Instructional strategies in multicultural classrooms in China: Experiences and challenges of international graduate students

Jimmy Ezekiel Kihwele¹, Markos Tezera Taye²* and Ahmed Alduais³

Abstract: The number of international students is immensely increasing in China towards the internationalization of higher education. This tendency inspired the emergence of teaching in multicultural classrooms (MCs), which is challenged by the lack of innovative instructional strategies matching international students’ needs and preferences. This study reveals the experiences and challenges faced by doctoral and master’s students in China. The researchers used a qualitative case study where an in-depth interview with 12 international students was conducted. Besides, classroom observation of six doctoral and master courses was documented. The international students’ main challenges include: the university teachers use of framing as the basis for their interaction, stereotyping as significant sources of examples and illustrations, and cultural-biased knowledge sharing yet prejudice towards the (under)-developing nations’ cultures. Consequently, this study calls for a change in MCs’ used instructional strategies in Chinese universities. The university teacher expertise (UTE) should include proper and more practical training.

Subjects: Educational Research; Education Studies; Higher Education
Keywords: instructional strategies; multicultural classrooms; mobility; higher education; China

1. Introduction
Recent internationalization reports mentioned China as the top destination for international students (Ghundol & Muthanna, 2020). Although in 2016, there were around 5 million international students globally (Arora, 2019), Chinese academic institutions have been attracting more international students. The statistics support this claim as Y. Zhang and Liao (2021) report that in 1976, there were 1,236 international students in China, and the number rose to 52,150 students in 2000. Further, studies have reported the increase of international students in China from 162,695 in 2006 to 184,799 in 2015 and 442,773 in 2016 (Jiani, 2016; Nseke, 2018). In 2018, Qi (2018) reported that there were 492,185 international students, while Biney and Cheng (2021) said that Chinese education institutions expect to have 500,000 international students in 2020. For example, out of 492,185 international students in China, 295,043 came from Asia; 81,562 from Africa; 73,618 from Europe; 35,733 from America; and 6,229 came from Oceania (Chinese Ministry of Education, 2022). In this view, China is implementing the internationalization of education by attracting international students with diverse cultural backgrounds.

Therefore, internationalization has raised new challenges for university teachers requiring higher education institutions (HEIs) in China and worldwide to reconsider the UTE (Cao et al., 2020; Chiang et al., 2020; Dijk et al., 2020; Jeanes, 2021; Lian et al., 2021; Noben et al., 2021; Yin et al., 2020). The
current trend of internationalization is a significant reason for the emergence of MCs, which requires university teachers to develop critical competencies considering the cultural differences and cognitive levels of master's and doctoral students coming from several destinations (Ergenc, 2020; Hall & Theriot, 2016; J. L. Young, 2020). As the authors were international graduate students in China and originally from different countries, they believe that this study is significant in revealing the experiences and challenges of international graduate students concerning Chinese universities' instructional strategies in MCs. Three reasons support the significance of this study: (1) university teachers and management understand how international graduate students think about different instructional strategies, (2) international graduate students understand and reflect on instructional strategies in Chinese institutions with those in their own countries, and (3) university teachers reflect on their instructional strategies and transform their instructional strategies to facilitate the learning process better. This study answers the question: what are the experiences and challenges of international graduate students in China considering the university teachers' instructional strategies in MCs?

2. Theories of multicultural classroom education

International graduate students in foreign countries are considered temporary migrants; hence, multicultural theories explain these interactions. However, there are various theories such as Pull-Push Theory, Classical Economic Theory, Neoclassical Economic Theory, Dual Labour Market Theory, World Systems Theory and Network Theory (Arora, 2019) and equity pedagogy theory (Banks, 2011). In this context, the Pull-Push and equity pedagogy theories form the theoretical framework for this study.

A Pull-Push Theory developed by Ravenstein in 1885 asserts that people moving from one country to another is due to some pleasant factors in a foreign country compared to unpleasant factors in the home country. In the context of China attracting international students, the Chinese government has constantly been reviewing policies to attract international students, including providing scholarships and other assistance (Y. Zhang & Liao, 2021). The policy review has enhanced some reforms in Chinese universities to soften the entry requirements, affordable tuition fees, provision of scholarships and high rate of admission for international students compared to other western or home countries (Biney & Cheng, 2021).

In 1995, Banks, C. A. M. and J. A. Banks developed the equity pedagogy theory, an integral approach that enhances cultural-responsive teaching in multicultural classrooms (Banks, 2013). The theory asserts that teachers should be aware of students' diverse social and cultural backgrounds in the classroom and use approaches that facilitate learning achievement for all students in the classroom (Banks, 1993).

The two theories should be in harmony to ensure effective and proper internalization of education that accommodates MC. As the pull-push theory attracts international students, the equity pedagogy theory offers a pleasant classroom interactive environment to facilitate learning achievement to meet students' expectations of studying abroad.

3. Multicultural classrooms

Teaching in MCs has become a primary part of teacher education professional development (Davis, 1995). The challenges to both university teachers and students have been examined for the last four decades. Several researchers focused on the cultural elements that should be included to teach in MCs (Irving, 1984). Others argued for favoring integrating multicultural issues instead of teaching them separately (Lee Yao, 1984). These also call for considering the social values brought by teaching MCs (Harper, 1994). On the other hand, social obstacles (e.g., mixing patriotism and multiculturalism) caused by variable events could also hinder successful teaching and learning in MCs (R. L. Young & Sharifzadeh, 2003). It could also be conceptual, just like the current debate between international, global and multicultural education (Wells, 2008). The cause of challenges to students and university teachers in MCs could also be due to a conflict between past, present,
and future (i.e., assuming that other cultures’ integration influences the country’s original culture where MCs are delivered; Carjuzaa et al., 2008).

University teachers are the first to be blamed for challenges faced by international graduate students in MCs. However, these teachers are also victims of inadequate teacher education programmes, or they have not received any professional training to help them run MCs efficiently and effectively (Rudney & Marxen, 2001). It is the responsibility of universities to “prepare interculturally competent teachers to nurture a global society” (Mushi, 2004, p. 193) and to “[determine] the quality of opportunities, activities, and outcomes of [the] student experiences” (Wasonga & Piveral, 2004, p. 42). Many teachers reported several advantages of instructing in MCs, including making the classroom more dynamic and diverse (Isaac, 2013). It is worth mentioning that defining job-role by the university management can help university teachers perform better with higher motivation (Cao et al., 2020). The stressors that influence university teachers’ performance vary and depend on several factors, including economic development, organizational inadequacy, salary and many others (Yin et al., 2020).

