram's (1997) model identifies key components, including cultural knowledge, interpretative skills, and an open, inquisitive attitude. This framework informs curriculum design aimed at fostering intercultural awareness. Pedagogical strategies to enhance intercultural competence include integrating culturally diverse materials, experiential learning activities (e.g., role-playing, simulations, and collaborative projects), and culturally responsive teaching that validates students' identities (Wang, 2024; Kumi-Yeboah & Amponsah, 2023). Incorporating students' cultural narratives further promotes intercultural dialogue. Despite its significance, challenges persist. Many educators lack adequate training and resources to address intercultural issues, leading to a gap between theory and practice (Liu & Zhang, 2014). Curricula often fail to emphasize intercultural competence, limiting students' exposure to diverse perspectives (Thomas & Warren, 2017).

Recent research highlights the benefits of intercultural competence, including enhanced communication skills, empathy, and problem-solving abilities (Kern, 2020). Moreover, discussions on cultural differences in second language classroom is often disregarded resulting gaps in second language acquisition (Eide, et al., 2025). Kumi-Yeboah and Amponsah (2023) study examined online teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive pedagogy found that ESL teacher inadequate knowledge in cross-cultural interaction affects learning. Furthermore, Hidayah et al., (2024) study uniquely addresses the gap teachers developing multicultural-based English teaching materials aimed at enhancing students' vocabulary, cultural understanding, and speaking skills and found that substantial effects on learning in a situation where intercultural aware is low. But there improvements in students' speaking abilities when a learning material that has cultural relevance to the learners.

### **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This study adopts Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory, which underscores the role of social interaction and cultural context in cognitive and language development. Central to this framework are social interactions, cultural tools, and the zone of proximal development, which collectively facilitate learning. Within the context of Awutu Senya East, English language instructors can enhance students' linguistic competence and intercultural awareness by employing culturally responsive pedagogical strategies that scaffold learning within their zone of proximal development. The integration of bilingual approaches (English and local languages) and culturally relevant instructional materials fosters meaningful learning experiences and improves student engagement (Wolf & Avornyo, 2022). Classroom interactions and organizational structures are also shaped by cultural norms (Rogoff et al., 1993). A holistic evaluation of classroom quality necessitates consideration of environmental factors, cultural values, and teacher-student interactions (Wolf & Avornyo, 2022). While socio-cultural theory has been effectively applied to second language acquisition, it has been critiqued for prioritizing societal influences over individual learner differences (Ameri, 2020). Nevertheless, its relevance in multicultural educational settings remains well-established (Lim, 2001).

## **3. Method**

### **3.1 Research design**

In alignment with the positivist research philosophy, we employed descriptive surveys design to examine the intercultural competence teaching practices in English language classrooms in Ghanaian classrooms using the socio-cultural theory (Wolf & Avornyo, 2022; Vygotsky, 1978). The choice of the positivist research philosophy is to give a deep comprehension English language teachers perception of intercultural competence teaching practices in Ghanaian English language classrooms. Positivist paradigm shaped the study, helping the researchers to objectively quantify data with the use of statistical methods, making it particularly suited for studies that aim to produce generalizable and reliable results such as this study. Descriptive surveys allow us to gather large-scale data through structured instruments like questionnaires, which can then be analysed to identify trends and patterns within the population of interest. The design enables the collection of detailed information on experiences and perceptions. Because the aim of this study was to assess the intercultural competence teaching practices in English language classrooms in Ghanaian

classrooms, the use of quantitative descriptive survey is acceptable. Furthermore, the design was chosen because it allows researchers to gather large-scale data through structured instruments like questionnaires, which can then be analysed to identify trends and patterns within the population of interest.

