

**Exploring Teachers' Perceptions, Challenges and Strategies for Teaching Culturally
Diverse Students in Kazakhstan**

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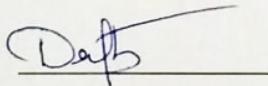
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A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'D' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal line extending to the right.

June 28, 2019

Ethical Approval



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6 December 2018

Dear Dauren

This letter now confirms that your research project entitled: Exploring Teachers' Perceptions, Challenges and Strategies for Teaching Culturally Diverse Students in Kazakhstan has been approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of Nazarbayev University.

Your ethics application was reviewed on the 7th of November. The changes recommended by the reviewer have been addressed and the proposed study now complies with all of the requirements of Nazarbayev University.

You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elaine Sharplin".

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Abstract

Kazakhstan is a multinational society, where the government and the Ministry of Education and Science aim to establish peaceful relationships and communication among all cultures. In this culturally diverse national context, schools need to address students' cultures, since each child has his/her own cultural background, core values, attitude towards learning, native language and beliefs. However, there is a lack of pedagogical knowledge for teaching culturally diverse students in the context of Kazakhstan. The purpose of this study is to explore teachers' perceptions, challenges and strategies for working with culturally diverse students from secondary classes in an international school in Kazakhstan.

This qualitative, single case study research used semi-structured interviews to collect data from eight participants. The study presents the perceptions of teachers' about their beliefs and pedagogical approaches to dealing with diversity. Participants were recruited using purposeful sampling within a convenience selected site. The collected data were analysed using open coding. The findings show that teachers' beliefs are influenced by school policy and school core values. While some participants were culturally aware, a limited range of pedagogical practices were adopted. The practices adopted focused on awareness of diverse cultures, rather than more sophisticated approaches to developing cultural competence. It was also found that the English medium of instruction of the school was the area in which most teachers identified challenges related to linguistic culture. The study concluded by making recommendations for school administrators about how to improve school policy and school values to consider the cultures of students.

Keywords: teachers, cultural diversity, strategies, challenges, perceptions.

Аннотация

Казахстан является многонациональным обществом, в котором правительство и Министерство образования и науки стремятся установить мирные отношения и общение между всеми культурами. В этом культурно разнообразном национальном контексте школы должны учитывать культурные особенности учащихся, поскольку каждый ребенок имеет свои культурные особенности, основные ценности, отношение к обучению, родной язык и убеждения. Тем не менее, не хватает педагогических знаний для преподавания культурно разнообразных классов в контексте Казахстана. Целью данного исследования является изучение опыта, проблем и стратегий учителей в работе с культурно разнообразными учениками средних классов в международной школе в Акмолинской области Казахстана.

Качественный, единый дизайн исследования конкретного случая, использовал полуструктурированные интервью для сбора данных от восьми участников. В исследовании показаны представления учителей об их убеждениях и педагогических подходах к решению проблемы разнообразия. Участники были набраны с использованием целенаправленной выборки на удобном месте. Собранные данные были проанализированы с использованием открытого кодирования. Результаты показывают, что убеждения учителей зависят от школьной политики и основных ценностей школы. В то время как некоторые участники были культурно осведомлены, был принят ограниченный спектр педагогических практик, ориентированных на осведомленность о различных культурах, а не на более сложные подходы к развитию культурной компетентности. Также было установлено, что английская среда обучения в школе является той областью, в которой большинство учителей определили проблемы, связанные с языковой культурой. В

завершение исследования были даны рекомендации для школьных администраторов о том, как улучшить школьную политику и школьные ценности для учета культуры учащихся.

Ключевые слова: учителя, культурное разнообразие, стратегии, проблемы, убеждения.

Аңдатпа

Қазақстан - үкімет пен Білім және ғылым министрлігі түрлі мәдениеттер арасында бейбіт қарым-қатынас пен берік байланыс орнатуға бағытталған көп ұлтты қоғам. Бұл мәдени әртүрлі ұлттық контексте мектептер әр оқушының мәдениетіне, негізгі құндылықтарына, оқуға деген қарым-қатынасына, ана тіліне және нанымына ие болғандықтан, оқушылардың мәдениетіне назар аудару керек. Дегенмен де, Қазақстанның контекстінде мәдени әртүрлі сыныптарды оқытатын педагогикалық білім әлі де жетіспейді. Зерттеудің мақсаты - Ақмола облысының көп ұлт және мәдениет өкілдері негізінде жұмыс істейтін халықаралық мектеп мұғалімдерінің тәжірибе, проблемалар және стратегияларын зерттеу.

Сапалы, бірыңғай зерттеу әдіснамасы, сегіз қатысушының деректерін жинауда жартылай құрылымдалған сұхбат пен жеке жағдайларды зерттеу әдісі қолданылды. Зерттеуде мұғалімдердің көп мәдениеттілікпен айналысуға деген сенімдері мен педагогикалық көзқарастары туралы пікірлер бар. Қатысушылар таңдалған сайтқа ыңғайлы таңдау арқылы мақсатты түрде іріктеу аясында ерікті түрде таңдалынды. Жиналған деректер ашық кодтау әдісімен талданды. Нәтижелер мұғалімдердің сенімдеріне мектептегі саясат пен мектептің негізгі құндылықтарынан әсер еткенін көрсетеді. Кейбір қатысушылар мәдени танымға ие болғанымен, мәдени құзыреттілікті дамытудың күрделі тәсілдерін емес, әртүрлі мәдениеттер туралы хабарлауға бағытталған педагогикалық тәжірибенің шектеулі ауқымы қабылданды. Сонымен қатар, мектептің ағылшын тіліндегі нұсқасы көптеген мұғалімдер лингвистикалық мәдениетке қатысты мәселелеріне оң әсер ететіні анықталды. Зерттеу мұғалімдердің мектеп әкімшілігіне

мектеп саясаты мен негізгі құндылықтарын оқушылардың қалыптасқан мәдени ортасы
байланысты ыңғайлауға арналған кеңес, ұсыныстарымен аяқталады.

Түйінді сөздер: мұғалімдер, көп мәдениеттілік, стратегиялар, проблемалар,
көзқарастар.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Kazakhstan, located in the centre of Eurasia, has a rich history; it is populated by a diversity of cultures. Nowadays, there are more than 120 different ethnicities with their own languages and historical and cultural values in Kazakhstan (Bridges, 2014). While secular spirit is preserved in the constitution, Kazakhstan is predominantly Muslim (70%), with around one-quarter of the population declaring itself Christian (26%) and 3.5% indicating “other” or no religious affiliation (OECD, 2014). The maintenance of peace and good relations between all the representatives of different cultures has always been a priority for the government. Multicultural education is an essential approach to preparing future generations for living in a multicultural environment by providing representatives of different cultural groups with equal educational opportunities (Banks, 2013). This study aims to contribute to the development of multicultural education of Kazakhstan through case study research in an international school.

1.2. Personal Journey towards the Proposed Study

My journey towards this research on cultural diversity in the classroom began two years ago, when I commenced working in a new school and I was admitted to the Inclusive Education program at Nazarbayev University. When I came to the university, I encountered people with extensive experience of working with, or who are currently involved in, the establishment of policy and educational reforms in Kazakhstan. Some of them shared their strategies and visions about the perfect educational system that they are trying to implement in our country. One of the areas identified as needing development was Kazakhstani teachers' approaches to cultural diversity during the learning process, even though the government of Kazakhstan has a focus on the development of trilingual education.

During my education, I was taught using methods that did not address students' cultures. Pedagogical practices were based on the learners' level of knowledge and language of instruction. Having experience of working in two different educational systems for four years, where one is a traditional Kazakhstani system and another is the system of International schools, I realized that, international schools in Kazakhstan focus more on teaching students based on their cultural characteristics. I suppose that the creation of a favorable atmosphere for teacher-student interaction leads to an increase in the academic performance of students and respect for other students' ethnicities. The main factor is teachers' values, perceptions and beliefs that influence their attitudes to diversity.

In my experience, I have seen the problems created by a lack of cultural awareness. I have seen misunderstandings between a teacher and student when a student struggled to correctly pronounce some words that were complex for his language accent. Another situation occurred when teachers taught students about pork consumption and some Muslim learners felt disgust. It shows that student learning is negatively impacted without cultural sensitivity and student learning could be improved if they were taught in a culturally responsive way. These examples suggest that currently, Kazakhstani teachers do not address students' cultures during lessons; where some historical events can negatively affect students, some words can be inappropriate for an explanation of the topic, and some issues can contravene students' cultural values. Even though international schools predominantly have students from different cultural backgrounds, from my experience state schools' classes also contain students of at least three different. Since Kazakhstan is a multicultural country, in my opinion, it is essential to share information about perceptions, challenges and strategies to teach culturally diverse students in order to improve the quality of student learning.

1.3. Problem Statement

Kazakhstani schools represent a variety of students from different ethnic backgrounds with their own beliefs, culture, religion and language (OECD & World Bank, 2015).

Nowadays, the education system is adapted for teaching students from 23 different ethnic backgrounds. In the country, there are 73% of Kazakhs, 14% Russians, 4% Uzbek, 1.5% Uighurs, 1.3 Ukrainians, 1% Germans and other ethnicities (Information-Analytic Centre [IAC], 2014). The establishment of harmony and good relations among all the representatives of different cultures has always been the primary target for the government (Bridges, 2014). The educational system of Kazakhstan needs to address each student's ethnicity, his/her core values and individual characteristics. However, there is a lack of pedagogical knowledge for teaching culturally diverse classrooms in the context of Kazakhstan. Therefore, teachers who do not have experience of teaching students from various ethnic backgrounds will face challenges or will not address students' cultures in the lesson process.

In response to this problem, this research study explores knowledge and perceptions of teachers in the case of one international school in Kazakhstan, where teachers have experience in teaching in culturally diverse students. This study aims to explore possible strategies that can be adapted and applied in other schools or educational organizations with cultural diversity. In addition, this research reveals possible challenges and obstacles that are likely to occur in the culturally diverse classes.

In addition, Gay (2002) suggested that teachers should know in what ways different ethnicities pay attention to collaborative problem solving and how it affects their educational motivations and achievements; how teachers interpret ways for children to communicate with adults and the assumptions of gender role socialization in different cultural groups for applying equity. In conclusion, if teachers have experience in this field and know about

possible problems that can occur in their classrooms and how to deal with students from culturally diverse backgrounds, they may create a favorable atmosphere where students are likely to achieve better and have a good relationship between each other.

1.4. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore teachers' perceptions, challenges and strategies for working with culturally diverse students (grades 6-12) from secondary classes in an international school in Kazakhstan. This study collected information through interviews with teachers who have experience in teaching classes with students from different cultural backgrounds. The research synthesizes the previous literature to illustrate how cultural diversity impacts on the learning process, the collaboration between teachers and students, and student development of knowledge in classes with cultural diversity.

1.5. Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. How do teachers in Kazakhstan perceive working with culturally diverse students?
2. What are the possible challenges that can occur while teaching culturally diverse students?
3. What strategies do teachers who are working with culturally diverse students use?
4. In what ways does culturally responsive teaching affects the learning process?