Framing or stereotyping is also a significant challenge for students in MCs (Wijnia et al., 2016). University teachers can frame students based on their stereotyping-based background about their culture or country. This stereotyping could be positive or negative. For instance, when a specific country is considered a developed country, all thinking is directed towards positive values existing. On the other hand, when talking about an under-developing country, thinking is directed towards negative values. However, even when these categorizations exist, they are not completely accurate, and there is good everywhere, in relative terms. This valid reality leads some university teachers to illustrate their teaching based on this classification, ignoring that they are teaching in MCs. This teaching behaviour contradicts previous findings, evidencing the importance of considering students’ backgrounds and characteristics (Tartwijk et al., 2009), and using language (Schoorman & Bogotch, 2010) in MCs. Therefore, since stereotyping is reported as an element of professional competence (Hochfeld et al., 2015), the practice of this teaching behaviour is an indicator of low professional competence. To this end, the unique context of education in MCs requires university teachers to have additional qualifications and training—enabling them to teach effectively. The next section is an account of the key competencies of university teachers relevant to MCs.

4. University teacher expertise
The transition of higher education from local, multicultural (D. D. Zhang & Chen, 2014), international (Hall & Theriot, 2016), to global (Ergenc, 2020) has raised more teaching challenges for university teachers and administrative roles for policy-makers. This trend urges the need to question UTE: the expected teacher competence, teacher performance and teacher skills required to teach in MCs. These should be promoted and developed through professional development to ensure university teachers’ self-efficacy (Noben et al., 2021). The Multicultural Teaching Portfolio (MTP) introduces three components to measure the UTE: teaching philosophy, positionality statement, and instructional framework (J. L. Young, 2020). Key competencies of university teachers can be assessed in terms of teaching competence (e.g., coaching), professional competence (e.g., participation in foreign academic events) and communication competence (e.g., communication skills; Blaskova et al., 2015). Another type that is more specific to MCs is intercultural competence—referring to the teacher’s ability to use teaching methods (e.g., humour) to ensure more engagement with all learners (Petraki & Pham Nguyen, 2016). Because culture plays a significant role in teaching, so UTE should prepare teachers to be best suited for delivering MCs (Huang et al., 2019).

The sources of teacher quality are simply the teacher, the [university], and the university’s external environment (Hopkins & Stern, 1996). These three sources, which can be used as predictors for teachers’ self-efficacy (Fackler & Malmberg, 2016), are also influential factors for implementing a student-centred approach (L. Zhang et al., 2021). However, what makes a good
university teacher remains arguable and open to new findings from future research. A recent systematic review of UTE reported six tasks as indicators: “teaching and supporting learning, educational design, assessment and feedback, educational leadership and management, educational scholarship and research, and professional development” (Dijk et al., 2020, p. 1).

Performance management is among the key competencies—making better-qualified university teachers. It is defined as “a platform enabling them to win academic status, promotion and remuneration, and to accomplish their responsibility to organizational development” (Chiang et al., 2020, p. 8). It is also worth mentioning to consider the work-experience concerning key competencies of university teachers. While some researchers argue that work-experience, particularly in MCs, is a plus (Sahin, 2008), others argue that young university teachers can do well, too, should they use their acquired and learned skills well (Lian et al., 2021). As a result of this argument, attempts have been made to introduce a measure assessing this competence. A noticeable measure is the Teacher Cultural Beliefs Scale (TCBS), which assumes “Multicultural beliefs recognize that, because individuals have engaged with different sociocultural contexts, they have legitimately different perspectives and beliefs” (Hachfeld et al., 2011, p. 987). Nevertheless, whether experienced teachers can perform better than beginning teachers or professional development can support the two types of teachers equally (Graham et al., 2020), these all remain questionable to have further empirical evidence. Given this, professional development, be it formal (e.g., workshops) or informal (e.g., collaboration with others; Cooc, 2019), remains an essential source influencing UTE.

5. Instructional strategies: Andragogy, pedagogy or both?
A theoretical assumption guiding this study reflects learners’ level and how learning occurs in various sociocultural contexts. In 1984, Knowles coined the term “andragogy,” referring to teaching strategies for adult learners (Chan, 2010). Knowles believed the learning process of adult learners is different from that of young learners. He identifies four principles for adult learning: (1) there is a need to explain why (objectives) specific things are being taught, (2) instruction should be task orientated, (3) instruction should take into consideration the different backgrounds of learners, and (4) instruction should allow learners to discover things for themselves and provide corrective feedback when mistakes are made. The study also used the sociocultural learning theory pioneered by Lev Vygotsky in 1978 with the following set of assumptions: mediation, scaffolding, zonal of proximal development (ZPD), internalization and social interaction (Shabani & Ewing, 2016; Shabani et al., 2010). In this context, the two theories merged to form a theoretical framework that acts as a reference to instructional strategies’ status as perceived by international graduate students in Chinese universities. Consideration of these theories enhances mutual interaction and learning between international graduate students who seek to develop their competencies and university teachers who are mentoring learners.

Further, a controversial approach for teaching adults is andragogy and pedagogy (Muresan, 2014). There is a debate among researchers and educators in choosing between pedagogy and andragogy or even recognizing the latter. While the former refers to children-learning, the latter refers to adult learning (Egizii, 2015). Self-directed learning is assumed to be achieved only through different strategies (e.g., increasing social readiness, building infrastructure and technology, and developing collaborative relationships) derived from andragogy, supporting student-centred learning (Egizii, 2015). Many researchers reported the students’ preference to teach methods the following andragogy as they feel more engaged and graduate with more practical knowledge and skills (Muduli et al., 2018). Therefore, an ideal method to promote andragogy is by integrating it with pedagogy, where the former uses the latter’s experiences, and pedagogy implements andragogy towards a better quality of teaching and learning (Jeanes, 2021). This also includes innovative teaching strategies like the “inventing activities … requiring students to invent aids by themselves to understand given tasks more efficiently” (Stratton, 2020, p. 1).

Several strategies have been reported to help university teachers decrease the challenges which international graduate students face in MCs. One of these instructional strategies is using three
different strategies to ensure more effective MCs: (1) Cognitive Behavioural Modification Strategies, (2) Authentic Reading Experiences, and (3) Technology Assignments (Ford et al., 2007). Another instructional strategy uses geographic questions including six elements: location, place, human-environment interaction, movement and region (Gallavan, 1999). This last strategy can ensure all participants in the MCs without any bias toward any culture. Another proposed strategy is the four F’s strategy: Facts, Foods, Famous People and Festivals (D. D. Zhang & Chen, 2014). An emphasis has been put on implementing engaging strategies that are student-centred (Payan-Carreira et al., 2019). Motivational strategies consistent with the student’s preferences are also essential to improve students’ willingness to learn (Machingambi, 2013).

6. The position of instructional strategies in the classroom
Various authors have described the instructional strategies used by teachers to help students learn. Halpin and Kieffer (2008) gave two powerful instructional strategies a teacher should offer: classroom setting and instructional scaffolding. The classroom settings include how a teacher manages time when performing various tasks and activities in the classroom, manages students’ behaviours during the class, organizes students’ seating, and how discussion groups are formed. Students’ emotions are understood and how they are supported towards the learning process. Teachers who forcibly import their knowledge, substitute what learners know discourages students from learning (Harrison, 2008).