### **3.2 Participants and sampling**

English language teachers who teach at the pre-tertiary level of education in Ghana made up the study's population. In particular, Ghana served as the main country used in this study. However, the accessible population consists of 154 English language teachers who were actively teaching in the Awutu-Senya-East municipality at the time of the study. The target population is confined to those teaching English within this municipality, offering a focused lens through which to examine the experiences of teachers in a specific cultural and educational context. This municipality was chosen due to its diverse population, including a significant number of migrant communities from all over Ghana and other African countries such as Nigeria, Togo, Liberia and Burkina Faso, which provides a unique framework for understanding the complexities of teaching English in such a varied environment (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). A simple random sampling procedure was used to select the 154 teachers, ensuring that each teacher had an equal chance of being chosen. This approach minimizes selection bias and enhances the representativeness of the sample, which is critical for the external validity of the findings (Fowler, 2014). By using random sampling, the study aimed to generate a sample that reflects the broader population of English language teachers in the municipality, allowing for generalizations about teaching practices and challenges across this group.

### **3.3 Procedure and data collection**

The primary data collection instrument used in the study was a structured questionnaire, designed with multiple sections to address the key research questions. The questionnaire included sections on demographic information, which gathered data on teachers' age, gender, educational background, and teaching experience, providing valuable context for the study's findings. It also included a section on teaching practices, focusing on the methods used by teachers in their English language classrooms, particularly in teaching writing.

Another section assessed the challenges faced by teachers, such as large class sizes or inadequate resources, while a section on resources and support evaluated the availability of materials and institutional support that can influence teaching effectiveness. Finally, the questionnaire included a section on professional development, exploring the opportunities available to teachers for growth, such as training programs or workshops. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire, providing participants with clear instructions to ensure that all questions were understood and answered accurately. This direct administration method helped maintain consistency and minimized response errors. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was reviewed for relevance, clarity, and alignment with the study's research objectives. Additionally, the study conducted a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.85, indicating that the questionnaire items were highly reliable and consistent in measuring the intended constructs (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

This high reliability score suggests that the instrument can be trusted to produce consistent results across different respondents. The data collection process was straightforward: the questionnaire was administered to all 154 teachers selected in the sample, and they were given clear instructions on how to complete it. The researcher ensured that all participants were fully informed about the study's purpose and their role in it. This transparency helped achieve a 100% response rate, with all selected teachers completing the questionnaire. The high response rate reflects the effective implementation of the data collection process and strengthens the validity of the findings (Babbie, 2001).

Ethical considerations were central to the study. Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that they understood the study's objectives, their rights as participants, and their right to withdraw at any time without facing negative consequences. The study adhered to ethical guidelines set by the Institutional Review Board, ensuring that participants' privacy and confidentiality were respected. The data were anonymized, and responses were securely stored to protect participants' identities. These ethical protocols were designed to uphold the integrity of the study and ensure the protection of participants (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

### **3.4 Data analysis techniques**

The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including the calculation of mean scores and standard deviations, to summarize the key characteristics and behaviours of the sample population. These



measures helped to present a clear understanding of the participants' experiences and practices. Descriptive statistics are widely used in educational research to make sense of large datasets and draw meaningful conclusions (Pallant, 2016). The analysis provided insights into the challenges faced by teachers and the resources available to them, as well as their professional development needs.

### 3.5 Ethical Approval Statement

Ethical considerations of voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity were taken into account during the recruitment of participants. In light of ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, teachers were not allowed to write their names on the questionnaire. Ethical principles were upheld throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before giving them the questionnaire to fill. The purpose of the study, the procedures for data collection, and voluntary participation were explained to all participants. The participants were also informed that their rights and consents were duly respected and protected. Thus, the anonymity of the participants and their occupational locations were assured through the use of numerical coding, which protects their privacy and identity. Furthermore, the participants were guaranteed confidentiality of the collected data and its use solely for academic purposes. Ethical review and approval were waived by University of Education, Winneba Research Ethics Committee for the study. This was due to anonymity of questionnaire. All procedures for data collection were treated with confidentiality according to University of Education, Winneba Declaration on ethics. Informed consent was sought from all individual participants (respondents) included in the study. They were informed that the survey was anonymous and that participation was voluntary. Consent was written.