1.6. Significance of the Study

Kazakhstani teachers, and other education stakeholders, need to be aware of possible challenges that can occur, and the benefits that can be achieved, in classes with culturally diverse students. This work addresses the gaps in the literature about working with culturally diverse students in Kazakhstan. The information presented in this study can be used for further research, not only in Kazakhstan but also by researchers from other post-Soviet Union

countries who may have a similar cultural awareness within the society. Various stakeholders can benefit from this research. Firstly, these are teachers, who are currently working or will work with students with different cultural backgrounds, as well as the parents of these children. Teachers will know teachers' strategies and possible challenges that can occur and will be able to improve their strategies to work with children from different cultural backgrounds. By exploring teachers' perceptions about working with cultural diversity, the teachers' development can be enhanced to improve the teaching of children from various ethnic backgrounds.

According to Gay (2002), training teachers can change the teaching of children from different cultures and give them confidence in their work and a motivation to seek approaches and methods for each of them so that they can succeed not only in learning but also in interaction with each other. Knowledge of characteristics of each students' country, culture, language gives teachers the opportunity to apply various methods of teaching (Garmon, 2004). Consequently, the academic performance of students with ethnic diversity will improve when the learning process takes into account their cultural characteristics and personal beliefs (Gay, 2000). The research findings from this study may be used to inform policymakers, school administrators and other educational organizations to provide an understanding of why the culture is important and why school should address it.

1.7. Outline of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter (Introduction) describes the motivation of the researcher in undertaking the proposed study; the problem statement; the purpose of the study; the research questions and the significance of the research.

The second chapter (Literature review) presents a review of previous empirical studies related to my research. It contains seven sections, reviewing the literature on multicultural

education, and culturally responsive teaching, teachers' perceptions, challenges and strategies for teaching cultural diversity. Further, it presents a conceptual framework for the study based on the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (Centre for Educational Effectiveness [CEE], 2018), which shows at what level of the taxonomy are the perceptions of teachers from previous studies.

The third chapter (Methodology) describes the research design, participant and site selection procedures, data collection tools, data analysis and ethical considerations of the study.

The fourth chapter (Finding) presents the main findings of the study with the use of participant data, presented through themes. These findings are discussed in relation to previous literature in the fifth chapter (Discussion). The final chapter is the "Conclusion"; it includes a summary of the main findings of the study, recommendations for the school administration, limitations of the study and implications for further research.

Chapter 2. Literature review

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore teachers' perceptions, challenges and strategies for working with cultural diversity. This chapter outlines the theoretical literature, which informed the development of this study. This chapter provides a broad background to multicultural education, its interpretation and usage for different schools' contexts, before focussing on culturally responsive teaching and the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018). Further, this chapter describes perceptions of teachers about teaching culturally diverse students, possible challenge that can occur and their strategies for its implementation. The chapter concludes with the conceptual framework used for this study.

2.2. Multicultural Education

Banks (1993) defines multicultural education as an approach created to motivate all students to pay attention to global citizenship, cultural awareness and search for knowledge about other cultures in our multinational world. Multicultural education was intended to help students to raise their cultural awareness by observation of their cultures from the view of other cultures (Banks, 2014). There is no one common interpretation of multicultural education (Grant & Sleeter, 2009); rather it should be explained as a collection of different practices related to cultural identity, race and gender of students in the school. According to Nieto and Bode (2012) and Banks (2009), multicultural education involves the reconstruction of the principles and concepts of a school to give an opportunity for students of all ethnicities and social status for equal learning. If classrooms represent cultural diversity, it gives many opportunities for students, teachers and the whole school. When teachers understand cultural diversity and when they change their beliefs about different cultures and attitudes towards

culturally responsive pedagogy, they will be able to change their community and students' beliefs and attitudes (Banks, 2014).

As the term multicultural education is versatile, it can be adapted for a variety of purposes by individual schools. According to Banks (1993), some teachers understand this term as curriculum adaptation to the needs of various ethnicities, which are presented in a class. Some schools use multicultural education to propose social justice, which includes equality within the community, and other schools see this as a celebration of all holidays of all nationalities that are present in school during the academic year.

There are many different ways of implementing approaches to multicultural education. Gibson (1976) used a survey for collecting data through which he found five different types of multicultural education. Even though this article was published in the 1970s, it is still valid for the twenty-first century and continues to be an important one. The first interpretation of multicultural education promotes respect between all cultures and highlights strategies to explain differences as a natural situation. The second is a culturally responsive education that aims to adapt the curriculum to the needs of each culture in the class. The third is bilingual education that for Kazakhstan can be interpreted as trilingual education. This approach concentrates on raising the importance of cultures, and language, which differ from that of the majority. Another type of multicultural education reinforces the identity of all cultures to increase activity in the community. The last is about the capable participation of all ethnicities in society. It is important to consider all approaches since multicultural education involves the reconstruction of the all principles of a school (Banks, 2009; Nieto, & Bode, 2012).

Similarly, Banks (2004) defined five aspects of multicultural education, which are “content integration, prejudice reduction, knowledge construction process, equal pedagogy and empowering school culture” (p.16). The first one, content integration, is about including

various examples from all students' cultures into the learning process. Prejudice reduction is related to different practices that aim to promote positive attitudes towards all cultures within the class or school. An equity pedagogy helps teachers to adapt their teaching practices so they will be able to observe learning achievement of all students (Banks, 2013). An empowering school culture is related to school reform and reconstruction by all teaching staff to develop cultural and social equity within the school.

There are many different beliefs about what influences the realisation of multicultural learning processes. Grant and Sleeter (2009) claim that if teachers are able to integrate culture, language and the strengths of different cultural identities of students, they will be able to control the behaviour in the class "without lowering their expectations for learning" (p. 46). However, at the same time, it is not enough for pedagogues to consider only the cultural background of the students, because of additional factors like gender, race, grade and social status, which impact on students' achievements (Banks, 2013). Further, Banks (2014) defined eight aspects to be considered when implementing multicultural education at schools. They are: changing of attitudes and beliefs of teachers and administration towards culturally diverse students and adaptation of curriculum, adjustment of teaching practices and esteem to students' mother tongues, modification of materials used for lessons and adaption of assessment practices, reformation of whole school environment so it will promote cultural awareness. The last is about helping students from different cultural backgrounds to select a successful profession.

Since the study aims to explore teachers' perceptions, challenges and strategies for working with culturally diverse students, it is essential to consider each aspect of multicultural education since it is not enough to only adapt the curriculum or celebrate holidays; each of these types and influences are an important part of a whole system.

2.3. Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teaching is one of the ways to implement multicultural education. It reflects the five aspects of multicultural education as outlined by Banks (2004): “content integration, prejudice reduction, knowledge construction process, equal pedagogy and empowering school culture” (p.18). Gollnick and Chinn (2002) suggest that children need to be educated based on differentiation by language, culture, and opportunities. Culturally responsive teaching meets all these requirements. According to Gay (2002), a culturally responsive approach should be applied to teach students, based on their ethnic background, experience, connecting the content of the curriculum with the students’ cultures.

There are three dimensions of culturally responsive teaching: “institutional, personal and instructional” (Richards, Brown & Forde, 2007, p.3). The institutional dimension represents school management, leadership and policies, and communication between teacher and family. Another dimension is personal that relates to teachers’ attitudes and beliefs about cultural responsiveness; also, it is processed when teachers reflect on their experience and make an effort to explore information about their students’ culture. The last dimension is instructional, which stands for teaching strategies, methods.

Teaching staff should be able to reflect on their practice and include knowledge about the cultural characteristics of students into the curriculum and the lesson process. Similarly, Richards, Brown, and Forde (2007) stated when teachers want to become culturally responsive teachers, they need to be researchers and reflect on their practices, for the teaching culturally diverse classes. However, it is not enough for teachers to know only basic knowledge like special dates, traditional food or music and stereotypes about culture (Taylor, 2010). Teachers who know how to base their teaching practices in relation to culture and language of culturally

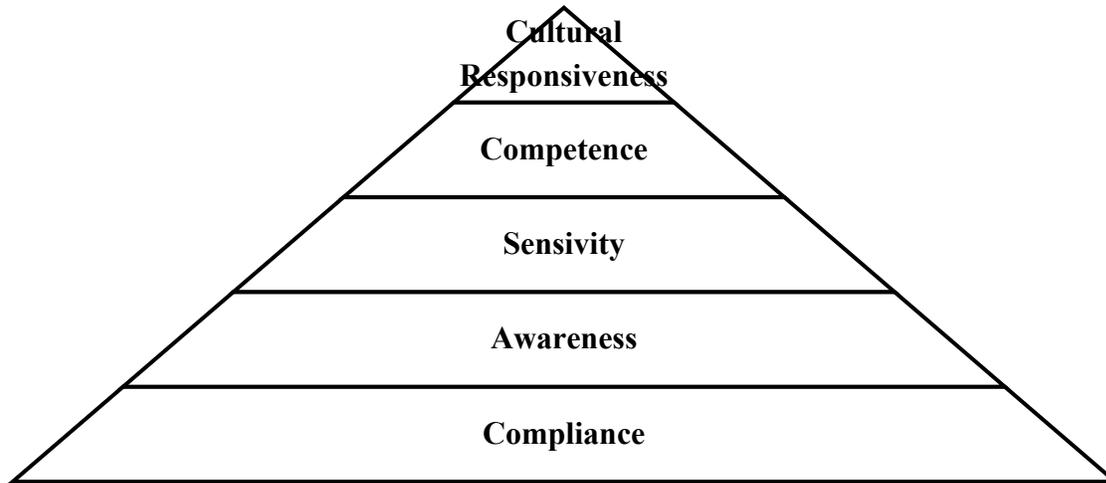
diverse students will be able to control classroom behaviour and make learning output equal for everyone (Banks, 2013).

In the opinion of Ghosh and Galczynski (2014), the teaching process does not occur only during the lesson but also outside the lesson, thus extracurricular activities need to be organised; for example, different clubs, or field trip. The main aim of those activities is to build a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere, promote good communication and respect within the class, which are essential components for culturally responsive pedagogy. Another aspect of the culturally is about building a pleasant environment, where the whole school demonstrates respect to everyone and its culture, and fairness from teachers and administration of a school towards all students.

According to the Centre for Educational Effectiveness (CEE, 2018), there are five levels of the CEE taxonomy of culturally responsive teaching. These level are shown in Figure 1. They are cultural responsiveness, competence, sensitivity, awareness and compliance. Compliance is the fifth and lowest level of cultural responsiveness. Teachers just follow the laws of the country. The fourth level is awareness. Teachers acknowledge cultural differences but have a lack of knowledge to understand the importance of addressing cultural diversity in their teaching practices. The third level is sensitivity. Teachers who are sensitive, they are aware of cultural diversity but have a lack of knowledge that affects their perceptions and assumptions. The second level is competence. In this case, teachers have beliefs, assumptions and understanding of the importance of addressing cultural diversity in the classroom. However, they do not apply it as a daily practice in their lessons. The first level is the cultural responsiveness. Teachers, who are related to this level, have knowledge and skills about teaching cultural diversity, which they always develop and apply in their teaching practices.

Figure 1

CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning



Source: Centre for Educational Effectiveness, 2018, p.1

In this section, the culturally responsive teaching approach has been explained based on previous literature, its key aspects and practices that can be implemented to effectively educate children from different cultural backgrounds and the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching has been presented (CEE, 2018).