Like Halpin and Kieffer (2008), Lea and Callaghan (2014) had a similar view that effective instructional strategies involve well-planned preparation and participatory delivery approaches. Students’ engagement, flexible classroom activities, and critical evaluation help learners are motivated and interested in the lesson, hence bringing out the best learning. Learning should be consolidated through various instructional strategies used by teachers. Eshach et al. (2014) found that a questioning strategy in facilitating learning had a substantial impact in developing students’ interest to learn, developed curiosity and thinking skills based on its interactive nature.

At the university level, postgraduate students are few compared with undergraduates and lower levels of education. According to Roberts (2016), the best ways of working with small groups of two to 20 students [preferably these postgraduate classes] include cross-over groups, role-play, peer tutoring and seminars. These learner-centred strategies are the best ways of enabling students’ learning by constructing their knowledge rather than receiving information directly from teachers. Adding the best strategies for these groups, Fry et al. (2009) mentioned essential aspects of instructional strategies: timely feedback, reflection and work-based learning.

7. International graduate students: Experiences and challenges
The number of students studying abroad is rapidly increasing due to various motivating factors such as the need to internationalize education and scholarship opportunities, motivating many students to study abroad. According to Marshall (2016), in 2013, 374,000 African students were studying abroad, and the Chinese Ministry of Education said in 2017, 6,084,400 Chinese students went abroad to study compared with 144,000 in 2007. Also, Zong and Batalova (2018) report that in the 2016/2017 academic year, the US received 291,000 international students from Asian and African countries. The increase in students’ mobility is highlighting concerns on challenges faced by international students while studying abroad. One of the challenges noted by Liao et al. (2017) is instructional strategies that do not realize students’ multicultural backgrounds.

Students coming from different geographical locations have different learning ways rooted in their cultural backgrounds and personal experiences. In this view, the instructional strategies used in international graduate students significantly impact their learning (Nworgu & Achinewhu-Nworgu, 2018). According to Liao et al. (2017), students from different cultural backgrounds with varying levels of experience when they go abroad face several challenges: which instructional strategies are appropriate for students, flexible classroom management, meeting learner differences, collaboration with other teachers and assessing learners.
Instructing international graduate students in learning institutions is challenged by cultural backgrounds, which, to some extent, limits their freedom to interact and understand new things (Alghamdi & Otte, 2016). This creates difficulties for university teachers to meet each learner’s needs based on their prior learning strategies. The claim is supported by Talebloo and Baki’s (2013) findings, who identified one of the main challenges facing international postgraduate students is teaching methodology.

8. Method
The study used a qualitative research approach to understand international graduate students’ perceptions of university teachers’ instructional strategies for learning. A qualitative paradigm was chosen because the study’s nature was to understand how the university teachers’ instructional strategies influence students’ learning. According to Creswell (2014), a case study design is useful when a study involves examining or exploring an issue through one or two cases within a bound system (i.e. the university teachers’ instructional strategies used in MCs and international graduate students’ perceptions regarding those strategies).

9. Participants
The study was conducted in one of the top-ranking teacher education universities in China and involved international graduate students from three graduate degree programmes. The university was selected because the researchers were participant observers in classes for 12 consecutive months; hence, familiarity with the environment helped observe, interview, and interact with participants to obtain adequate information concerning their perceptions.

The study employed purposive sampling to gather data from international graduate students. They were selected purposefully because they have unique cultural backgrounds, prior experience, and experience from different classes on various university teachers’ various instructional strategies. The international graduate students who participated in the study are from 7 countries, as illustrated in Table 1.

The selected international graduate students expressed their experiences and challenges regarding seven master’s and doctoral, elective and compulsory courses in the selected university in China. All the university teachers are Chinese, full-time faculty members, and two faculty members taught only one course (See, Table 2.)

While the study sample is not representative of all the university teachers in the most extensive higher education system globally (i.e., China), it gives an overview of the university teachers’ instructional strategies in one of China’s top teacher education universities and the world. It helps the readers understand the nature of higher education for international graduate students in MCs.

10. Measures
Two measures were used to collect the data: an in-depth interview and classroom observation. It has been mentioned above that 12 international graduate students were interviewed, and six doctoral and master’s courses from three majors were observed during one academic year. The interview included seven prompting questions (See, Table 3.), and the observations took the form of a daily diary based on note-taking. These observations were reflections of the interview questions, including instructional strategies used, university teachers’ teaching behaviours, international graduate students’ learning behaviour, and, more importantly, interaction with the used strategies in MCs.

According to Creswell (2009), reliability refers to the findings’ consistency, while validity refers to the findings’ accuracy. The following exact research steps from preparing the proposal, presentation for peer review, data collection process and presentation of the findings were ensured—the procedure assisted in keeping the study’s focus. After gathering the data,
Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of participants

| No. | Position      | Age range | Gender | Graduated in | Country | Level | Pseudonym | Code |
|-----|---------------|-----------|--------|--------------|---------|-------|-----------|------|
| 1   | Graduate student | 35–40     | M      | 2021         | Cambodia | PhD   | Participant 1 | P1   |
| 2   | Graduate student | 35–40     | M      | 2021         | Ghana   | PhD   | Participant 2 | P2   |
| 3   | Graduate student | 30–35     | M      | 2020         | Liberia | MA    | Participant 3 | P3   |
| 4   | Graduate student | 35–40     | M      | 2020         | Tanzania | PhD   | Participant 4 | P4   |
| 5   | Graduate student | 35–40     | M      | 2021         | Ethiopia | PhD   | Participant 5 | P5   |
| 6   | Graduate student | 25–30     | F      | 2020         | Ghana   | MA    | Participant 6 | P6   |
| 7   | Graduate student | 35–40     | M      | 2021         | US      | PhD   | Participant 7 | P7   |
| 8   | Graduate student | 30–35     | M      | 2021         | Ghana   | PhD   | Participant 8 | P8   |
| 9   | Graduate student | 30–35     | F      | 2021         | Algeria  | PhD   | Participant 9 | P9   |
| 10  | Graduate student | 35–40     | F      | 2021         | Ghana   | PhD   | Participant 10 | P10  |
| 11  | Graduate student | 25–30     | F      | 2020         | Tanzania | MA    | Participant 11 | P11  |
| 12  | Graduate student | 25–30     | M      | 2020         | Cambodia | MA    | Participant 12 | P12  |
Table 2. Characteristics of the observed courses in doctoral and master programmes

| Code  | Course Name                                           | Level  | University Teacher Rank         |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------|
| C001  | Advanced Qualitative Research Method                | Ph.D.  | A Professor and an Associate Professor |
| C002  | Academic Writing and Publishing                      | Ph.D.  | Professor                        |
| C003  | Teacher Professional Development: Theory and Practice | Ph.D.  | Professor                        |
| C004  | Education Statistics                                 | Ph.D.  | Associate Professor              |
| C005  | Chinese Language                                     | Ph.D.  | Assistant Professor              |
| C006  | International Teacher Education Policy and Practice  | Ph.D.  | Associate Professor              |