## 4. Results

The rest of this paper focuses on the outcomes on English language teachers demonstrating of intercultural competence. The section also highlights the prevalence of culturally responsive teaching practices among English language teachers. This have been presented under two main themes, and the outcomes are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

### 4.1 Theme 1: English language teachers demonstrating of intercultural competence

This sub-section aimed to unravel English language teachers' proficiency in demonstrating intercultural competence in the Awutu Senya East municipality. This is covered in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Level of intercultural competence among Teachers in English Language classrooms

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I understand the concept of intercultural competence	154	4.19	.84
I believe intercultural competence is important in teaching the English language.	154	4.69	.46
I am familiar with the cultural customs, traditions, and values of ethnic groups in my class.	154	4.64	.48
I feel confident in my ability to facilitate cross-cultural interactions among students.	154	4.38	.86
I have received adequate training on intercultural competence in teaching.	154	4.72	.450
I feel prepared to teach the English language in a culturally diverse classroom.	154	4.31	.80

Source: Field data, 2024

Table 3 presents the level of intercultural competence among teachers in English language classrooms. The data reveals a generally high level of intercultural competence, with mean scores ranging from 4.19 to 4.72 across various statements, indicating that the teachers in the study perceive themselves as well-prepared to teach in culturally diverse environments.

The statement, “I understand the concept of intercultural competence,” received a mean score of 4.19 (SD = 0.84). This suggests that teachers have a solid understanding of intercultural competence, with relatively low variability in their responses (SD = 0.84), signifying a strong foundational knowledge that is essential for fostering inclusivity and cultural sensitivity in the classroom. This understanding is crucial, as it forms the basis for the effective application of culturally relevant teaching strategies, ensuring that teachers can navigate diverse cultural dynamics effectively. A higher mean score of 4.69 (SD = 0.46) was recorded for the statement, “I believe intercultural competence is important in teaching the English language.” This result reflects a strong consensus among teachers regarding the importance of intercultural competence in their teaching practice. The low standard deviation (SD = 0.46) indicates that the respondents are largely in agreement about the necessity of intercultural competence for enhancing teaching effectiveness, which is aligned with current literature that emphasizes the significance of culturally responsive pedagogy in promoting student engagement and learning outcomes (Gay, 2018).

Teachers also demonstrated familiarity with the cultural customs, traditions, and values of the ethnic groups in their classrooms, as indicated by a mean score of 4.64 (SD = 0.48). This high score underscores the teachers’ awareness of their students’ diverse cultural backgrounds, which is critical for creating an inclusive classroom environment where all students feel valued. A teacher’s familiarity with students’ cultural customs can enhance their ability to connect with students and incorporate relevant cultural references into their lessons, making learning more relatable and meaningful (Banks, 2015).

Furthermore, teachers reported feeling confident in their ability to facilitate cross-cultural interactions among students, with a mean score of 4.38 (SD = 0.86). This suggests that teachers are generally confident in managing intercultural interactions, an important skill for fostering collaboration and mutual respect in diverse classrooms. However, the higher standard deviation (SD = 0.86) reflects some variation in teacher responses, implying that while most teachers are confident, there may be some who feel less equipped to facilitate cross-cultural interactions effectively. This finding highlights the potential need for further professional development in this area to ensure that all teachers feel equally prepared. Training on intercultural competence was also evaluated, with a mean score of 4.72 (SD = 0.45) for the statement, “I have received adequate training on intercultural competence in teaching.” This high mean score indicates that teachers feel they have received sufficient training, which is essential for enhancing their knowledge and skills in handling culturally diverse classrooms. The low standard deviation (SD = 0.45) suggests that the teachers are generally in agreement regarding the adequacy of the training they have received. Training in intercultural competence is crucial for teachers to understand how to adapt their teaching methods to meet the needs of culturally diverse students and to address challenges that may arise in such classrooms (Nieto, 2010).

Finally, the statement “I feel prepared to teach the English language in a culturally diverse classroom” received a mean score of 4.31 (SD = 0.80). This result suggests that teachers generally feel prepared to teach in multicultural classrooms, although the slightly higher standard deviation (SD = 0.80) implies some variation in teachers’ self-perceptions of preparedness. While the majority of teachers feel equipped to teach in diverse settings, there may still be a subset who require additional support or resources to feel fully confident in their roles.

