

Intercultural Communication in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language in Malawi

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Abstract : This paper discusses how the teaching of English as a foreign language in Malawi can enhance intercultural communication competence in a multicultural society. It argues that incorporation of intercultural communication in the teaching of English as a foreign language would improve cultural awareness in communication in the multicultural Malawi. The teaching of English in Malawi is geared towards producing students who would communicate in the global world. This entails the use of proper pedagogical approaches and instructional materials that prepare the students toward intercultural awareness. In view of this, the language teachers were interviewed in order to determine their instructional approaches to intercultural communication. Instructional materials were further evaluated to assess how interculturality is incorporated. The study found out that teachers face perceptual and technical challenges that hinder them from exercising creativity to incorporate interculturality in their lessons. This is also compounded by lack of clear direction in the teaching materials on cultural elements. The paper, therefore, suggests a holistic approach to the teaching of English language in Malawian school in which the diversity of culture in classrooms must be considered an opportunity for addressing students' cultural needs that may be lacking in the instructional materials.

Keywords : cultural awareness, grammar, foreign language, intercultural communication, language teaching

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