Table 3. Prompting questions used during the interview

| No. | Item                                                                 |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | How do you think about the teaching strategies of our university teachers? |
| 2   | What are your views on these strategies?                              |
| 3   | Are all the university teachers using collaborative instructional strategies? How? |
| 4   | Were you comfortable with the teaching strategies? Why?               |
| 5   | Do the teaching strategies assist you in improving your practical application of new skills and knowledge? How? |
| 6   | How do the teaching strategies help you to link your previously learned knowledge to new knowledge? |
| 7   | Do the instructional strategies need some improvements? How?           |

Participants were introduced to the purpose of the study by clarifying the main objective of the research. The main objective is to understand the instructional strategies used in international graduate students’ classrooms and how they support students’ learning of new skills and knowledge while linking them to actual practice. A consent form was obtained for their participation in the research and recording. The collected information was solely for learning purposes and not intended for any other use without their permission. The participants agreed, and the interview was conducted and recorded.

11. Procedure
The study used an in-depth interview and classroom observation in the data collection process. In an interview, the researcher collected views from international graduate students on the instructional strategies used in classrooms and how they support their learning and developing of new skills and knowledge. This method enabled the gathering of adequate information to understand the
instructional strategies used and how they help international graduate students acquire new skills and knowledge. Also, classroom practices were observed in several courses that comprised all participants.

The collected data were transcribed and then coded based on the most repeating concepts from the interviews to form the findings’ thematic presentation. The codes formulated themes that were used as sub-topics in the preceding data presentation and discussion. Although the analysis is based on the emerging themes, it tried to answer the guiding research questions. The quotations were supplied as evidence to emphasize and strengthen the data analysis and reduce researcher bias because of the subjectivity of interpreting qualitative research data.

12. Results
The study results are presented hereunder to reveal the university teachers’ instructional strategies and, more importantly, experiences and challenges of international graduate students concerning these used instructional strategies in the MCs.

13. Instructional strategies used in MCs
The findings have identified five instructional strategies used by the university teachers in the MCs. These are task-oriented, collaborative, lecturing, case study and constructive feedback instructional strategies. These strategies are explained in detail below.

13.1. Task-oriented instructional strategies
Task-oriented instructional strategies require students to work either in groups or individually but aim to merge theories into better understanding practices. They involve a set of activities that students must perform using the acquired knowledge to measure their competency in doing things under the guidance of theories learned. In this study, it was found that students were given classroom work to discuss in groups and present before the class. The tasks required them to read, answer the given questions and present their answers for a more extensive class discussion. Students were given an additional assignment of writing a significant paper requiring them to apply their theoretical skills acquired in the class into practice, aiming to consolidate their general understanding and knowledge acquisition. To cement this finding, one respondent said, “… like they usually give us too many assignments which help students to interact more frequently” (Participant 3).

13.2. Collaborative instructional strategies
Collaborative instructional strategies are perceived as useful as they help students discuss, present their ideas and receive constructive criticism and feedback from university teachers and peers, essential for academic growth. Constructive criticism is when one is challenged from different perspectives on the issues presented, which sometimes requires justification or further reading to understand them further from different angles and perspectives, which is one aspect of learning new knowledge and skills. This method aids students to point out mistakes and errors in their work hence “reading again” to clarify and gain more skills and knowledge. For example, the respondents said:

I was comfortable with a teaching strategy that promotes discussions and teamwork with my colleagues from diverse cultural and social background … I learned new things. (Participant 6)

I prefer kinds of methods that give a chance to talk and discuss with friends, and university teachers will correct the mistakes later, for example, we present and talk, and when they see mistakes, they point to the mistake … from that, I think I will gain a lot. (Participant 1)

Although some university teachers still used instructional strategies not task-oriented, which felt alienated them from practical aspects. The teaching styles were dominated by teacher talk and students passively listening with few tasks to help them link theories and practices. Evidence from the data, one student said:
Just listening to, watching videos, I do not think is the appropriate approach at all; I am not sure you know, because people have different teaching styles, perhaps they see that the way is suitable for students, the best approach should reflect the realities inside the classroom. (Participant 2)

### 13.3. Lecturing strategies

Lecturing is one of the teaching strategies found to be part of the instructional strategies used in international graduate students’ classrooms. According to adult learning theories, adult learners hardly learn from transactional methods like lecturing. Learner-centred approaches are more appropriate for graduate-level students. One respondent showed dissatisfaction with being passive in the class, just listening to teachers talking and talking in front of the class. He said people can always concentrate on listening for a short time, explaining why you find people become busy with their laptops and smartphones while teachers continue talking. “A participant also added “talk-chalk method or lecturing are no longer good strategies for teaching”. (Participant 6). Another participant further explained:

… the improvement should be at the individual level, because some use the strategies that are not fully engaging learners so they perform and obtain higher scores without having the required competence at the expected standard. So the strategies of teaching should help learners to honestly acquire the skills and knowledge. (Participant 7)

### 13.4. Case-study strategies

Case studies were one of the instructional strategies used in the international graduate students’ classroom. This involves a thorough study of one case to develop a clear understanding and later transfer the acquired knowledge and skills to other contexts with almost similar characteristics. One respondent said they were studying teacher education policies and how politics influences them. The university teacher used the teacher education policies change in the UK under different political administrations to understand the relationship between them. This style of instruction encourages reflective and critical thinking based on the cases given under study.

Videos are sometimes used when university teachers intend to teach students problem-solving skills or critical thinking. Students watch a set of video clips followed by a discussion requiring students to propose measures to solve an existing problem in their particular society. Students spent some time watching videos but later had nothing to discuss concerning the watched videos. Respondents show this was contrary to their expectations that after watching the video, the university teachers should explain some concepts related to watching videos or give some discussion questions based on what they have seen.

### 13.5. Constructive feedback strategies

This was the most useful ingredient in assisting students in gaining new knowledge as part of their learning. Respondents show feedback to identify mistakes they have made and collaboratively search for solutions and ways forward through discussion and further reading. Constructive feedback improves students’ prior knowledge and gives room for a broader discussion with experienced university teachers. One respondent showed concern about the role of feedback and said:

This is a problem, and when I decide to write, they say okay without giving proper feedback. I am not sure if this is their style of what. They have to make sure we know what to do. I think I gain from them, but I suggest they tell us what we should do and their requirements. (Participant 2)

Lack of proper feedback and directives leaves a student in a dilemma and confusion. Apart from reading articles, books, reports and responding to different tasks and assignments, they always expect feedback to adjust their prior knowledge in the right way and perspective. This experience leaves students in a dilemma, not knowing whether they were right or wrong.
14. Instructional strategies towards acquisition of new knowledge