The findings provide important insights into English language educators’ self-perceived intercultural competence, contributing to the growing body of literature on culturally responsive teaching. While previous research has emphasized the importance of intercultural competence (Eide, et al., 2025, Kern, 2020), empirical studies focusing on self-assessment in this domain remain relatively scarce, particularly in non-Western or multilingual educational contexts. The high mean scores across all statements indicate a positive self-perception, reinforcing arguments that educators increasingly recognize the necessity of intercultural competence in language teaching. However, the study introduces a critical perspective by revealing nuanced discrepancies between theoretical knowledge, training, and practical preparedness, an area that has not been widely explored in existing literature.

One novel aspect of this study is the relationship between perceived adequacy of training (M = 4.72, SD = 0.45) and self-reported preparedness to teach in diverse classrooms (M = 4.31, SD = 0.80). While previous studies have emphasized the importance of intercultural training (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013), few have investigated whether such training translates into confidence in real-world classroom application. The observed gap suggests that while educators may feel well-trained, they might still experience challenges in

applying intercultural competence effectively in dynamic and unpredictable classroom settings. This insight adds depth to the discourse on teacher training programs, calling for a more experiential, practice-based approach to professional development.

A key discrepancy in the findings lies in the difference between high levels of agreement on understanding intercultural competence ( $M = 4.19$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ) and the slightly lower self-reported confidence in facilitating cross-cultural interactions ( $M = 4.38$ ,  $SD = 0.86$ ). This suggests that while teachers may understand the theoretical underpinnings of intercultural competence, their ability to apply these concepts in interactive classroom scenarios may vary. Previous research (Wang, 2024) supports this finding, emphasizing that conceptual knowledge does not always translate into effective pedagogical practice.

Another notable discrepancy is the relatively higher self-reported familiarity with students' cultural backgrounds ( $M = 4.64$ ,  $SD = 0.48$ ) compared to the lower confidence in facilitating cross-cultural interactions. While teachers may believe they are culturally aware, this does not necessarily equate to competence in managing culturally diverse interactions in real-time. This finding aligns with Kumi-Yeboah and Amponsah (2023) assertion that intercultural competence requires not only knowledge but also the ability to mediate and negotiate meaning across cultural boundaries, which is a more complex skill.

The strong agreement on the importance of intercultural competence in English language teaching ( $M = 4.69$ ,  $SD = 0.46$ ) is consistent with long-standing research highlighting the role of culture in second language acquisition (Hashemian & Farhang-Ju, 2020). This suggests that educators are well-aligned with contemporary perspectives on language teaching, reinforcing the argument that language cannot be separated from cultural context. Additionally, the relatively high level of perceived training adequacy aligns with previous findings indicating that teacher education programs increasingly incorporate intercultural competence training (Kern, 2020). However, the slightly lower perceived preparedness suggests that while such training exists, it may not always be sufficiently practical or reflective of real classroom challenges. These findings suggest that while educators recognize and value intercultural competence, there remains a need for professional development that bridges the gap between theory and practice. Future research should explore how experiential learning, reflective teaching practices, and ongoing professional development can enhance teachers' ability to translate intercultural knowledge into pedagogical strategies. Additionally, qualitative investigations into teachers' experiences with intercultural challenges could provide deeper insights into the complexities of applying intercultural competence in diverse classroom settings.

#### 4.2. Theme 2: Prevalence of culturally responsive teaching practices among English language teachers

This section aimed to explore the prevalence of culturally responsive teaching practices among English language teachers in the Awutu Senya East municipality. This is covered in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Extent of incorporating culturally responsive teaching strategies

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I regularly integrate culturally diverse materials into my English language lessons.	154	3.79	.90
I modify my teaching methods to accommodate different cultural learning styles.	154	3.10	1.40
I encourage students to share their cultural experiences and perspectives in the classroom.	154	3.54	1.49
I create opportunities for cross-cultural interactions among students in my classroom.	154	3.94	1.21
I address cultural differences and conflicts that may arise among students constructively.	154	4.16	1.24
I receive adequate support and resources to implement culturally responsive teaching strategies.	154	3.43	1.22

Source: Field data, 2024

The analysis of the data in Table 4 reveals several insights into the extent to which teachers are incorporating culturally responsive teaching strategies in their English language classrooms. While there is a general inclination toward utilizing diverse resources and fostering a culturally inclusive learning environment, the results also highlight areas where teachers may require further support and development.