2.4. Teachers' Perceptions of Teaching Culturally Diverse Students

The previous section explained what constitutes culturally responsive teaching, its three important dimensions and its importance. This current part of the chapter draws on previous empirical studies related to that field and reveals different teachers attitudes towards teaching in culturally diverse contexts. The findings from these studies can be connected with the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018).

Vandeyar (2010) conducted qualitative research to explore the process of desegregation in South Africa where students were able to choose a school to attend. Despite the fact that this study describes the context as one where pluralism was not previously accepted, this study shed light on some important issues in the area of teaching culturally

diverse classes. The results revealed three types of teacher attitudes with different teaching strategies that they applied in their diverse classrooms. The first type of teachers treated their students as all the same and teaching plans did not consider students' race and culture. The teachers who promoted the treatment of students according to the principle of sameness forced students' assimilation with the aim of removing racism in the school. Assimilation takes place when one cultural group begins to behave as another cultural group while losing its own ethnic characteristics and values (Banks, 2001).

Further Convertino, Levinson, and Gonzalez (2013) stated that assimilation enables the dominance of the majority culture. Assimilation of students leads to the loss of cultural identities of students within the class. The second type of teachers in the study of Vandeyar (2010) tried to bring awareness of diversity into the classrooms without integration into the lessons, for example, the teachers hung posters that represented diversity and organised celebratory activities of different cultural ethnicities. Vandeyar (2010) stated that there was still in the class was the dominance of one racial group on another. Based on the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018) it shows that these teachers are on the awareness level.

The last type of teachers in Vandeyar's study (2010) applied culturally responsive teaching and fostered an atmosphere of respect and understanding in their classrooms. These allowed them to make their lessons interesting and fun for their students. Further students were able to think about their personalities and be aware of other cultures. It shows that is important for teachers to reflect on their practices and integrate cultural content into the lesson process, for the promotion of cultural awareness. This last type of teacher belongs to the highest level of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018), since

teachers' attitudes towards teaching cultural diverse classroom, includes teaching students based on their cultures.

Similarly, researcher, Misco (2018) examined in what ways secondary and middle school teachers from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands perceived pedagogy within a culturally diverse context. Eight of the middle school teachers embraced the connection between subject content and the real-life setting of each student. This showed their efforts to promote cultural awareness. As an example, one participant interpreted cultural diversity in a class as a chance to learn about other cultures for students who were not abroad. Also, a history teacher mentioned that he conducted his lessons concerning real cases from history and helped students to build their ideas and perceptions about their cultural backgrounds. Comparing this study with Banks (2014), it shows that teachers applied two aspects of the framework: changing of attitudes and beliefs of teachers and modification of materials used for lessons. What was interesting is that one of the teachers in that study commented that, "teaching about cultural diversity...helps students respect others and have a better understanding of the cultures of others which makes students more compassionate and understanding members of the community" (Misco, 2018, p. 87). In the secondary school, the researcher found that secondary school teachers focused on the content and applied teacher oriented lessons that were missing the culture of students. Overall, it shows that middle school teachers were more focused on students and their culture rather than secondary teachers.

Ebersole, Kanahele-Mossman and Kawakami (2016) explored the understanding and attitudes towards culturally responsive teaching of eight teachers who were studying in a Master of Education program. Based on the responses obtained through questionnaires and focus group interviews, they identified three categories of teachers' perceptions. The first type of participants was those who included culturally responsive teaching as a topic and a small

part of the curriculum or just included some activities related to cultural meals, drinks, dances, songs, books or famous people. Ebersole, Kanahale-Mossman and Kawakami (2016) stated that the main reason for the perception of culturally responsive pedagogy as activities is a lack of knowledge about students' cultures. Other participants focused on cultural awareness and that students need to respect all cultures and their cultural identities. The last category of teachers was those who every time connect everything to the culture and teach content through the culture, which is similar to the third category of teachers in research (Vandeyar, 2010) who represent the highest level of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018).

To sum up, the previous literature showed different teachers' perceptions of teaching culturally diverse students. Based on their perceptions and practices teachers were related to different levels of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018).

2.5. Possible Challenges for Teachers in Culturally Diverse Classes

All teachers should understand the possible challenges that can occur in the culturally diverse classroom and understand how to deal with them (Gay, 2002). Misco (2018) in his study found that the primary challenge for implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy was that teachers were mostly concentrating on content teaching rather than on cultural awareness and organisation of lesson plans that involve the ethnic background of each student in the class. Another problem was that as many teachers had been working in the same school for a considerable period, they were resistant towards the new teaching methods. Misco (2018) stated that if teachers worked for a long time at school, they did not apply culture-based learning; they do not see a need for this, as they are all satisfied with their teaching process. As a result, their perceptions reflected in the missing sequence between lesson plans and the lack of connection to the children's needs. In addition, Misco (2018) found that for a few

participants it was challenging to include various cultural contexts in the lesson process when there a lot of different culture in one classroom.

Similarly, Nilsson, Kong and Hubert (2016) found that for some teacher it was challenging to integrate culture into the lessons. Specifically, they found two categories of challenges related to the integration of cultural contexts of students with English language instruction into the lesson process. These are internal and external challenges. The first barrier to the culturally responsive teaching is the considerable amount of work assigned to teachers; also, there are limited opportunities for the implementation of new knowledge and a lack of collaboration between the teaching staff. Further, the researchers found that there were students who already had their settled patterns of English language. Because of this, the students are unwilling to share their native language background. In addition, there is an internal factor where teachers felt pressure to focus on the essential content, since culture consideration takes a lot of attention and time; some teachers did not have enough time to finish a topic. Further, Misco (2018) found that it was challenging to make connection to students' cultures, when there are too many different cultures present in the class. Ramirez, Jimenez-Silva, Boozer and Clark (2016) also found that some teachers struggled with considering culture because curriculum and books force them to apply teaching techniques that do not match the principals of culturally responsive teaching.

As an alternative to being culturally responsive, teachers applied cultural activities during the lesson process, due to "unfamiliarity (with other cultures) that are different than what the teacher is used to" (Ebersole, Kanahale-Mossman & Kawakami, 2016, p. 100). Johnson and Chang (2012) argued that sometimes it is challenging to share information about students' culture, especially data that can lead to tension and misunderstanding within the class. An example of this is information about students' religion or stereotypes about culture.

This situation mostly happens when students do not feel safe; there is no respect, understanding and good communication in the class.

In summary, there were various issues that teachers found challenging. They are: the challenge of dealing with a lot of different cultures in one classroom, a huge amount of work assigned to teachers, curriculum and books that did not address culture, students' settled patterns of English, and lack of time and collaboration within the staff. In addition, it was challenging for teachers to share culturally sensitive information within the class.

2.6. Effective Strategies for Teaching Culturally Diverse Classes

The following section reveals effective strategies for culturally responsive teaching, found by previous researchers. Referring to the OECD (2009), teaching practices should not be only connected to the perceptions and cultural context of teachers, they should be based on students' beliefs and needs.

According to Hains, Lynch and Winton (2000) through communication with each parent in a culturally diverse classroom, the teacher will be able to get a lot of valuable information about each culture. It is essential to take into account family beliefs since its part of the institutional dimension of the cultural responsive pedagogy, which includes communication with between teachers and parents. Researchers found that during home visits participants were able to collect information about special traditions in the cultures, food preferences of the children, perspectives and expectations of the parents (Gichuru, Riley, Robertson, & Mi-Hwa Park, 2015). Similarly, Ogbu (1992) reflected on the importance of investigating information about students' cultures. He stated that teachers could implement culturally responsive teaching in several ways. They could observe students' behaviour during lessons, break time and in the playgrounds, talk with students about their cultural events or other things related to students' cultures. Also, they could form a good relationship with

parents and ask about the culture from them, or conduct research with their students in the school about different ethnicities. Another way is to make research and investigation on a specific cultural group (Ogbu, 1992).

Hoosein (2014) proposed three categories of strategies to teach in culturally responsive ways. The first is about creation of nurturing and positive atmosphere in the class. The second is related to fostering equality, student-based lessons and applying different practices to meet the needs of all students. The last is including all students in the lesson process to raise cultural awareness and help students to be able to respect each other and value other cultures. Similarly, to create a positive atmosphere, teachers should be reflective practitioners, which means that teacher should look for ways to develop his or her teaching style, organise different activities, and make self-reflection on their practices (Pewewardy & Hammer, 2003), since students have different ways of understanding and perception of the lesson material (Banks, 2006).

Morgan (2010) suggested three key aspects needed for creating a positive climate in the diverse classroom, those are consistent with Hoosein (2014) who proposed that positive atmosphere is important factor for teaching culturally diverse classroom. The first aspect is preventing conflicts between students from different ethnic backgrounds. For example, in the opinion of Gollnick and Chinn (2009), even simple touching of student's head can cause a problem, as for American it means acceptance, and for Asian people, it can be negatively interpreted, since most of them think that a person's spirit originates in the head. The second concept is to take into account that students have different ways of learning and understanding, since one method of explanation can work well for one cultural group and negative for another. The third theme is to have the same attitude towards all.

Gichuru, Riley, Robertson, and Mi-Hwa Park (2015) and Johnson and Chang (2012) mentioned in their research teachers who made class decorations of different ethnic groups

represented in the class. They put up poster about students' cultures, had instructions in several languages, pictures of historically important people from each ethnicity. This led to positive reaction of parents and students of those classes. Further, Participants replied that their students were happy and motivated to come to the class where their cultures are valued and respected. Similarly, Hoosein (2014) talks about classroom decoration as the tool to change students' mindset and raise their cultural awareness. This is consistent with Vandeyar (2010), who mentioned that teachers used classroom decoration to raise cultural awareness; however, in this case culture was not addressed in the lesson process.

Vandeyar (2010) found that teachers, who were promoting culturally responsive teaching during the lesson, used each possible moment to connect the content of the lesson with the cultural background of the students. It provided students with the opportunity to join their new knowledge to their life contexts and gain a better understanding. As an example, a participant instead of telling students to dance a special dance asked students to dance their culturally traditional dances. Similarly, Chang and Johnson (2012) found that their participant applied ethnic celebrations, ethnic clothes to raise students' interest and include all students into the lesson process.