Respondents show that some of the instructional strategies used have helped improve their skills and knowledge. Through hands-on tasks and classroom activities, respondents believe they consolidated their understanding by practically linking their learning in the class to actual practices. The activity mentioned by both respondents is from the Advanced Qualitative Research Methods course, where students participated in an actual focus group discussion after studying how it is conducted, also in preparing proposals based on specific qualitative research methods and their defence. These practices internalized skills and knowledge. One respondent said:

In courses like qualitative research, teacher professional development, research seminars, you will find what I knew before and what I learn here; it is like a continuation; there is a very close link. It is something like building upon existing knowledge to improve and gaining more from what I already had. (Participant 2)

To prove they have acquired new skills and knowledge, one respondent said he used focus group interviews to collect data for a final major paper in one course. He says it was fascinating, and the techniques he learned helped him extract much information from respondents to answer his research question. Another respondent said he had a minimal understanding of policy issues, but in one course, through discussion and participatory activities, he managed to develop the conceptual framework for policy analysis in the education context. A participant also said:

I have acquired the skills and knowledge as I expected. For example, in learning Chinese language we use technology so it has helped me understand the accent, intonation and how to pronounce words. (Participant 10)

Through classroom reading, recommended readings and activities like writing final papers, project papers and essential papers that require students to read also contributed to students gaining more skills and knowledge. The reading was the exciting part the respondents saw should be sustainable in the coming years despite some required adjustments like reducing the number of core readings to reflect the number of courses and available time. In some courses, there were more readings than students could handle quality studying in given time duration.

15. Experiences and challenges of international graduates students in MCs

The international graduate students’ class comprises students from different countries, each representing different educational experiences rooted in their societies’ context and cultural practices. University teachers teaching international graduate students in multi-cultural classrooms should consider the diversification of experiences and backgrounds and propose measures to reflect the classroom realities. The findings show the international graduate students were instructed by university teachers also with diverse experience from different countries. Some Chinese university teachers pursued their studies in the US and the UK, some university teachers pursued their studies in Chinese territories only, and there are foreign university teachers from other countries. Some university teachers fail to consider this diversified experience—what Paris (Banks, 2013) calls “funds of knowledge,” meaning the more diversified experience in a classroom, the richer the knowledge available for learning and improvement. The evidence comes from one respondent who said:

We are coming from all over the world as international graduate students and professors should teach something you know, that is culturally appropriate like a particular foreign professor, and she always talks about the situation in America and inside the classroom we only got three students from America, they understand Professor because they come from that country, the know the situation, they know English because it is their language. Nevertheless, me and others coming from Asia and Africa seem to have no idea about that. (Participant 1)
Failure to realize culturally diversified international graduate students’ presence limits some university teachers’ instructional strategies to manage their teaching. The findings show that some international graduate students felt alienated from their classroom learning process because the examples are given, and the resulting discussion was contextualized to the experience of the university teachers and a few international graduate students who shared a similar understanding. Other international graduate students believe they did not learn anything because the discussion was not applicable in their home countries. University teachers should balance and engage in more examples from different countries. Even when university teachers have limited experience from those countries, they should allow international graduate students to share what they know from their countries, helping others understand different practices. This will broaden the learning from different countries. This is supported as one respondent said:

Teachers tend to assume we all know hence uses their explanation as a measure for the whole class. This affects the amount of content delivered, and instructional strategies do not meet the need of others who have never been here before. Also, examples given in the classroom should not focus only on developed countries; they should be balanced to cover the countries where international graduate students come from as part of learning, from developed and developing countries, from rich and developing countries. (Participant 2)

The same experience was observed in two different classes when the university teachers asked the international graduate students to summarise their learning from the course with suggestions for its improvement. The suggestion that appeared for the two courses was for international graduate students’ country background and experience to be considered part of learning; international graduate students should be given a task to present policy and practice issues from their countries, which will play two prominent roles. First, other international graduate students will learn from their colleagues’ experience and context on educational policies and practices. Second, it helps university teachers have a broad pool from which to pick cases for class discussion to contribute to international graduate students’ critical thinking and reflection to construct new knowledge.

Further demonstration of the gained experiences is given below. Table 4 showed extracted quotations for positive experiences. Table 5 demonstrates negative experiences. Implications for each gained experience or challenge is inferred and shown in each Table 4.

16. Discussion and conclusion
The study aimed at revealing the international graduate students’ experiences and challenges concerning the instructional strategies used in MCs in a top-ranking selected Chinese university. The study revealed that international graduate students faced several challenges in multicultural classrooms. This finding is in line with the finding of Liao et al. (2017) claiming that international graduate students face challenges in teaching and learning strategies when studying in countries with different cultural practices to their home countries. University teachers in these classes need to have higher cultural understanding levels and use the classroom cultural differences as funds of knowledge for better knowledge management and delivery as suggested by Banks (2013). International graduate students are compassionate when university teachers use different examples from countries they have never visited or have little knowledge of during classroom presentations and discussion; hence for multicultural instruction, the examples should cut across their cultural diversity and reflect their context. When this is not considered, international graduate students in the same classroom will be divided based on their cultural background and experience, leading to fragmented learning. Hence, adherence to the requirements of equity pedagogy theory is vital in selecting teaching approaches that considers the social and cultural diversity within the classroom to facilitate achievement in learning (Banks, 1993).

International graduate students regard themselves as adult learners; hence instructional strategies should reflect an adult learning process. The preferred strategies are those putting international graduate students at the centre of working, presenting, and discussing, which will help students gain
Table 4. Selected quotations representing international graduate students’ positive experiences in instructional strategies in China

| Instructional strategy | Observation | Participant reflection example | Implication |
|------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Presentation (after reading given articles) (course code C003) | Students were worried but shared their understanding of the article, critiqued it and in the part of the discussion, it was live, and everyone was interested in sharing similar experiences from their countries. | “When a presenter finished, some of the students asked questions, and one or two moved in front of the class to demonstrate one or two things to agree or disagree with the presenter.” (Participant 9) | The students felt it is interesting to express their ideas and include their previous background and country context. |
| Learning and practicing (course code C002) | The course was instructing students about academic writing and publishing. It was a hands-on experience as students had to listen to Professors and later take part in writing parts according to what they have learned. Later in the course, the Professor asked each to give his/her paper to one or two colleagues to review it. Later because of time, those who reviewed came to present that I read one paper from …. And gave their opinions, suggestions and questions for improvement. | “Students showed to have control of their learning process and were very active. Some of the papers were published in respected journals.” (Participant 4) | The students found this method of teaching as practical and prepare them for now and the future. |
| Demonstration and task-based (course code C004) | The course involved mathematical calculations, and the majority of students were worried. In the beginning, 12 students attended the course but dropped, and at the end, only six remained whereby 4 took it because it was a core course to them and the only one took as an elective, and one was repeating the course after failing in the previous year. | “Teacher used many examples, and it was easy for students to follow. For example, she gave papers and handouts for reference, and after every university, the teacher gave simple questions for practice at our own time. It boosted confidence in the course, and all students passed.” (Participant 12) | Although there were variable and enough aids to help students understand this course, the dropout rate is high due to the gap between theory and practice. The gap between the registered students hinders both the teaching and learning processes for teachers and students. |