One of the most prominent findings is the mean score of 3.79 ( $SD = 0.90$ ) for the statement “I regularly integrate culturally diverse materials into my English language lessons.” This suggests that teachers are generally making an effort to integrate diverse cultural materials into their teaching practices, which is a key element of culturally responsive pedagogy. However, the moderate standard deviation indicates variability in how consistently this practice is applied, with some teachers incorporating such materials more regularly than others. This inconsistency may reflect differences in teacher experience, familiarity with diverse cultural materials, or access to resources. It also points to a need for further professional development to standardize the use of diverse materials across all classrooms (Hashemian & Farhang-Ju, 2020). The second finding, regarding the modification of teaching methods to accommodate different cultural learning styles, has a mean score of 3.10 with a high standard deviation of 1.40. This suggests that while some teachers are adapting their methods to cater to the varied learning styles of culturally diverse students, there is considerable inconsistency in this practice. The substantial variability in responses may indicate challenges such as a lack of training, insufficient understanding of cultural learning styles, or a lack of confidence in modifying teaching methods. This is consistent with previous research that highlights the need for teachers to receive targeted training in culturally responsive teaching methods that address the distinct learning styles of students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Behrnd & Porzelt, 2012; Bennett, 2009).

The next item, “I encourage students to share their cultural experiences and perspectives in the classroom” produced a mean score of 3.54 ( $SD = 1.49$ ). While this indicates moderate agreement, the high standard deviation points to significant differences among teachers in their approach to encouraging students to share their cultural experiences. Some teachers may be more proactive in fostering an environment where students feel comfortable sharing their cultural narratives, while others may struggle with creating this opportunity. Encouraging students to share their perspectives is a key aspect of creating an inclusive classroom where diverse cultural identities are respected and celebrated (Lieberman & Gamst, 2015; Maharaja, 2018). The variability in responses suggests that some teachers might benefit from additional guidance on how to effectively encourage such exchanges.

Teachers’ efforts to create opportunities for cross-cultural interactions among students were reflected in a mean score of 3.94 ( $SD = 1.21$ ). This indicates a strong inclination toward fostering intercultural interactions, which is vital for promoting understanding and respect among students from different cultural backgrounds. Despite the generally positive response, the moderate standard deviation implies that the extent to which teachers are able to create such opportunities may vary depending on individual classroom dynamics or teacher strategies. This variability may be influenced by factors such as class size, the availability of collaborative activities, or teachers’ comfort levels with facilitating such interactions. The statement, “I address cultural differences and conflicts that may arise among students constructively” received the highest mean score of 4.16 ( $SD = 1.24$ ). This suggests that teachers feel confident in their ability to manage cultural conflicts constructively, which is an essential aspect of culturally responsive teaching. Teachers who are adept at addressing cultural differences and resolving conflicts can create a more harmonious and inclusive classroom environment (Byram, 2020; Peng et al., 2020; Pinto, 2018). However, the relatively high standard deviation indicates that while most teachers are confident in their conflict-resolution skills, there is some variability in how effectively these skills are applied in different classrooms. The final item, concerning the adequacy of support and resources for implementing culturally responsive teaching strategies, yielded a mean score of 3.43 ( $SD = 1.22$ ), suggesting moderate agreement. This indicates that, while some teachers feel adequately supported, others feel that there are insufficient resources and guidance to effectively implement culturally responsive teaching strategies. The moderate score reflects concerns about the availability of materials, professional development opportunities, and institutional support, which have been identified as barriers to successful implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy (Byram, 2020; Dalib et al., 2020). This finding underscores the need for schools and educational institutions to provide teachers with the necessary resources and professional development to successfully incorporate culturally responsive strategies into their teaching practices.

This study contributes new insights into the self-reported implementation of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in English language classrooms, highlighting both strengths and gaps in current practices. While existing literature (e.g., Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Byram, 1997) underscores the importance of CRT, empirical studies that quantitatively assess how educators perceive and enact these principles



remain limited, especially in diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. The findings of this study add to the field by revealing nuanced discrepancies between teachers' awareness of CRT principles, their ability to implement them effectively, and the institutional support they receive.