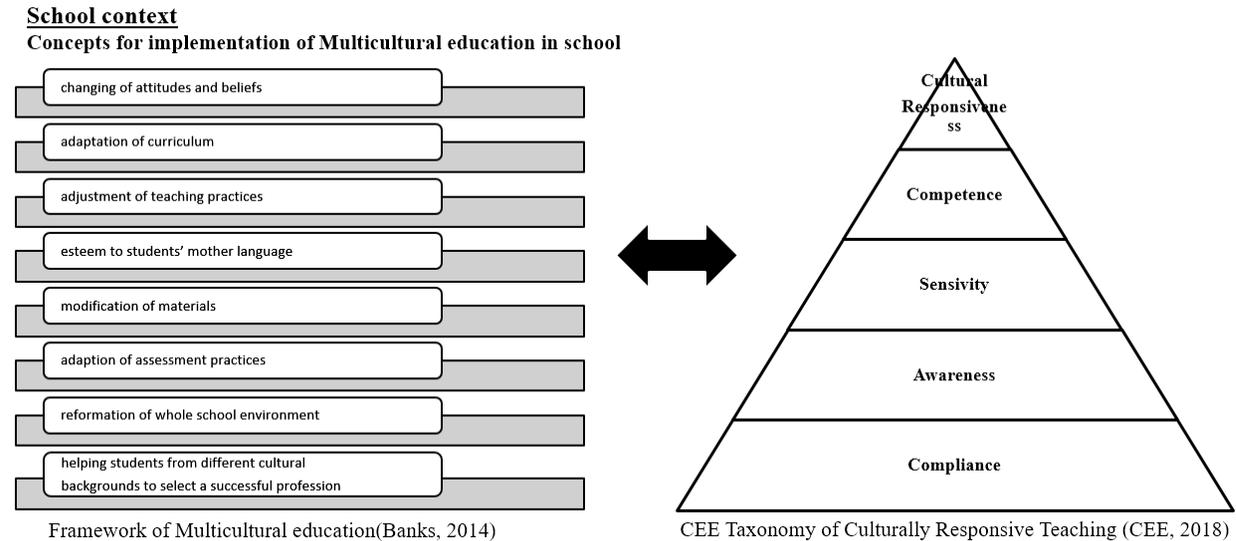
To sum up, results of the empirical studies reviewed showed that it is important for teachers to acquire knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds in order to make content integration. This requires communication with parents to gain knowledge about students' behaviours and cultural context. In addition, it is important to create positive atmosphere with respect and equality, where students get motivation for learning and respect to each other. These entire strategies can be applied for diverse classes, but still there is a gap in the research related to the Kazakhstani context, as to whether their techniques will work or not, and whether their reactions would be positive or negative.

2.7. Conceptual Framework using the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive

Teaching

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework



Source: Adapted from J. A. Banks, 2014, p. 42; Centre for Educational Effectiveness, 2018, p.1

The conceptual framework for the study is based on the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018) and Banks' Framework of Multicultural Education (2014). The rationale for the use of this taxonomy is that it provides the researcher with the opportunity to relate the level of understanding and strategies used for the teaching culturally diverse students to the perceptions and activities of the participants in this study. In this case, the framework of multicultural education was used to show the key aspects that need to be implemented to achieve the responsiveness level of the taxonomy (see Figure 2).

This conceptual framework will be further applied in the study to explore how teachers' perceptions and strategies are related to the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018). It will provide information about the teachers' perceptions

about teaching culturally diverse students and what needs to be done in order to improve their understanding of the importance of considering culture during the lessons.

2.8. Summary

This chapter discussed the theoretical literature of multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching, teachers' perception, challenges and strategies for teaching culturally diverse students. Based on different studies, it was found that there are different teachers' perceptions that were related to different levels of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018), and those affected their strategies. It was revealed that it is important for teachers to create a positive atmosphere with respect and equality and acquire knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds to make content integration. On the other hand, the main challenges were a huge amount of work assigned to teachers, curriculum and books that did not address culture, students' settled patterns of English, lack of time and collaboration within the staff. The chapter concluded with the conceptual framework based on the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018) and Banks' Framework of Multicultural Education (2014), and its relevance for this study.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter explained the relevant literature related to the field of multicultural education, culturally responsive pedagogy, and how teachers in different school contexts perceived culturally responsive teaching. This literature shaped the focus of the current study. This chapter presents the methodology of the study. It includes a description of the research design, research site, site and participant selection, data collection tools and procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations.

3.2. Research Design

To address the problem of the study, a qualitative, phenomenological case study was implemented as the primary research design. According to Leedy, and Ormrod (2005) phenomenological qualitative research aims to describe and understand research phenomena from the participants' point of view. In this case, a central phenomenon is working with culturally diverse students. Another rationale for using the qualitative paradigm is that the study aims to gather life experience and daily practices of participants through a face-to-face interview.

A case study approach was used for this study to explore and answer the research questions from the real-life experiences of participants within one school context. For the research, the case was teachers of one school and the phenomenon was their perceptions and working with culturally diverse students.

According to Zainal (2007), a case study is the best way to explore the problem when detailed and comprehensive research is needed, and Yin (2014) stated that the case study design helps the researcher to illustrate real-life situations and their essential and complete

aspects. A single case study approach was used, with the teachers in one international school, which is located in Kazakhstan that met all the needed criteria for this study.

3.3. Research Site

After receiving ethical approval from the GSE Ethics Committee of the Nazarbayev University, the researcher established contact with the site gatekeeper, who was the principal of this school.

After getting permission from the administration of the school to conduct the research at this site, the researcher sent the gatekeeper an email message with essential information, which invited all teachers who were interested in participating in the research to complete a demographic internet survey through a digital link. The email contained the consent form and link to the demographic questions of the survey. The information sheet mentioned that all people who would reply to the demographic survey would be considered as willing to participate in the study. Teachers who accepted the invitation to participate in the research were asked to sign the informed consent form for the internet survey (see Appendix A). Through the email, participants replied with a time and day when they would also be able to take part in the interview. All volunteers were informed about interview recording, voluntary participation and the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were asked to sign the written informed consent form (see Appendix B), that included the explanation of the purpose of the study, description of procedures and data collection tools that would be used, possible risks and benefits for participants. Also, it included the sentence that all data received during the data collection process, about teachers and research location would be confidential and used only for research purposes.

3.4. Site and Participant Selection

The location of the study was an international school in Kazakhstan. This is the site, where the researcher is employed. In purposive sampling, to understand the central phenomenon, scholars deliberately choose individuals and sites (Creswell, 2014) intentionally. Since it is an international school, it has students and teachers from diverse countries and cultural backgrounds. Purposive sampling was applied, to select participants for interviews, who have knowledge and practice relevant to the study; in this study, this was teachers with teaching experience with culturally diverse students (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Along with the purposive sampling, convenience sampling was used to recruit people from the research site who aspired to help in the field of the study. In convenience sampling participants are selected when they express eagerness and availability to be studied (Creswell, 2014). In that situation, it did not mean that all selected participants are ideally suited for the gathering of information related to cultural diversity. Even though, they shed light on some interesting issues that were influential for further investigation.

During the data collection process, all secondary staff was emailed to participate in the research. Eight participants responded to the email and volunteered to participate. All eight participants who completed the internet survey had the essential background and experience with cultural diversity, in this case, it was an experience of teaching culturally diverse students for more than four years. So they all were accepted into the study and invited to interview. In summary, there were eight participants (see Table 1).

Table 1

List of participants

Participants	Gender	Role	Experience of teaching culturally diverse students
Participant 1	Male	Administration	31 years
Participant 5	Male	Teacher	24 years
Participant 6	Male	Teacher	19 years
Participant 2	Male	Administration	10 years
Participant 8	Female	Teacher	10 years
Participant 4	Male	Teacher	6 years
Participant 7	Female	Teacher	5 years
Participant 3	Male	Teacher	4 years

3.5. Data Collection Tools and Procedures

The first data collection tool was a demographic survey, which was applied after the approval from the gatekeeper to conduct the research in the school. All people in the school got a message with an invitation to the demographic survey, consent form for internet surveys and link to the questions of the survey (see Appendix C). The main aim of the demographic survey was to collect general background information about potential participants, about their cultural background and teaching experience. Based on this information, participants were selected purposefully and invited for the interview.

An interview was selected as the main data collection tool for the study. It was intended to elicit a detailed picture of perceptions, challenges and strategies for teaching classes with cultural diversity. Semi-structured face to face interviews, with open-ended questions, were the primary method to collect data. Interview meetings provided in-depth information about participants' experiences and perceptions of teaching culturally diverse

students. This kind of interview is appropriate for interviewing people who are confident and expressive enough and who can share their ideas easily (Creswell, 2014). Through the open-ended questions from the interview protocol (see Appendix D), teachers were able to describe and share their ideas, emotions and perceptions; tell about their experience of teaching and the challenges that occurred during their lessons. The semi-structured approach allowed the researcher to conduct interviews in the form of a conversation where there was no specific order of questions and the researcher asked probes when needed to extend a response (Creswell, 2014). On average, interviews lasted for 40 minutes. Since all participants were employed in a school with English medium of instructions and knew the English language, the interviews were conducted in English. The participants were informed of the possibility to withdraw from the interview at any time. All interviews were audiotaped with the permission of the participants.

3.6. Data Analysis

Participants' interview responses were transcribed verbatim. To analyze the collected data, open coding was implemented. Descriptive codes that were revealed during the open coding process were assigned to a table of each participant (see Appendix E). According to Given (2008), coding is dynamic, which gives opportunity to a researcher to combine different words. By connecting code labels or words to identify occurrences, meanings, perceptions, or phenomena, practices and experiences, challenges and strategies were grouped to that are similar and to distinguish those that differ.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

This research was conducted in line with all international ethical standards. Ethics permission from NU as describer earlier. Specifically, the following ethical considerations, as

described by Patton (2002), were considered when the research was designed and implemented.

Informed consent. Before the start of the study, the gatekeeper of the research site, who was principal of the international school, was acquainted with the consent form that included the purpose of the study, description of procedures to gather data from participants. Before the recruitment process of teachers for the interviews, the gatekeeper sent an email message with all essential information about the research with the attached consent form. Furthermore, all participant who accepted to participate signed this consent form two times and had one copy returned for their own records.

Reciprocity. The main aim of purposeful sampling was to get the best quality data to answer the research questions and contribute to the development of education of Kazakhstan by sharing teachers' perceptions, ideas, challenges and strategies for teaching students from different cultural backgrounds. In addition, people who took part in this research got the opportunity to reflect on their teaching experience and through this reflection process, potentially enhance their teaching.

Confidentiality. Another critical issue that was taken into account is confidentiality. Firstly, the name of the school and location were not included in the research. The names of the participants have been replaced by a number to identify each participant, for example, participant 1, participant 2. Any characteristics that could reveal the participants' names or subject were not mentioned in the study. To ensure full protection of teaching staff, sexual, cultural, and racial issues that may affect their identity and identity of their students were excluded.

Data access, ownership and data management. All information that was obtained during this study was confidential to the full extent possible. All data was only electronically

on the researcher's computer, password protected. After five years of finishing the study, the researcher will destroy the recorded interviews, emails, consent forms, all notes and the list of participants. Information that was mentioned, as "off the record" was not used in the study, and was not recorded into the interview report (Creswell, 2014, p. 231).

Beneficence. The researcher was responsible for ensuring that participants do not get hurt during the study period and especially during the interviews and observations. During meetings, all participants were provided with tea, water, biscuits and a comfortable room.

Justice. There were no advantages between the participants and the questions were interpreted for all equally and in the same manner. Conditions during the interview processes were the same for everyone. Teachers could refuse to take part in the research at any time.

Bias. Since the researcher was from the same site as participants, the gatekeeper emailed all potential participants and invited to participate in the research, to prevent any duress on colleagues to participate. In addition, the researcher did not force or push anyone to participate in the study. During the process of the interview, participants were asked not to treat the researcher as a colleague to obtain more relevant data.