new and broader knowledge through hands-on and minds-on. This learning process helps to link theories and practices while learning. International graduate students showed they gained a lot from reading, doing assignments, classroom presentations, classroom discussion and corrections, and feedback from university teachers. Despite graduate studies being mainly researching in a specialized field of study, learning by doing is very constructive given the feedback is provided timely with clear directives and instructions. This is supported by (Cao et al., 2020; Chiang et al., 2020; Dijk et al., 2020; Jeanes, 2021; Lian et al., 2021; Noben et al., 2021; Shaban & Ewing, 2016; Yin et al., 2020) through the explanation of the andragogy theory of adult learning. Teacher-talk dominant teaching in graduate classrooms should be limited as they still regard students as passive and have nothing to contribute to the learning process. University teachers with this type of teaching were branded as “boring” and resulted in students’ low morale in those classes.
| Instructional strategy                                      | Observation                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Participant reflection example                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Implication                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lecturing method (course code C006)                       | In one course, the university teacher used the lecturing method only and had one assignment for the course, which took 80% of the course to weigh while attendance took 20%. Students were bored as they had to attend three consecutive sessions every week only to listen to the professor. | “In the course, a student gave excuses every time either to go to their room for other activities or acting as if they are going to the washroom just to make time pass.” (Participant 2)                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | As doctoral and even master students, they got bored with this dominating instructional strategy.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Listening and speaking (course code C005)                | Students showed that instructing was inappropriate in the Chinese language class since it was only listening and speaking. Students were worried as they cannot pronounce, and they expected to have more practice, audio listen or video to watch and learn, but nothing was provided. | “Students have attended the class with a sad face, looks tired and not interested.” (Participant 5)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | The used instructional strategy did not consider the students’ learning a new language and their cognitive level preferences.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Presentation (responding to questions given at the beginning of the course) (course code C001) | Instructors provided questions that cover all topics. It required that students should read and submit before the day of a particular lecture. During the lecture, Professors talked very little and asked students to start resenting. In the end, no clarification or feedback was given. So students were left unsure if they have done a right or wrong and how they can improve. | “Students looked not free to contribute or ask. In every presentation, no questions were asked or comment given for improvement. Students showed like they are doing it because they are required to do not because they want to learn.” (Participant 8)                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | The used instructional strategy focused on teaching and passing the time, ignoring the process’s assessment and output.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Demonstration and task-based (course code C004)           | The course involved mathematical calculations, and a majority of students were worried. In the beginning, 12 students attended the course but dropped, and at the end, only six remained whereby 4 took it because it was a core course to them and the only one took as an elective, and one was repeating the course after failing in the previous year. | “Students struggled to understand how to calculate and to interpret statistical data. For example, one who dropped out said he thinks the course is challenging because I did not understand the university teacher from the first day and see by yourself someone is repeating the course. That is why I decided to drop it.” (Participant 4)                                                                 | The course failed to match the students’ level, which resulted in around half of the class dropping out. The attention was given to applying the course description instead of matching the content to its level.                                                                 |
International graduate students are expected to develop broader and competent understandings of theories and practical application of those theories. The instructional strategies should be those assisting international graduate students to develop the link between theories and practices. The continuation of this process will help international graduate students merge the theories and practices, hence acquiring the standard doctoral knowledge to conduct more quality and impactful research in their area of specialization. This is related to assumptions emphasized in sociocultural learning theories of assisting learners in reaching their full capabilities, which they could not reach by their efforts as presented by Banks (2013).

Studying abroad is considered as the process of internationalization of education. There is a need to improve international graduate students’ learning environments and use their cultural backgrounds to enrich and support learning. Instead, the instructional strategies should not discriminate against international graduate students based on their nationalities, experiences, or educational background; instead, they should accommodate all learners and treat them equally. Among all the reported challenges, the international graduate students found it impractical to use framing, stereotyping and culturally biased strategies while instructing doctoral and master students in MCs. These should be replaced with more innovative instructional strategies (i.e., reported by previous research as suitable for adult learning in MCs) consistent with the cognitive level of the international students and the setting of MCs (Graham et al., 2020; Stratton, 2020; Zhang et al., 2021).

To sum up, international graduate students are automatically directed to adopt new instructional strategies, some of which do not reflect their educational background or experience. It is vital for university teachers who teach in MCs, like international graduate students, to consider cultural differences during teaching as recommended in equity pedagogy theory by Banks (1993), Banks (2013). Although the study has five instructional strategies, some strategies do not give a university teacher room to consider cultural diversity during instruction.

17. Limitations and future studies
There are at least two limitations to this study. The first limitation is the findings’ generalizability. Although the study’s design as a case study did not attempt to generalise the findings, they remained confined to the study’s context. A reasonable next step would be to undertake a study with identical objectives but larger populations from other Chinese higher education institutes. Another drawback concerns the data collection tools. Although the current data supplied met the study’s main questions, more systematic instruments with greater validity and reliability would have resulted in more trustworthy findings regarding multicultural classrooms in China’s targeted higher education institutions. Future studies should look towards using better tools for the data collection.

Acknowledgements
We would like to acknowledge the full cooperation of all the participants in this study.

Funding
The authors received no direct funding for this research.

Author details
Jimmy Ezekiel Kihwele
E-mail: markostezera73@gmail.com
1 Faculty of Social Sciences, Mzumbe University, Morogoro, Tanzania.
Markos Tezera Taye
2 College of Education, University of Gondar, Gondar, Ethiopia.
Ahmed Alduais
3 Department of Human Sciences (Psychology), University of Verona, Verona, Italy.

Disclosure statement
No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Contribution statement
The first author collected data and drafted the early manuscript. The second author produced the second version. The third author restructured the two versions, added a literature review, and produced the final version. All three authors participated equally in reviewing and finalising the publication version.

Data availability statement
Data are available from the author on a reasonable request

Citation information
Cite this article as: Instructional strategies in multicultural classrooms in China: Experiences and challenges of international graduate students, Jimmy Ezekiel Kihwele, Markos Tezera Taye & Ahmed Alduais, Cogent Social Sciences (2022), 8: 2130220.

References
Alghamdi, H., & Otte, S. (2016). The challenges and benefits of study abroad. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 6(5), 16–22. http://ijhssnet.com/journal/index/3497
Arora, P. (2019). International student mobility from China and India – the influence of Australian immigration policy, and institutional and family factors on post-graduation destination outcomes. Doctor of Philosophy thesis, Faculty of Business & Law, Swinburne University of Technology.