One particularly novel finding is the significant gap between the reported integration of culturally diverse materials ( $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ ) and the ability to modify teaching methods to accommodate diverse learning styles ( $M = 3.10$ ,  $SD = 1.40$ ). This suggests that while many educators recognize the value of incorporating diverse content, fewer feel equipped to adapt their pedagogical approaches accordingly. This distinction between content inclusion and pedagogical flexibility is not always explicitly addressed in CRT literature, making this study a valuable addition to discussions on how CRT is operationalized in the classroom.

Another key contribution of this study is its emphasis on the role of institutional support ( $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ). While previous research has acknowledged the importance of resources and professional development (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Sercu, 2005), this study quantifies the extent to which educators perceive such support as adequate. The variability in responses suggests that institutional backing for CRT is inconsistent, which could explain some of the discrepancies in teachers' ability to fully implement culturally responsive strategies.

The relatively high agreement on integrating culturally diverse materials ( $M = 3.79$ ) contrasts with the lower ability to modify teaching strategies for diverse learners ( $M = 3.10$ ). This suggests a gap between theoretical understanding and practical execution. Prior research (Gay, 2018) has noted that many educators recognize the value of CRT but struggle to translate this into pedagogical flexibility due to limited training or rigid curricular structures.

While many teachers report encouraging students to share cultural perspectives ( $M = 3.54$ ,  $SD = 1.49$ ), slightly more feel confident in creating structured cross-cultural interactions ( $M = 3.94$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ). This discrepancy suggests that while educators may facilitate occasional cultural discussions, deliberately structured intercultural exchanges may not be as prevalent. This aligns with research suggesting that effective CRT requires more than passive encouragement; it necessitates structured, scaffolded learning experiences (Deardorff, 2006). The highest mean score was recorded for the ability to address cultural differences and conflicts constructively ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ), yet the perceived adequacy of institutional support remains moderate ( $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ). This suggests that while individual teachers take the initiative to mediate cultural conflicts, they may not always have the structural support, training, or resources to do so effectively. This discrepancy raises concerns about the sustainability of CRT efforts in environments where institutional policies and professional development may not align with teacher needs.

The study consistently indicates that teachers recognize the importance of culturally responsive teaching. The relatively high scores for integrating diverse materials ( $M = 3.79$ ) and fostering cross-cultural interaction ( $M = 3.94$ ) align with longstanding research advocating for intercultural competence in language education (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1993). This suggests that educators largely agree on the value of CRT, reinforcing its relevance in contemporary English language teaching.

The standard deviations across statements suggest a high degree of variability in how CRT is implemented. This aligns with existing research indicating that CRT is often unevenly practiced due to differences in teacher training, institutional policies, and personal teaching philosophies (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). The findings underscore the need for more structured, systematic approaches to CRT training and support.

The discrepancies identified in this study point to an urgent need for professional development programs that go beyond theoretical discussions of CRT and focus on practical, classroom-based strategies. Future research should explore: Barriers to implementing flexible teaching methods in diverse classrooms, particularly in relation to curriculum constraints and teacher training gaps. The impact of institutional support on teachers' ability to engage in culturally responsive teaching, examining whether stronger institutional backing correlates with more effective CRT implementation. Qualitative studies on teachers' lived experiences, providing deeper insights into the challenges and successes of applying CRT in practice. By addressing these areas, future studies can help bridge the gap between CRT theory and practice, ensuring that teachers are not only aware of intercultural competence but also fully equipped to implement it effectively.

## 5. Discussion

The results indicate that teachers in the study perceive themselves as well-prepared to teach English in culturally diverse classrooms, with high levels of understanding, confidence, and training in intercultural competence. However, the slight variations in the standard deviations suggest that there is room for improvement, particularly in ensuring that all teachers feel equally confident and prepared to facilitate cross-cultural interactions and to apply their knowledge of intercultural competence in practice (Eden et al., 2024).