3.8. Summary

This chapter gave detailed information on the methodology part of the research. A qualitative case study research design was applied to explore teacher perceptions, challenges and strategies of teachers who are working with culturally diverse classes. One international school in Kazakhstan was selected because it provided the researcher with easy access to participants and relevant resources for the purpose of this study. Purposive and convenience sampling were used to select people from the research site who aspired to help and had knowledge and experience relevant to the field of the study. The semi-structured one-on-one interview was used as the main tool for data collection. All conversations were audiotaped and

transcribed verbatim. The data was coded and categorized into different themes that were analysed and discussed in the discussion chapter. The research complied with all ethical standards required by Nazarbayev University.

Chapter 4. Findings

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this research, which aimed to explore teachers' perceptions, experiences, strategies and challenges of working with culturally diverse secondary students (grades 6-12) in an international school in Kazakhstan. There were four research questions: (1) How do teachers in Kazakhstan perceive working with culturally diverse students? (2) What are the possible challenges that can occur while teaching culturally diverse students? (3) What strategies do teachers who are working with culturally diverse students use? (4) In what ways does culturally responsive teaching affects the learning process?

The findings are presented from the data analysis. The selected quotations from responses of participants were used as evidence to support findings. In total, there were eight participants. Each participant has been assigned a number and in this chapter, they are represented as participant 1 or participant 2. The findings of the study are grouped into four sections pertaining to each research question. The first section is about teachers' perceptions of working with culturally diverse students. The second section is about challenges those participants faced in working with culturally diverse classes. The third section is differentiated strategies focused on language rather than cultural diversity. The last is the impact of culturally responsive pedagogy on the teaching process.

4.2. Understandings of Cultural Diversity and Perceptions of Working with Cultural Diversity

This section presents the findings about teachers' perceptions of teaching culturally diverse students: how they understand working with culturally diverse students and what is important to consider during lessons. The following section consists of two sub-sections: (1)

Teachers in this school acknowledge the importance of cultural awareness, (2) There is limited understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy and consequently teacher differentiation for cultural diversity is limited. In general, this shows that teachers are aware of the cultural background of students and they expressed that this was perceived to be important, however, information about the different cultural backgrounds of students were limited to the lowest levels of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018). Furthermore, based on school values, teachers indicated that they try to treat everyone equally and with respect. For some teachers, differentiation was seen as contrary to principles of equality. Teachers promoted these school values in the school community rather than differentiating instruction.

Teachers acknowledge the importance of cultural awareness. Teachers are aware of cultural diversity in classes. All of them named different nationalities in their classes. As an example, two teachers made following comments:

They are from different cultures: Pakistan India. I have one from Greece. There is another one from Indonesia and another one I think he is German. So roughly five or six of them aside from Kazakhs and Russians.
(Participant 3)

Indian, Romanian, Pakistani, South Korean. So those are [students] I teach.
(Participant 5)

In fact, one participant believed that cultural diversity could almost be taken for granted in Kazakhstan. Participant 6 said, “we are living in Kazakhstan and we are always ready to respect any different culture”.

Two participants made points about classroom decoration that will promote cultural awareness:

Something that would encourage all of us to think globally to be one to be united in one corner of the classroom would be a place where we express our being one despite our differences our different cultures. (Participant 3)

Sometimes we need to change the theme to the classroom because with we should think about the religions or some like personal characteristics and beliefs. (Participant 4)

One participant suggested that cultural diversity was not an issue they considered when decorating the room. This participant commented about importance of showing all students' works as a part of classroom decoration: "I just make sure I have got everybody represented in some way. I do not really think about in terms of culture" (Participant 7). Interesting fact that one teacher mentioned, "You know lack of my knowledge of their cultures is probably the hardest thing" (Participant 5). Which is important factor in the culturally responsive pedagogy.

Two teachers talked about importance of cultural practices such as holidays, religious festivals and teachers were aware of different cultural celebrations:

If school provides opportunities to students with different cultural backgrounds to follow their traditions for example. To celebrate their holidays. It is helpful to establish a kind of cultural diversity in the school. (Participant 1)

They like different foods also like traditions but they are adapted for themselves... They celebrating like different holidays or something like that. (Participant 4)

Further, two teachers said that they taught about festivals of different cultures to raise interest in those cultures and promote cultural awareness. For example, Participant 3 said, "We had a lesson about the Diwali festival". Similarly, Participant 7 said, "We taught throughout festivals from each of our countries which you know makes them feel valued and that their culture is valued".

This finding connects to teachers promoting school values, and vision in their classrooms. Moving beyond this low-level focus on room decorations and festivals, one participant saw the value in developing more complex understandings of culture. For example,

Participant 6 said, "I think every student can take any positive things from the different cultures". Another interesting comment related to this point claimed by Participant 7:

It's interesting to discuss different things from different perspectives which is particularly useful as you know we have a more globalized more connected world... I'm trying to get them to talk about their cultures or share their... you know what they have experienced in own countries.

Further, there are several values such as respect, equality and empathy those teachers mentioned in connection with cultural diversity:

Students need to understand empathy for example or that they should respect each other. And they should be diverse. I think it is really important especially during the globalization process... it is important for country to establish a kind of peaceful situation environment and our school also tried to follow this ideology. (Participant 1)

Overall, it can be concluded that teachers promote cultural awareness and respect for other cultures by the celebration of their cultural events and teaching about different traditions.

Limited understanding of differentiation related to culturally responsive pedagogy. The literature review in Chapter 2.3 defined culturally responsive pedagogy as an approach to teaching students based on their ethnic background, experience, connecting the content of the curriculum with the students' cultures (Gay, 2001). However, the findings of this study showed that teachers have only limited understandings of the significance of culture for their teaching and the learning of their students. Consistent with this, there is a limited understanding or use of differentiation in relation to students' cultural backgrounds.

Three participants mentioned that in their teaching practices, they try to avoid topics or issues that could be culturally sensitive. The following comments show this opinion:

If you are aware of this things [students' cultures], you avoid offending their sensibilities. But as much as possible since this is an international school. (Participant 3)

Teachers need to know about their students' culture. To prevent some kind of difficulties in future or to skip some kind of difficult topics. (Participant 8)

That indicates that teachers ignore aspects of cultural difference rather than acknowledging and opening those topics up for discussion, which shows teachers' misunderstanding of cultural awareness. For other teachers, the curriculum was internationalised with the conscious inclusion of diverse cultures to engage and interest students. The inclusion of historical examples of different countries in their lesson plans is an example of using content from cultures presented in the classroom. It showed that teachers use culture to arouse students' interest in different cultures. Participant 1 claimed that in his lesson he uses internationalism. Further, Participant 5 said that, "You can just make it [lesson] more interesting by attaching questions to that culture". Similarly, Participant 8 commented, "I'm just trying to make the lessons interesting for them because while they ... see their own country own state it is like they are interested in that topics".

To sum up, teachers in the school have a focus on the awareness of culture, which influences the choice of the content for the interest. They avoid including some content from a fear of causing offence to students.

4.3. Challenges in Working with Culturally Diverse Students

This section explains the challenges that teachers' faced when teaching culturally diverse students. The context of the school is an international school in a trilingual country, which has adopted English as the medium of instruction. School context shapes the international model with its values and vision. The following section presents three sub-sections: (1) Different language backgrounds and competence, (2) Behaviour management of different cultural values, (3) Adaptation of students to the school culture.

Different language backgrounds and competence. The aspect of diversity, which presented the greatest challenge to teachers, was linguistic diversity. This is one of many aspects of student cultural diversity (for example, ethnicity, religious, etc.). The first issue is that despite the fact that the English language is the medium of instruction, most of the teachers see it as a challenge. Participant 1 noted,

Sometimes if you teach in English, there might be some problems with understanding or the students they may not understand the English well and in these moments you cannot help them. If you know their [first] language you can better explain.

In addition, Participant 3 stated, "Language facility plays a big role because if they do not understand the language all the other subjects are affected". It shows that teachers' pedagogy is influenced by students' level of English. Even students in grades 10, 11 and 12 have problems with English. Participant 8 commented:

Students from upper secondary schools from 10 grade 11, 12 grade and they have lack of English language and they are facing with a lot of difficulties because of their level of English.

Participants described that students' low level of English is a challenge for them. It led to the fact that most practices, especially differentiation strategies are related to differentiation for language background rather than other aspect of cultural diversity.

Behaviour management related to different cultural values. The following section explains how and why participants apply different behaviour management strategies. Almost all participants mentioned about setting rules for the classroom. According to Participant 1:

I set some rules in my class. For example, that students need to respect each other. If they want to ask a question or answer the question, they need to raise their hands. They have to follow the rules. If they break the rules. Of course. This kind of behavioural process.

Similarly, participants 4 and 3 mentioned about setting rules for the classroom, "We are trying to teach them how they need to do things here and what is not acceptable to do in our classroom" (Participant 4). Participant 7 noted:

You know certain things might happen depending on different cultures and different perspectives. When I as a teacher doing behaviour management my class it is going it has got to be the same for everyone.

These participant comments shows that teachers are aware that the cultural background of their students may impact on their behaviour in class. The comments suggest that the teachers believe students have different understandings of what behaviour is expected in class, based on their specific cultural background. The teachers are trying to control students' behaviour despite their cultural background differences. One teacher summarised this view about culturally sensitive issues for teachers in behaviour management:

What is normally accepted in one country may not be the expectation in another country... in some countries it is okay to yell at students for example and be loud. But in another country your tone is vitally important. You might need to use a softer tone because your aggressive voice might not be acceptable. (Participant 2)

One participant linked behaviour management to language issues, saying that, "I have found that behaviour is influenced through how much English students understand because particularly the start of the year".

In summary, teachers promote equality in school despite students' cultures. Behaviour management practices based on school policies and school context, that do not take into account students' cultural backgrounds.

Adaptation of students to an international school culture. The four participant said about adaptation of new students to the school context. Those responses are following:

If we have new students from another country. We can advise parents how that student, how their child can adapt in our school. What can that students

do to establish, for example friendly relationship in the class? (Participant 1)

They have different backgrounds and it is like the behaviour, which is acceptable in other school. It is not acceptable in our school. They cannot show the same behaviour and sometimes it is for them difficult to understand the system. (Participant 4)

Students, who have not been in, have not had that type of teaching and learning before. It takes maybe six months to get used to our style... It is important that you involve parents in education because the more they are involved the more they understand your methodology. Just think, our parents came from a different time period and maybe don't understand our curriculum or our methods. So we have to explain it to parents as well. (Participant 2)

These responses show that there is tension between cultural awareness and expectation of adaptation to dominant school culture. This includes students' and parents' adaptation to schools' methodology, rules and curriculum.

4.4. Differentiated Strategies Focused on Language rather than Cultural Diversity

This section addresses the second research question, about teachers' strategies for teaching culturally diverse students. The following section consists of four themes: (1) How teachers differentiate for language diversity in the context of English language as medium of instruction, (2) How resources selection occurs based on ability and culture, (3) how teachers uses different assessment practices by ability rather than culture.

Differentiation for language diversity in the context of English language as medium of instruction. Half of participants noted the importance of differentiation by language. Participant 7 expressed his opinion that, "Wherever we need to differentiate for ability [knowledge of English] we do in every subject". In this statement, the participant pointed out the importance of differentiation based on language and stated that it should be used in all lessons. Two other teachers noted that they make language-based differentiation in

lessons. Participant 2 mentioned, "I try to teach my teachers to use is language based lessons".