Banks, J. A. (1993). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. Review of Research in Education, 19, 3–49. https://doi.org/10.2307/1167339

Banks, J. A. (2013). The construction and historical development of multicultural education, 1962–2012. Theory into Practice, 52(1), 73–82. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2013.795444

Banks, J. A. (2013). The Construction and Historical Development of Multicultural Education, 1962–2012. Theory Into Practice, 52(1), 73–82. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2013.795444

Biney, P. A., & Cheng, M. Y. (2021). International students' decision to study in China: A study of some selected international students from universities in China. Open Journal of Social Sciences, 9(8), 305–325. https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2021.98021

Blaskova, M., Blask, R., Matuska, E., & Rosak-Szyrcka, J. (2015). Development of key competences of university teachers and managers. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 182, 187–196. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.06.755

Coo, C., Shang, L., & Meng, Q. (2020). Applying the job demands-Resources Model to exploring predictors of innovative teaching among university teachers. Teaching and Teacher Education, 89, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.103009

Corruzzu, J., Fenimore-Smith, J. K., Fuller, E. D., Howe, W. A., Kugler, E., London, A. P., Ruiz, I., & Shin, B. (2008). Drawing parallels in search of educational equity: A multicultural education delegation to China looks outside to see Within. Multicultural Perspectives, 10(1), 35–40. https://doi.org/10.1080/15210969.2008.1016607

Chen, S. (2010). Applications of andragogy in multi-disciplined teaching and learning. Journal of Adult Education, 39(2), 25–35. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ930244

Chiang, T. H., Thurston, A., & Lee, J. C. K. (2020). The birth of neoproliferism in the context of neoliberal governmentality: The case of productive university teachers. International Journal of Educational Research, 103, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101582

Cooc, N. (2019). Teaching students with special needs: International trends in school capacity and the need for teacher professional development. Teaching and Teacher Education, 83, 27–41. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.03.021

Creswell, J. W. (2009). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (3rd Ed). SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (4th Ed). SAGE Publications.

Davis, K. A. (1995). Multicultural classrooms and cultural communities of teachers. Teaching and Teacher Education, 11(6), 553–563. https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X(95)00003-3

Dijk, E. E., Van, Tartzijk, J., van Schaaf, M., van der, F., & Kluitjmons, M. (2020). What makes an expert university teacher? A systematic review and synthesis of frameworks for teacher expertise in higher education. Educational Research Review, 31, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2020.100365

Egizii, R. (2015). Self-directed learning, andragogy and the role of alumni as members of professional learning communities in the post-secondary environment. Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 174, 1740–1749. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.832

Ergenc, C. (2020). An action research on teaching in multicultural classrooms at joint-venture universities in China. Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1080/21887912.2020.1788506

Eshagh, H., Dor-Ziderman, Y., & Yefroimsky, Y. (2014). Question Asking in the Science Classroom: Teacher Attitudes and Practices. Journal of Science and Technology, 23(1), 67–81. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10956-013-9451-y

Fackler, S., & Malmborg, L. E. (2016). Teachers' self-efficacy in 14 OECD countries: Teacher, student group, and school leadership effects. Teaching and Teacher Education, 56, 185–195. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.03.002

Ford, T. N., Glimps, B., & Giallourakis, A. (2007). Under-Prepared students: Essentials beyond academics. Multicultural Perspectives, 9(3), 51–56. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mulpers.2007.04.001

Fry, H., Ketteridge, S., & Marshall, S. (2009). A handbook for teaching and learning in higher education: enhancing academic practice (3rd Ed). Routledge.

Gallivan, N. P. (1999). Empowering geographic questions with multicultural perspectives: Suggestions for teachers by teachers. Multicultural Perspectives, 1(3), 23–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/15210969909539911

Ghundol, B., & Muthanna, A. (2020). Conflict and international education: Experiences of Yemeni international students. Compare, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2020.1846119

Graham, L. J., White, S. L. J., Cologon, K., & Planta, R. C. (2020). Do teachers’ years of experience make a difference in the quality of teaching? Teaching and Teacher Education, 96. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103190

Hachfeld, A., Hahn, A., Schroeder, S., Anders, Y., & Kunter, M. (2015). Should teachers be colorblind? How multicultural and egalitarian beliefs differentially relate to aspects of teachers’ professional competence for teaching in diverse classrooms. Teaching and Teacher Education, 48, 44–55. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.02.001

Hahnel, A., Hahn, A., Schroeder, S., Anders, Y., Stomat, P., & Kunter, M. (2011). Assessing teachers’ multicultural and egalitarian beliefs: The Teacher Cultural Beliefs Scale. Teaching and Teacher Education, 27(6), 986–996. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2011.04.006

Holl, J. C., & Theriot, M. T. (2016). Developing multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills: diversity training makes a difference? Multicultural Perspectives, 18(1), 35–41. https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2016.1125742

Holpin, P. F., & Kieffer, M. J. (2008). Describing profiles of instructional practice: A new approach to analysing classroom observation data. Education Researcher, 44(5), 263–277. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X15590804

Harper, V. (1994). Multicultural perspectives in the classroom: Professional preparation for educational paraprofessionals. Action in Teacher Education, 16(3), 66–78. https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.1994.1044271

Harrison, H. (2008). Engaging Identities in a Regional University Classroom. Higher Education, 56(2), 241–258. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-008-9129-1
Hopkins, D., & Stern, D. (1996). Quality teachers, quality schools: International perspectives and policy implications. Teaching and Teacher Education, 12(5), 501–517. https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X(95)00055-0

Huang, F., Teo, T., Sánchez-Prieto, J. C., García-Per álavo, F. J., & Olimos-Mígueléz, S. (2019). Cultural values and technology adoption: A model comparison with university teachers from China and Spain. Computers & Education, 133, 69–81. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2019.01.012

Irving, K. J. (1984). Cross-Cultural awareness and the English-as-a-Second-Language classroom. Theory Into Practice, 23(2), 138–143. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405848409543104

Isaac, L. B. (2013). Pledges of allegiance, Bandana Wristbands, and Spanish Pig Latin: A Teacher’s reflections on rituals, resistance, and working toward multicultural classrooms. Multicultural Perspectives, 15(2), 98–103. https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2013.781379

Jeanes, E. (2021). A meeting of mindsets: Integrating the pedagogy and andragogy of mindsets for leadership development. Thinking Skills and Creativity, 39, 100758. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2020.100758

Jiani, M. A. (2016). Why and how international students choose Mainland China as a higher education study abroad destination. High Education, 74, 563–579. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-016-9666-0

Lea, S. J., & Callaghan, L. (2014). Lecturers on Teaching within the ‘Supercomplexity’ of Higher Education. Higher Education, 55(2), 171–187. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-006-9041-5

Lee Yao, E. (1984). The infusion of multicultural teaching in the classroom. Action in Teacher Education, 6(3), 43–48. https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.1984.10519203

Lian, L., Guo, S., Wang, Q., Hu, L., Yang, X., & Li, X. (2021). Calling, character strengths, career identity, and job burnout in young Chinese university teachers: A chain-mediating model. Children and Youth Services Review, 120, 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105776