The findings suggest that teachers exhibit a strong understanding of intercultural competence, a belief in its importance for teaching English, and a readiness to engage with culturally diverse classrooms. However, the variation in their confidence levels regarding cross-cultural interactions points to the need for further professional development to enhance their abilities in this area (Eide, et al., 2025). While the majority of teachers feel prepared and confident to teach English in culturally diverse environments, the observed differences in responses indicate that some teachers may benefit from additional support and training. This variation emphasizes the importance of ongoing professional development programs that provide teachers with the tools, strategies, and resources to effectively respond to the cultural diversity in their classrooms (Abugre & Debrah, 2019).

The need for professional development in intercultural competence is widely supported in the literature. Research shows that teachers who engage in continuous learning opportunities, such as training in cultural responsiveness and diversity, are better equipped to meet the needs of their students from different cultural backgrounds (Byram, 2020; Pinto, 2018). Effective teachers not only need to understand cultural diversity but must also develop the capacity to implement inclusive teaching strategies that promote equity and engagement for all students. This finding aligns with Dagbaeva et al. (2020) who emphasize how targeted professional development can enhance teachers' cultural awareness and competence, ultimately improving their teaching practices.

The results also contrast those of Dalib et al. (2019), who found that teachers exhibited a significant lack of understanding of the target culture in their classrooms. In this study, however, teachers displayed a higher level of intercultural competence, which may be attributed to differences in context, such as regional diversity, training programs, or the specific demographic composition of the teachers. This divergence in findings highlights the evolving nature of teacher competence in intercultural matters, particularly with the increasing emphasis on cultural inclusivity in educational policy and teacher training (Barnatt et al., 2020; Róg et al., 2020).

As Byram (2020) noted, intercultural competence helps teachers understand and connect with students' values, beliefs, and behaviours, thus allowing them to anticipate and address the unique needs of culturally diverse learners. The teachers in this study demonstrated a strong foundation in intercultural competence, which likely contributes to fostering a classroom environment where students from diverse cultural backgrounds feel seen and valued (Leersnyder et al., 2021; Wahidah et al., 2023; Atmaja, 2020). Teachers' ability to engage effectively with students from different cultures is linked to improved student outcomes, as it promotes an atmosphere of respect, collaboration, and mutual understanding (de Hei et al., 2020). Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that teachers are aware of the need for intercultural competence and see its importance in the context of English language teaching. This aligns with Gómez-Parra (2020) who argues that teachers' belief in the importance of intercultural competence plays a critical role in shaping their teaching practices. Teachers who recognize the value of cultural awareness are more likely to integrate culturally responsive strategies into their instruction, which can positively affect student engagement and achievement (Hidayah et al., 2024).

While teachers in this study demonstrated high levels of intercultural competence, the variation in their confidence suggests a need for ongoing professional development (Wolf & Avornyo, 2022). Enhancing teachers' confidence and skills in cross-cultural interactions will enable them to become better equipped to foster inclusive and supportive learning environments for their students. Given the growing emphasis on intercultural competence in teacher training programs and educational policies worldwide (Ferreira-Lopes et al., 2018), educational institutions need to prioritize these initiatives. Doing so will help create classrooms that support the academic success and well-being of all students, particularly in increasingly diverse educational settings (Byram, 2020).

The findings from this study on the prevalence of culturally sensitive instructional strategies indicate that, while teachers recognize the importance of integrating culturally diverse materials into their lessons, there is considerable variability in their ability to adapt teaching methods to accommodate different cultural learning

styles and in their efforts to encourage students to share their cultural experiences. This suggests that, despite a strong belief in the value of culturally responsive teaching, there are significant challenges in applying these strategies effectively in practice. These results align with the work of Wang (2024) who found that although teachers engage in various activities to promote intercultural learning, they often encounter obstacles when attempting to implement interactive and inclusive practices. Teachers in the study also demonstrated a willingness to address cultural differences constructively, indicating a strong awareness of the importance of managing cultural conflicts within the classroom (Agbevivi, 2022).