Moreover, Participant 2 added:

It is not so much based on the cultural but it is more based on the student understanding and language. For example if you have children that are very good at understanding English let, us say in Grade 5 then you might expect them to write one full page of a story, a narrative. And that's the acceptable standard. But for some other students who haven't got that experience maybe you accept two paragraphs.

Further, Participant 1 noted about language based lessons:

Also there is one new technique called CLIL. Content Language Integrated Learning. You can use it to teach your subjects in English. And to improve understanding of students. Because you can teach your subject as well as English.

Participant 2 commented about importance of the English language, "Key factor one is their prior knowledge in English because we're an English speaking school". In addition Participant 7 stated that, "Everything is done in English and that's enforced". Finally, to explain the importance of the English language Participant 3 said, "Language facility plays a big role because if they [students] don't understand the language all the other subjects are affected".

Because the school emphasises English as the medium of instruction this presents a challenge for students from different linguistic backgrounds, and consequently this was a dominant concern of teachers. Because of the trilingual context of the school, for teachers, the issues of English Medium instruction appeared to be seen as separate to a cultural diversity issue. None-the less, this focus on EMI challenges appeared to consume teachers' attention, and it leads to loss of focus on other aspect of teaching pedagogy. Subsequently, two main strategies to support students with the language were found during the interviews: (1) vocabulary, (2) peer teaching.

Vocabulary. A practice to support students with English was providing students with essential vocabulary before the lesson. Two teachers noted the importance of knowing keywords for students, as example Participant 2 expressed this idea, “Even in mathematics or in science it is very important to use the strategies of the main words”. One participant specifically commented about keywords as a support strategy for new students. Participant 8 said, “In case of the students who are taking only for the first year I'm giving keywords also the helpful information”. Participant 1 said, “I show students video content. And give them some important terms that they are going to see in the video”, and Participant 3 mentioned that, “I would provide vocabulary or word building before the actual lesson. Vocabulary is very important so there might be unfamiliar words”.

Another point was that students from different cultural backgrounds have different understanding of words. Participant 2 regarding this issue said: “Some of the terminology that you might use is that children don't understand the vocabulary. They might think that you are saying a different word than what you're saying”. Moreover, Participant 4 added, “If it's like multicultural class you need to try to explain the words to adapt it to them because it's like each of them they have their own meanings are like in their mind”.

Peer teaching. Three teachers mentioned peer teaching as a strategy to support students with language problems. Participant 1, who also mentioned English as challenge said, “You can use another student who knows his language to explain that student about the content of the lesson”. Another teacher who stated that, “Knowledge of English is key factor”, said:

I think it is important if you have children in your class with limited English that you will have another speaker in the class or you utilize the other students to help you explain what you want to be done. (Participant 2)

The last teacher, despite saying that English language was not a problem, commented “Sometimes when you have students that do not understand this and I say other students to explain it in their language.”

Overall, this section shows that teachers worry about their students understanding the lesson, especially words which that may not know. For this purpose, teachers provide students with an essential explanation of those words or ask their peers to explain them in their native language during the lesson.

Selection of resources based on ability and language. Based on the responses of teachers, this research shows that most of teachers pay a lot of attention to digital resources, so if students do not know English very well, teachers used digital resources so that their students could better understand the topic. As an example, Participant 3 stated that, “All of them [students] are technologically adept, so we can really make use of technology like iPads, phones, the Internet, online books, e-books”. Further, there were a few comments about the differentiation of resources based on English level. Participant 2 noted, “The new textbooks ... There is not so many words and it is easier for them to understand. So they're more visual”. Participant 1 made a point on video use:

I can show students the video. Sometimes I show it to them twice. Because if I show them only once students might not understand. That's why sometimes you need to show them the video two times. And also if there is a video with subtitles, like the English subtitles.

In addition, there were participants who said they do not differentiate resources. Their opinion was based on the fact that some subjects are equally taught in all countries. It shows a very limited understanding of culture and cultural awareness. Their comments were:

I do not differentiate. The Classics will always be the classics in my subject in literature. Modern literature or the classics will always be the same.
(Participant 3)

Math is it always across all different cultures. So you know the math you do in like in like an Arabic culture is essentially the same as the math of Kazakh culture or Russian cultural. (Participant 5)

In contrast, one teacher said:

Also using folk tales of another country, fairy stories from other countries might be culturally insensitive, perhaps in Kazakhstan; perhaps we could utilize the stories from this country [Kazakhstan]. I like to do is utilize the literature and the culture of that country in what you are teaching. So, if you understand the culture and you can gain more understanding yourself as a foreign teacher then you can utilize that country's own culture in your lessons. (Participant 2)

In this case, the teacher explains the importance of considering the majority of the class; it will be Kazakh or Russian students. Which is lead to the missing of connection to the cultures of the rest of the class, which is contrary to culturally responsive pedagogy.

Finally, it can be seen that teachers use differentiation of resources mostly based on language; some of teachers prefer to use digital resources and two teachers think that there is no need to differentiate resources for some subjects.

Different assessment practices by ability rather than culture. Teachers say they differentiate assessment practices based on students' knowledge or level of the English language. The following comments show this opinion:

Sometimes students may not complete their assessment well especially if they are not good in English. Maybe you need to use a different assessment for that student. Different tasks or more easy tasks or also you can use another scale. And you need to consider effort of the student. (Participant 1)

In math do you put long questions in English language or should the questions be short and using more numbers. It depends on what the children are expecting. (Participant 2)

If a child is particularly weak with their English. That might influence how we assess them. ... You know we may not ask them to do a piece of writing or might assess it in a different way, verbally or with support with some translation. (Participant 7)

It shows that the linguistic background of students despite their cultural influences teachers' perceptions and strategies for teaching, in this case, participants discussed English language differentiation based on the amount of work and support with translation.

It was interesting to find that one teacher connected assessment practice to students' cultures to raise cultural awareness, he said:

All students have the list of the topics for this term and so they are choosing one topic among them and they are preparing one-minute history video about the topic. So in case of one-minute history video that they have studied about it, they can relate one-minute video with their culture.
(Participant 8)

Overall, the findings showed that there was no assessment differentiation by culture,

4.5. Impact of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy on the Teaching Process

When the study was designed, the fourth question focused on teachers' views of how differentiated instructions influenced culturally responsive pedagogy. Because the findings of the first three questions indicated that teachers have only limited strategies for culturally responsive pedagogy and that teachers did not include extensive planning for cultural diversity of students in their classes; therefore, the study is unable to explore the impact of culturally responsive teaching on student learning.

4.6. Summary

In this chapter, the findings of the study were provided. The first part presented teachers' understanding of cultural diversity and perceptions of teaching culturally diverse students. The next part explained the challenges of participants that included students' English background, behaviour management and adaptation to school culture, which participant explained as a process of assimilation. Further, there were explained teachers' strategies that were focused on the English language rather than culture. It included peer teaching, support

students with a vocabulary and English language differentiation. It was concluded that there were limited strategies for culturally responsive teaching. The discussion of the findings is provided in the next chapter.

Chapter 5. Discussion

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented the main findings of the study. It was revealed that teachers' perceptions of teaching cultural diversity are influenced by school policies; moreover, and that teachers revealed the use of only limited pedagogical strategies, primarily focused on the linguistic diversity of students. The low level of English language of students affected teachers' practices. This chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to previous studies discussed in the literature review. The discussion chapter is divided into three sections to summarise the findings in relation to the research and guiding questions: (1) Perceptions of working with cultural diversity, (2) Challenges in working with culturally diverse students, and (3) Differentiated strategies focused on language rather than cultural diversity.

5.2. Perceptions of Working with Cultural Diversity

According to my findings, it was revealed that teachers are aware of the students' cultural backgrounds; they base their teaching philosophy on school values, which are about treating everyone equally and with respect. Teachers promote these school values within the school community. Gay (2002) stated that teachers need to respect diversity and avoid stereotypes about any cultures during teaching in culturally diverse classrooms. Most of the participants commented about the promotion of respect and equality within the classroom. This is consistent with one of the dimensions of the Banks (2004) framework, which is about empowering school culture and school reform to build cultural and social equity. One of the reasons for this is the huge amount of different ethnicities who live in Kazakhstan and creates a multinational community of the school. So while Participant 6 mentioned that people in Kazakhstan are ready to respect another culture.

Johnson and Chang (2012) mentioned that it is important to create an atmosphere without conflicts and create a “classroom in which all the students felt respected and safe to share their lived experiences” (p.23). This matches the findings of my study, as teachers mentioned about creating peaceful environments and the importance of discussion of different perspectives of students in this globalized world but was found is that teachers claimed to believe this, however they then had problems enacting strategies to achieve it.

Regarding the atmosphere in the classroom Vandeyar (2010) found that some teachers made classroom decoration that represented the cultural diversity of the classroom. The response of Participant 4 of this research mentioned we should consider students' religions during the classroom decoration process. It nearly shows that society of the international school represent various religious backgrounds and teacher is considering it is as an important factor that can affect not only classrooms but also the whole school atmosphere. Another issue that was mentioned by two participants was the importance of celebrations of cultural holidays, including different traditions and cultural food of students in the classroom. These results are consistent with the findings of Johnson and Chang (2012) who commented, “These strategies were used to incorporate both the dominant culture as well as the individual students' cultures into learning activities” (p. 23). It shows that teachers use these strategies to increase the interest of students in the lesson, or to involve students from different cultural backgrounds into the lesson process, or as a part of extracurricular activities. Similarly, Ebersole, Kanahele-Mossman and Kawakami (2015) stated, “for some teachers culturally responsive teaching appeared to be an activity or something that is done when there was extra time in the curriculum. These types of activities highlighted cultural traditions – music, food, dance, etc.” (p. 100). In overall, it can be concluded that this kind of perceptions relate teachers to the awareness level of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018), since

teachers promote cultural awareness by cultural celebrations however do not fully understand the importance of addressing students culture and limited to extracurricular activities.

Three participants of this study characterized culturally diverse teaching as skipping culturally sensitive topics or issues. This avoidance issue shows that there are tensions between being sensitive and avoiding issues. However, Gichuru, Riley, Robertson and Park (2015) found, that teachers in their research used culturally sensitive resources for their classrooms. It indicates that teachers of this study do not fully understand the importance of addressing students' culture during the lesson process.

Despite that fact, teachers of the school did not apply culturally responsive teaching on the high level of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018); it was found that some teachers use internationalism in their lessons plans. It means that teachers provided culturally diverse students with examples from their cultures. Participant 8 commented on the importance of real-life examples that can increase students' interest in the topic. This is consistent with Misco (2018), who found that some teachers used cultures as "connective tissue for learning content" (p. 87).

To sum up, it shows that teachers in this international school represent either sensitivity or awareness level of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018), since their perceptions are based on cultural awareness. Teachers have limited understanding of importance of addressing students' culture. For some teachers, their sensitivity is shown by avoiding culturally sensitive issues, which is contrary to the culturally responsive approach. Teachers should have more comprehensive understanding of culturally responsive teaching, but for now a limited range of practices, as cultural celebrations are adopted.

5.3. Challenges in Working with Culturally Diverse Students

In previous section of this chapter it was discussed how participants of this study perceived working with culturally diverse students. This part explains the challenges mentioned by teachers. The challenges section includes the following themes: (1) Different language backgrounds and competence, (2) Behaviour management, (3) Adaptation of students to an international school culture.