Liao, W., Yuan, R., & Zhang, H. (2017). Chinese language teachers’ challenges in teaching in US public schools: A dynamic Portraya. The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher, 26(6), 369–381. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40229-017-0356-z

Machingambi, S. (2013). Instructional strategies for motivating students: Reflections from 13 teachers of teaching in higher education. International Journal of Educational Sciences, 5(1), 227–235. https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2013.11890082

Marshall, J. (2016). Mobility of African students – Europe losing ground. Retrieved September 19, 2022 from https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20161117045045147

Machingambi, S. (2013). Instructional strategies for motivating students: Reflections from 13

Ministry of Education (2022). Statistical report on international students in China for 2018. Retrieved September 20 from http://en.moe.gov.cn/zgkxdt/documents/reports/201904/t20190418_378692.html

Muduli, A., Kaura, V., & Quazi, A. (2018). Pedagogy or andragogy? Views of Indian postgraduate business students. IJMB Management Review, 30(2), 168–178. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijmb.2018.01.008

Muresan, M. (2014). Using cyberagogy and andragogy paradigms in lifelong learning. Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 116, 4722–4726. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.1015

Mushi, S. (2004). Multicultural competencies in teaching: A typology of classroom activities. Intercultural Education, 15(2), 179–194. https://doi.org/10.1080/146759804200025032

Noben, I., Deinum, J. F., Douwes-van Ark, I. M. E., & Hofman, W. H. A. (2021). How is a professional development programme related to the development of university teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs and teaching conceptions? Studies in Educational Evaluation, 68. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2020.105966

Niske, P. (2018). How international students adapt in China: The role of Chinese social media in intercultural adaptation. International Journal of Management Science and Business Administration, 4(5), 44–50. http://dx.doi.org/10.18775/ijmsba.1849-5664-5419.2014.45.1005

Nworgu, O., & Achinewhu-Nworgu, E. (2018). Cultural challenges facing teachers working with international students – a case study of QAHE. Bulgarian Comparative Education Society, 16. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED585166

Poyan-Correa, R., Cruz, G., Papathanasiou, I. V., Fradkin, E., & Jiang, L. (2019). The effectiveness of critical thinking instructional strategies in health professions education: A systematic review. Studies in Higher Education, 44(5), 829–843. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1586330

Petrika, E., & Pham Nguyen, H. H. (2016). Do Asian EFL teachers use humor in the classroom? A case study of Vietnamese EFL university teachers. System, 61, 98–109. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2016.08.002

Qi, J. (2018). Impact of rising international student numbers in China: University World News. Retrieved September 21 from https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20210521085934537

Roberts, N. (2016). Small group teaching: methods & techniques: Different methods facilitate different kinds of student engagement and opportunities to learn. Learning Hub View, Retrieved 17 December 2018 from http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/learning-hub/view/small-group-teaching-methods-and-techniques

Rudney, G. L., & Marxen, C. E. (2001). Preservice multicultural education: Graduates remember, reflect, and respond. Multicultural Perspectives, 3(1), 32–35. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327892mp0301_7

Sahin, M. (2008). Cross-cultural experience in preservice teacher education. Teaching and Teacher Education, 24(7), 1777–1790. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tote.2008.02.006

Schoorman, D., & Bogotch, I. (2010). Conceptualisations of multicultural education among teachers: Implications for practice in universities and schools. Teaching and Teacher Education, 26(4), 1041–1048. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tote.2009.10.047

Shabani, K., & Ewing, B. F. (2016). Applications of Vygotsky’s sociocultural approach for teachers’ professional Development. Cogent Education, 3(1), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1252177

Shabani, K., Khatib, M., & Samar, E. (2010). Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development: Instructional implications and teachers’ professional development. English Language Teaching, 3(4), 237–248. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v3n4p237

Stratton, D. H. (2020). Types of instructional strategies and their effect on Preparation for Future Learning in differentiation. International Journal of Educational Research, 104, 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101699
Talebloo, B., & Baki, R. (2013). Challenges faced by international postgraduate students during their first year of studies. *International Journal of Humanities and Science, 3*(13), 13B–145.

Tartwijk, J., den Brok, P., Veldman, L., & Wubbels, T. (2009). Teachers’ practical knowledge about classroom management in multicultural classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(3), 453–460. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.09.005

Wasongo, T. A., & Piveral, J. A. (2006). Diversity and the Modeling of Multicultural Principles of Education in a Teacher Education Program. *Multicultural Perspectives, 6*(3), 42–47. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327892mcp0603_9

Wells, R. (2008). *The global and the multicultural: Opportunities, challenges, and suggestions for teacher education.* Multicultural Perspectives, 10(3), 142–149. https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960802197656

Wijnia, L., Loyens, S. M. M., Derous, E., & Schmidt, H. G. (2016). University teacher judgments in problem-based learning: Their accuracy and reasoning. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 59*, 203–212. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.06.005

Yin, H., Han, J., & Perron, B. E. (2020). Why are Chinese university teachers not confident in their competence to teach? The relationships between faculty-perceived stress and self-efficacy. *International Journal of Educational Research, 100*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2019.101529

Young, J. L. (2020). Evaluating multicultural education courses: Promise and possibilities for portfolio assessment. *Multicultural Perspectives, 22*(1), 20–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2020.1728274

Young, R. L., & Sharifzadeh, V. (2003). After effect of 9–11: A call to balance patriotism and multiculturalism in the classroom. *Multicultural Perspectives, 5*(2), 34–38. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327892mcp0502_7

Zhang, L., Basham, J. D., Carter, R. A., & Zhang, J. (2021). Exploring factors associated with the implementation of student-centered instructional practices in U.S. classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 99*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103273

Zhang, D., & Chen, L. (2014). Creating a multicultural curriculum in Han-dominant schools: The policy and practice of ethnic solidarity education in China. *Comparative Education, 50*(4), 400–416. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2014.905249

Zhang, Y., & Liao, Y. (2021). Higher education for international students in China: A review of policy from 1978 to 2020. *ECNU Review of Education, 4*(4), 873–889. https://doi.org/10.1177/2096531120974382

Zong, J. & Batalova, J. (2018). International Students in the United States. Migration Information Source. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute. Retrieved September 20 from https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/international-students-united-states-2017

© 2022 The Author(s). This open access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) 4.0 license.

You are free to:
- Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format.
- Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially.

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:
- Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made.
- No additional restrictions

You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

*Cogent Social Sciences* (ISSN: 2331-1886) is published by Cogent OA, part of Taylor & Francis Group.

**Publishing with Cogent OA ensures:**
- Immediate, universal access to your article on publication
- High visibility and discoverability via the Cogent OA website as well as Taylor & Francis Online
- Download and citation statistics for your article
- Rapid online publication
- Input from, and dialog with, expert editors and editorial boards
- Retention of full copyright of your article
- Guaranteed legacy preservation of your article
- Discounts and waivers for authors in developing regions

Submit your manuscript to a Cogent OA journal at www.CogentOA.com