However, the findings reveal a deeper concern regarding the lack of institutional support, as evidenced by teachers' reports of insufficient resources to implement culturally responsive strategies effectively (Eden et al., 2024). This issue underscores a systemic gap in teacher preparation and ongoing professional development, which has been highlighted by Kumi-Yeboah and Amponsah (2023). They emphasize the critical need for adequate training and resources to enable teachers to successfully integrate multicultural elements into their curricula, suggesting that the absence of these resources may hinder the full potential of culturally responsive teaching. Moreover, the findings resonate with Ramstrand et al., (2024) assertion that current approaches to developing intercultural competence in English language classrooms are insufficient. They argue that enhancing students' intercultural competency should not be a peripheral consideration, but rather a deliberate and central priority within the teaching and learning process (Eide, et al., 2023). The results of this study indicate a gap between teachers' acknowledgment of the importance of intercultural teaching practices and their ability to implement these practices effectively, pointing to a need for a more robust and systematic approach to equipping educators with the necessary tools, training, and resources to foster intercultural competence among their students (Wahidah et al., 2023). This disconnect between theory and practice highlights a significant challenge in the education system, where teachers' good intentions and awareness may not be enough without the proper institutional support and professional development opportunities (Ameri, 2020).

The findings of this study are important because they provide empirical insights into the extent to which English language educators implement culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in their classrooms. While existing literature emphasizes the importance of intercultural competence in language education (Kern, 2020, Guillén-Yparrea & Ramírez-Montoya, 2023), this study contributes to the field by identifying specific gaps between teachers' awareness of CRT principles and their ability to translate them into pedagogical practice. The discrepancies observed particularly between integrating diverse materials and modifying teaching methods highlight the need for more practical, experience-based teacher training in culturally responsive pedagogy (Ameri, 2020).

Moreover, the study underscores the role of institutional support in shaping teachers' ability to implement CRT effectively. The moderate perception of resource availability suggests that while educators recognize the importance of CRT, systemic constraints may limit their capacity to fully integrate culturally responsive strategies. By addressing these challenges, the findings contribute to a broader understanding of how CRT can be effectively incorporated into English language education, particularly in diverse and multilingual classroom contexts (Eide, et al., 2023).

Future research should explore the specific challenges educators face in modifying their teaching methods to accommodate diverse cultural learning styles. Qualitative studies focusing on teachers' lived experiences could provide deeper insights into structural and pedagogical constraints.

A comparative study examining how different levels of institutional support affect the implementation of CRT could offer valuable policy recommendations. Longitudinal studies could also assess whether increased training and resource allocation lead to measurable improvements in intercultural teaching practices. While this study focuses on teachers' self-perceptions, future research should investigate how students perceive and respond to culturally responsive teaching strategies. Understanding student experiences could help refine CRT approaches to better meet the needs of diverse learners.

Further research should assess the effectiveness of different CRT training models, particularly those that incorporate experiential learning, classroom simulations, or reflective teaching practices. Experimental or quasi-experimental studies could evaluate the impact of targeted professional development on teachers' CRT implementation over time. By addressing these areas, future research can help bridge the gap between CRT theory and practice, ensuring that educators are both aware of and effectively equipped to implement culturally responsive teaching in diverse classroom settings.

## 6. Conclusion

This study provides a meaningful contribution to the discourse on culturally responsive teaching (CRT) by empirically exploring the intercultural competence and teaching practices of English language educators within Ghana's diverse educational context. The findings reveal that although teachers possess a solid theoretical understanding and recognize the importance of intercultural competence, their ability to implement culturally responsive strategies effectively varies, pointing to a gap between conceptual knowledge and practical execution. While many educators incorporate culturally diverse materials into their lessons, fewer are confident in adapting instructional methods to address different cultural learning preferences. This discrepancy highlights the critical need for professional development programs that emphasize experiential learning and classroom-based applications. The study also introduces an important perspective by identifying the limitations posed by insufficient institutional support, which can hinder teachers' efforts to fully implement inclusive pedagogical approaches. These insights suggest that educational institutions should prioritize comprehensive training and provide ongoing support to strengthen teachers' capacity for culturally responsive teaching. Future research should consider examining student experiences with CRT, employing observational methods to validate self-reported data, and assessing the long-term outcomes of enhanced training initiatives on both teacher effectiveness and student engagement in multilingual and multicultural learning environments..

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