Different language backgrounds and competence. The first issue presented in this international school is English as the medium of instruction. Most of the participants mentioned this as a challenge for them. Nilsson, Kong and Hubert (2016) made the research in a similar school context, where the medium of instruction was English, and students' native languages were different. They found in their research that for their teachers it was challenging to teach students with settled patterns of English; however, my participants responded that it was a challenge for teachers to work with culturally diverse students because of students' low level of English. It was interesting that one teacher mentioned that even students from the upper secondary school have a lack of English language. That indicates that there is a low barrier to the entry requirements to gain a place at this school based on English language. This is significant as students must not only learn all subjects in English but also communicate with some teachers and other students using the English language.

Further one participant mentioned, "Lack of knowledge of their [students'] culture is hardest thing", which was expected since it is impossible to apply culturally responsive teaching without knowledge about students' culture. It shows that teachers do not have the time or the skills to get to know enough about children's cultural backgrounds. This finding aligns with the fact that school policy does not force teachers to address students' culture in their lessons. Misco (2018) found that it was challenge for participants to include various

cultural contexts in the lesson process, and make communication with parents, because a class had a lot of different cultures. However, it was not revealed during the collection process, since teachers were operating at the lower levels of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018) and were not at the stage of development of including authentic culturally responsive pedagogical strategies in lessons. In addition, Johnson and Chang (2012) mentioned religion as a challenge that makes tension in the classroom. However, during the research, this issue also was not revealed, mostly because the school follows Kazakhstani ideology, where the secular practices are legislated. Subsequently, the school promote respect to other religions and celebrates various religious holidays.

Behaviour management. At the beginning of the study, there was an assumption that teachers' behaviour management is changing in relation to students' cultural backgrounds. For example, Zhang and Wang (2016) found 25% of participants mentioned, "Students from minority groups tend to disturb the class" (p. 62). However, the review of previous literature did not reveal any additional information about how teachers make behaviour management in their lessons, besides the fact teachers create a positive atmosphere and promote respect. Grant and Sleeter (2013) stated that teachers who know how to base their teaching practices in relation to culture and language of culturally diverse students will be able to control classroom behaviour. In this study, almost all teachers set the same rules for everyone regardless of students' cultures. This shows that culturally diverse students of this international school must adapt to what is accepted and not accepted by the school within the dominant culture. Only one participant talked about the importance of using a softer tone with some students.

Adaptation of students to an international school culture. Even though teachers perceived culturally responsive teaching as more about cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity, when participants talked about students' adaptation to school, it showed that there

is tension between their beliefs about cultural awareness and students assimilation to school culture.

According to the responses of my participants, it was revealed that there are teachers who perceive adaptation to the school as a process where students get used to a new school, students and teachers. But also, there are teachers who understand the adaptation of students, as a process of assimilation to a school culture, within a dominant ethnic or national culture. As they mentioned, students need to understand, what is accepted and what is not accepted in this school, as an international school. It probably occurs because teachers understand equality in the diverse ways, which is consistent with the study of Vandeyar (2010), where teachers “treat them all the same” (p. 354), but in fact, they taught their students from one cultural perspective. Another reason that is mentioned by Misco (2018) is that teachers who are “rooted” in one school or “unwilling to change” (p. 90). It probably indicates that teachers apply strategies those focus on the content rather than culture, and teachers do not see culture as an important factor for students’ academic achievements, as they are satisfied with their teaching practices. Also, it is probably challenging for teachers to adapt their strategies, so it is easier to force students to assimilate to school culture and teachers’ practices.

5.4. Differentiated Strategies Focused on Language rather than Cultural Diversity

According to the findings of the study, it was found that the low level of English language is a challenge for teachers of the international school. Subsequently, teachers’ strategies are more focused on the content and language, rather than culture. In these section different strategies, those participants apply to support culturally diverse students with the English language will be discussed.

Differentiation for the English language. The first issue that was mentioned by half of the participants is the importance of differentiation by language. The context of the study is

significant here. While students may come from diverse cultural backgrounds, even within the local population the level of English language competence will be diverse because of the Trilingual Education Policy (Road Map for Trilingual Education, 2015) and the policy of the school to conduct lessons in English language. The staff who are predominantly from Russian, Kazakh and English language background is working with students in an English medium instruction context. The students in this school are considered to have a low level of English (Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 3, & Participant 8) and teachers consequently need to adapt their lessons based on language. However, it led to the fact that students' cultures were not addressed. Another issue that was mentioned by Participant 2 is that knowledge of students' first language gives a chance to better explain the topic when students do not understand English very well. This was reflected in the study Gichuru, Riley, Robertson and Park (2015), who said that their participant used the Spanish language to interact with students whose English was not the first language. However, it cannot be a solution if the class will represent a variety of different nationalities with different speaking language. For this purpose, teachers talked about peer teaching, like language support, where students can explain each other using their native language. In addition, Participant 1 said, that he applies CLIL that is English based lesson strategy; Participant 3 commented that English affects all students' subjects. It all demonstrates that English as the medium of instructions forces teachers to apply much effort to deal with it. Subsequently, teachers probably have a lack of time to pay attention to students' culture during the lessons.

Vocabulary. Another practice that was proposed by participants in the provision of students with essential explanations of words before or during the lesson. Participant 3 and Participant 2 said that they provide students with essential vocabulary before the lesson. This finding is also reflected in the article of Ramirez and Jaffee (2016), where one teacher used a

vocabulary journal for teaching new students. Moreover, the teacher gave permission to students to use their native language in the classroom. However, this point was not revealed for my study, since teachers force students to talk only in the English language, consistent with the English medium instruction school policy. Another strategy that was revealed during the research is to provide new students with all the essential information (Participant 8). This is consistent with another study where researchers mentioned about the explanation for new students also about materials that will be used before the lesson (Tran, Lefever, & Ragnarsdóttir, 2016). It was interesting to see that Participant 4 mentioned the importance of adaptation and selection of words that teachers use since some words can have another meaning in different countries. It shows the teacher's competence and awareness of possible problems that can occur on the base of the student's misunderstanding of the teacher's speech.

Selection of resources and different assessment practices based on the English level. Teachers reported that they do not differentiate resources based on culture and language. However, they mentioned that it is better for students to use digital like “IPads, phones, the Internet and e-books” because they are more technologically adept. These findings are consistent with the study of Tran, Lefever, and Ragnarsdottir (2016), who found that teachers to help students in the lesson process, used various types of resources like “visuals, electronic devices, audio books” (p. 9). It probably indicates that for some students it easier to understand the topic by use of digital resources, despite the English level.

It was interesting to find that two participants mentioned that there is no need to make differentiation of resources based on culture for subjects like mathematics and literature. In particular, Participant 3 mentioned that classical literature will always be used for literature lessons and will not change with respect to different cultures. Participant 5 stated that math is the same for all cultures, so there is no need to differentiate. On the other hand, Vandeyar

(2010) found that a math teacher in her research used symmetry as the topic to teach students about diversity. Also, Tran, Lefever, and Ragnarsdottir (2016) revealed that the teacher of literature allowed students to introduce writers from their culture and to present their poems. It indicates that teachers have opportunities to differentiate recourses and involve students' cultures in the lesson; however, it based on their beliefs, knowledge about students' cultures and experience of culturally responsive teaching.

Findings showed that there is a differentiation of practices based on the language level. That affected teachers' assessment practices; those are also based on English level. It was discovered that participants also mentioned ability differentiation, which was used as an additional strategy to access students with a low level of English. Participants 1, 2 and 7 said that they changed the amount of the work required for the assessment of students with a low level of English. It also was found that Participant 8 allowed his/her students to include their culture and share information about their culture in videos as part of the assessment. It shows that this teacher is more concerned about students' cultural backgrounds and moving towards including students from different cultural backgrounds in active participation in the lesson.

Parent communication. Even though there were limited responses about teacher-parent communication, it is worth mentioning about parent communication as a strategy to work with culturally diverse students. It was found that some participants do home visit, to learn about students. However, it is not related to students' cultural background. Although Gichuru, Riley, Robertson, and Park (2015) talked about home visit as important strategy to collect information about students' culture and tradition. Therefore, it does not show that teachers' beliefs about importance of considering culture in the teaching process affect their practices.

5.5. Summary

This chapter discussed the major finding of the study in relation to the previous studies in the field of teaching culturally diverse classes. The results showed that teachers in this international school represent either sensitivity or awareness level of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018). Their perceptions about cultural diversity were based on cultural awareness and usage of culture to raise students' interest in the learning process. It most likely happens due to an insufficient level of knowledge, also during the interviews participants talked about different stereotypes of their students' cultures. Another factor that affected teachers' perceptions of teaching cultural diversity is the school and country context, which represents' multinational society.

For most teachers, adaptation to the school is a process where students get used to a new school, students and teachers. However, there are teachers who understand the adaptation of students, as a process of assimilation to school culture. It probably shows that there is tension between their teachers' beliefs about cultural awareness and students' assimilation to school culture. Even though teachers promote respect and equality within the school community.

Further, it was revealed that the low level of the English language was a challenge for most teachers. The reason for it is English as the medium of instructions that affected students' teaching practices. It included various strategies to support students with the English language. Participants mentioned that they provide students with vocabulary, or ask their peers to explain in their native language. In terms of classroom behaviour, most of the participants said that they set the same rules for everyone, despite students' culture. However, one participant mentioned the importance of usage of the softer tone that shows that this teacher has more competence in terms of working culturally diverse students. Also, teachers mentioned that

they do not pay attention to culture during the process of resources selection, moreover, some teachers stated that mathematics and literature are the same everywhere, so there is no need to differentiate by culture, although previous studies stated that it is possible to include culture in this subjects. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' perception of working cultural diversity and experience of culturally responsive teaching influences the strategies they use in class.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

This chapter summarises the thesis and provides limitations of the study and implications for further research. In addition, recommendations for various stakeholders, and mainly for the administration of this international school. In overall, the study was able to answer three out of four research questions. All answers for research question described in this chapter, in separate sections.

6.2. The Summary of Findings and Discussion Chapters

How do teachers in Kazakhstan perceive working with culturally diverse students? Teachers at this school have a limited understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy, confined to the lower levels of the CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018). Teachers showed that they represent either sensitivity or awareness level of the Taxonomy of Cultural Responsiveness that reflected in their practices like avoid of culturally sensitive topics and use of the culture to raise students' interest in the lesson process. In addition, they promote respect and equality to create positive atmosphere within the school community. It was found that teachers' perceptions of cultural diversity were highly affected by school policy and core values.

What are the possible challenges that can occur while teaching culturally diverse students? The main challenge revealed is students' low level of English that affected teachers' strategies and differentiation practices. The main factor for this challenge was the English medium of instruction in this international school context. Another challenge that was revealed for some teachers was the lack of knowledge about students' cultures.

What strategies do teachers who are working with culturally diverse students use? To support students with the English, teachers provide students with essential vocabulary

before the lesson; they make differentiation based on the English level and use peers to help students using their native language. To deal with behavioral management, teachers set the same rules for everyone, promote respect and equality within the school community. While teachers expressed the view that cultural background of students affected student behavior, there was little evidence of teachers differentiating their behavior management related to the cultural background of the student. For some teachers, students' adaption to school means a process where students get used to a new school and for some teacher it was a process of assimilation to school culture, where teachers treated everyone the same despite cultural backgrounds of students.

In what ways does culturally responsive teaching affects the learning process? The study revealed limited strategies for culturally responsive pedagogy; therefore, this study was unable to make any conclusions for this research question.

6.3. Recommendations

The findings of this study have implications for policy and practice within the school.

Review school values. In the school, there are primary core values that teachers of this international school are following. The values include some terms like equality and diversity. Currently these terms are understood in a very narrow way, that equality means treating all students the same. These terms need to be explained to everyone, and why it is so important to interpret equality in an inclusive manner. The school administration should describe each school's value in relation to cultural background, so teachers will promote it within the school community. In addition, the school should include reference to the cultural diversity of students in the school policy, recommending that teachers should consider it, both during and outside the lesson. Teachers and students should not understand cultural diversity only as a need for cultural awareness, but the need for culturally responsive pedagogy at cultural responsiveness level of the

CEE Taxonomy of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CEE, 2018). Especially teachers should address each student's cultural background and help everyone to achieve. Reconstruction of school policy and core values should force teachers for self-development, affect their beliefs about teaching cultural diversity and their teaching practices.

Create personal portfolios for all students. Another problem, that exists in the school, that teachers do not have knowledge about the cultural background of their students. They have some cultural stereotypes or basic knowledge, which includes traditions or celebrations. If the school created personal portfolios for all students, it will provide teachers with the necessary knowledge about their students and special characteristics. This will assist teachers to create their lesson plans in relation to everyone's needs. Overall, this personal portfolio should include general information about students, his or her parents, family background, cultural backgrounds, and social status, learning style, hobbies, weaknesses and strengths sides.

Recommendations for supporting English development for students from different linguistic backgrounds. There are two possible ways of dealing with the issue. The first is that school can raise the barrier of entering the school based on a student' level of English. Another recommendation that was mentioned in the previous literature is to organize extra courses for students with a low level of English and provide an explanation of the material that will be used before the start of the academic year, so students will have appropriate knowledge and linguistic background.

6.4. Limitations of My Study and Implications for Further Research

Even though this study makes a valuable contribution to the knowledge of Kazakhstani teachers' perception, challenge and strategies for teaching culturally diverse students, there are some limitations part of the study. Since a single case study design was used in this study,

there were shared experience and strategies of teachers who work in an international school.

That means that this information is not transferable to the context and policy for all other schools. For some cases, all data that were collected and explained in this study need to be adapted for the other schools' contexts.

Another limitation of this study was the sampling, because in the school, there were people who have considerable experience and useful strategies for teaching students, but they did not want to participate in this study. The sample size is too small to make significant conclusions. The semi-structured interview was the only data collection tool that was used; for a more extensive study, it would be better to make lesson observations of those teachers who work with culturally diverse students and analyse school curriculum and policy documents.

For further research, it would be better to conduct a multiple case study that will include more than one international school, with larger numbers of people who have experience in the field of teaching culturally diverse classes.

6.5. Conclusion

This thesis has presented a study of teachers' perceptions, challenges and strategies for teaching culturally diverse students. In six chapters, the thesis has covered the introduction of the study, discussion of previous literature, the methodology that was applied, findings and its' discussion with relation to previous research. This study makes a contribution to the knowledge of teachers understandings and practices of teaching culturally diverse students in Kazakhstan. The findings have the potential to help the administration of this international school and other education organisations who works with culturally diverse students.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Informed Consent Form for Internet Surveys

Introduction. You are invited to participate in a research study entitled “Exploring Teachers’ Perceptions, Challenges and Strategies for Teaching Culturally Diverse Students in Kazakhstan.

Procedures. The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore teachers’ perceptions, challenges and strategies for working with culturally diverse secondary students (grades 6-12) in an international school in Kazakhstan. The research process consists of two parts. The first part is a survey, to identify participants with relevant experience for interviews. Respondents to the survey will be contacted through the school email system to organise an appropriate time and location for the interviews. Participants will be asked to bring up to five samples of their lesson plans to the interviews. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The interview will take approximately one hour.

Risks. The participants are likely to experience only minimal risks such as the loss of time from conducting the interview or completing the survey. However, participants have the right to withdraw from participation in the research at any time.

Benefits. For participants and the school, the anticipated benefits from participation in this study will be the ability of teachers to reflect on their experience, to identify effective practices in their teaching and areas in which they could improve their teaching practices. The findings of the study can be used by policymakers for the development of successful policy documents or reforms that will make an impact on culturally responsive teaching among teachers at the school, local and international level.

Compensation. No tangible compensation will be given to participants. A copy of the research results will be available at the conclusion of the study (a digital copy of the final version of the study will be disseminated to participants by emails).

Confidentiality & Privacy. Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent possible. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep your personal information in your research record. All data will be saved only electronically on the researcher’s computer, password protected. After five years of finishing the study, the researcher will destroy the recorded interviews, emails, consent forms, all notes and the list of participants.

Voluntary Nature of the Study. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and if agreement to participate is given, it can be withdrawn at any time without prejudice.

Points of Contact. It is understood that should any questions or comments arise regarding this project, or a research related injury is received, the Principal Investigator, [Name], [telephone], [email] should be contacted. Any other questions or concerns may be addressed to the Nazarbayev University Institutional Research Ethics Committee, resethics@nu.edu.kz.

Statement of Consent.

By clicking “I agree” below you are indicating that you are at least 18 years old, have read and understood this consent form and agree to participate in this research study.

- I Agree
- I Disagree

Appendix B

Written Informed Consent Form

Introduction. You are invited to participate in a research study entitled “Exploring Teachers’ Perceptions, Challenges and Strategies for Teaching Culturally Diverse Students in Kazakhstan”.

Procedures. The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore teachers’ perceptions, challenges and strategies for working with culturally diverse secondary students (grades 6-12) in an international school in Kazakhstan. The research process consists of two parts. The first part is a survey, to identify participants with relevant experience for interviews. Respondents to the survey will be contacted through the school email system to organise an appropriate time and location for the interviews. Participants will be asked to bring up to five samples of their lesson plans to the interviews. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The interview will take approximately one hour.

Risks. The participants are likely to experience only minimal risks such as the loss of time from conducting the interview or completing the survey. However, participants have the right to withdraw from participation in the research at any time.

Benefits. For participants and the school, the anticipated benefits from participation in this study will be the ability of teachers to reflect on their experience, to identify effective practices in their teaching and areas in which they could improve their teaching practices. The findings of the study can be used by policymakers for the development of successful policy documents or reforms that will make an impact on culturally responsive teaching among teachers at the school, local and international level.

Compensation. No tangible compensation will be given to participants. A copy of the research results will be available at the conclusion of the study (a digital copy of the final version of the study will be disseminated to participants by emails).

Confidentiality & Privacy. Any information that is obtained during this study will be kept confidential to the full extent possible. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep your personal information in your research record. All data will be saved only electronically on the researcher’s computer, password protected. After five years of finishing the study, the researcher will destroy the recorded interviews, emails, consent forms, all notes and the list of participants.

Voluntary Nature of the Study. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and if agreement to participation is given, it can be withdrawn at any time without prejudice.

Points of Contact. It is understood that should any questions or comments arise regarding this project, or a research related injury is received, the Principal Investigator, [Name], [telephone], [email] should be contacted. Any other questions or concerns may be addressed to the Nazarbayev University Institutional Research Ethics Committee, resethics@nu.edu.kz.

Statement of Consent.

I, _____,

Give my voluntary consent to participate in this study.

The researchers clearly explained to me the background information and objectives of the study and what my participation in this study involves.

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary. I can at any time and without giving any reasons to withdraw my consent, and this will not have any negative consequences for myself.

I understand that the information collected during this study will be treated confidentially.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I, _____,

Give my voluntary consent for the audio recording of the interview.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher:

Signed _____ Date _____

Appendix C

Questions for the Demographic Survey

Title: Exploring Teachers' Perceptions, Challenges and Strategies for Teaching Culturally Diverse Students in Kazakhstan.

Purpose: The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore teachers' perceptions, strategies and challenges of working with culturally diverse secondary students (grades 6-12) in an international school in Kazakhstan. This is a qualitative case study research.

The Demographic Survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

1. Write your name? _____
2. Write your surname? _____
3. Indicate your gender? _____
 - Male
 - Female
4. Indicate your age?
 - 20-25
 - 25-30
 - 35-40
 - 45-50
 - 50 or more
5. What is your ethnicity? _____
6. What is your primary language? _____
7. How many years of teaching experience do you have? _____
8. How many years of teaching culturally diverse classes you have? _____
9. How many different ethnicities you have in your classrooms? _____
10. How many years are you working at XXX school? _____

Thank you for your response, the researcher will contact you about the appropriate time and location for the interview.

Appendix D

Question for semi-structured interviews

Title: Exploring Teachers' Perceptions, Challenges and Strategies for Teaching Culturally Diverse Students in Kazakhstan.

Name _____

Date _____

1. How many students are from cultures other than Kazakh and Russian in your classroom? What are these nationalities? How many students are from each nationality?
2. What do you know about the cultural backgrounds of these students?
3. Does the students' cultural background influence how they learn in school?
4. Do you consider the cultural backgrounds of your students when you plan your lessons? If yes, in what ways?
5. What does the term culturally responsive teaching mean to you? Is it important or not? If yes, why yes? If not, why not?
6. In what ways does teaching culturally diverse classes differ from culturally homogenous classes?
7. What strategies/techniques do you use to teach in your culturally diverse classroom? Can you please explain them one by one?
8. How you deal with behavior management in the culturally diverse classrooms?
9. Do you think that consideration of culturally responsive pedagogy is essential during the process of lesson plans preparation? If yes, why yes? If not, why not?
10. Do you cater to the needs of culturally diverse students in your lesson plans? If yes, how? How do you adapt your teaching to meet the different culture and learning styles of your students?
11. What challenges did you face during the process of teaching culturally diverse students?
12. What do you think in your opinion is important to consider during the process of teaching students from different ethnical background? What are the key factors that contribute to the success of students from diverse backgrounds?

13. Do you think that communication with parents influence on student progress?
14. What about information about the linguistic backgrounds of students?
15. How does the cultural background of a student impact on their classroom learning?
16. What challenges do you experience when teaching students from diverse cultural backgrounds?
17. Do you differentiate the resources you use with culturally diverse students?
18. Do you differentiate your assessment practices with culturally diverse students?

Appendix E

Descriptive codes assigned to each participant

teacher (Participant 1)	role teacher knowledge Year of experience	teacher of history of cultural background religious background cultural stereotypes 5 years
context	diverse nationalities of students mission, vision school values	Empathy Respect Harmony
language challenge	understanding	
differentiation	strategies	language support+body language CLIL Class environment assessment-language focus differentiation by ability
	behaviour management Resources	learning support rules consequence Video with subtitles
Reasons for CRP	Globalization Migration	International employment
Students different learning styles	mentality work ethic learning preferences Relationship - communication Reactivity values	attitude to work Respect, empathy, collaboration
Concept of CRP	multiculturalism	celebrations, holidays world history examples internationalism in curriculum
adaptation	parent teachers communication	