Intercultural Competence

Louise Townsin
UECA & UNSW Institute of Languages- Sydney, 14 May 2016

If you want to know about water, don't ask a goldfish…

What is intercultural competence?

Cross-cultural awareness

Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

Transcultural skills

Global competence

Intercultural sensitivity

Multicultural competence

What is intercultural competence?

Definitions:

Intercultural learning is "the acquisition of general (transferable) intercultural competence, that is competence that can be applied to dealing with cross-cultural contact in general" (Bennett, 2010, p. 2).

Intercultural competence is "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Deardorff, 2006, p. 248).

Monisha Pushparaj (2014) CC-BY-SA

What is intercultural competence?

History

Robinson (2008) Flickr CC-BY

Dumitrescu (2006) Flickr CC-BY

❖ International business
❖ Peace Corps
❖ Personality vs Behaviour

What is intercultural competence?

Developmental Approach

Can be measured by Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003)

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Ethnocentricism →				Ethnorelativism →		
Denial	Defence	Reversal	Minimisation	Acceptance	Adaptation	Integration
My own culture is the only viable one- the most "evolved" form of civilisation.	The world is organised into "us and them", where "my" culture is superior.	Other cultures are better than mine. My experience of other cultures is at a stereo-typical level.	My culture is central to an assumed universal reality. All people are essentially similar in ways that I can explain by my own cultural beliefs.	My culture is just one of a number of equally complex worldviews.	My experience of another culture yields perception and behaviour appropriate to that culture.	My experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews.

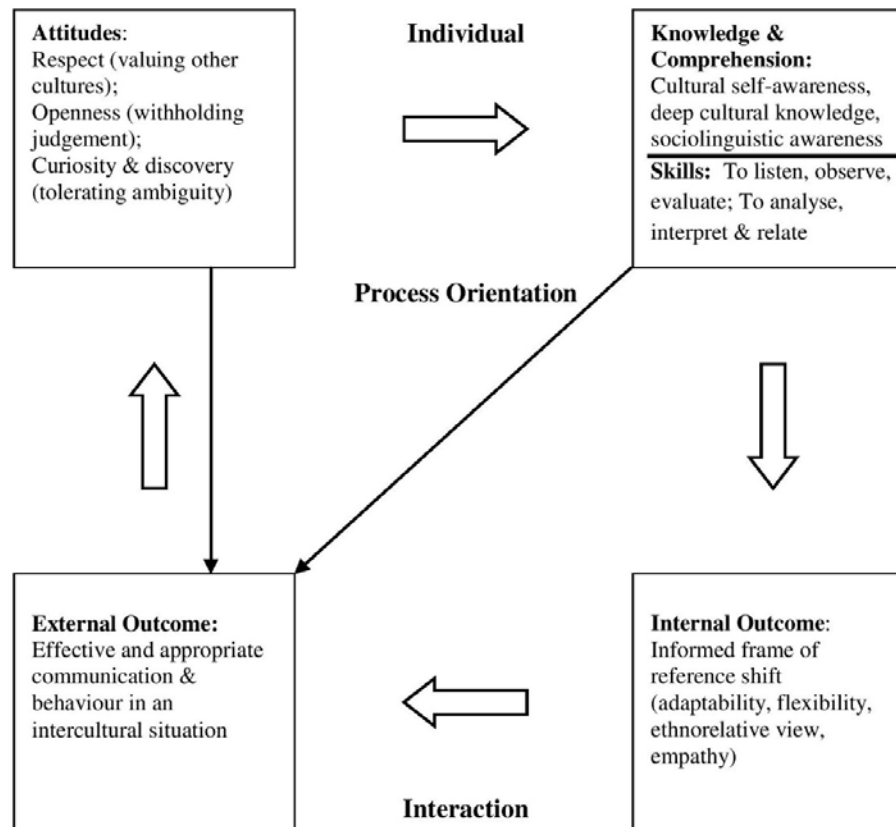Source: adapted from Bennett (2004); Hammer (2012)

THINKING POINT

❖ Reflecting on your current students, how interculturally sensitive do you think they would rate themselves?

❖ Have you seen examples of a mismatch between how they see themselves and how you see them in terms of intercultural competence?

What is intercultural competence?

Process Model of Intercultural Competence
Deardorff (2006)

What is intercultural competence?

Perspectives…

❖ Scholarly focus needed on relationships (Deardorff, 2009)

❖ Influence of interlocutors & context of interaction on the act of interaction (Dervin, 2010)

❖ *Interculturalidad:*
"respect for indigenous social movements in their struggle to gain recognition, share power, in the public arena in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru" (Aman, 2014, p. 83).

Identity

Image courtesy of Stuart Miles at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Kim (2009) proposes that individual identity factors provide a base for the skills associated with intercultural competence.

❖ *Identity inclusivity* (moving away from a monocultural identity)

❖ *Identity security* (confidence in self-identity)

❖ Transformation through cycle of stress, adaptation and growth as one experiences cultural differences and engages in communication with culturally different others.
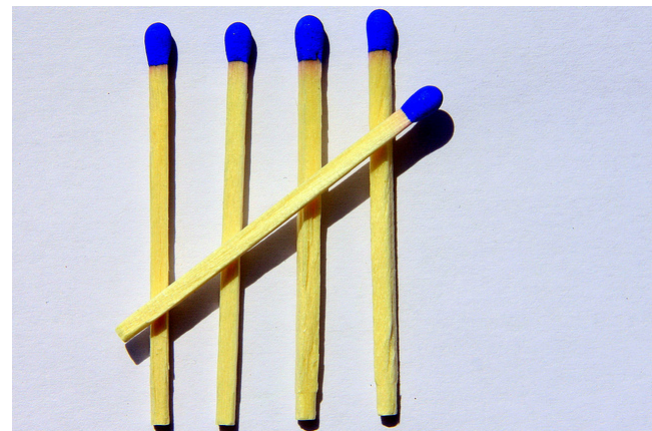
THINKING POINT

❖ Have you seen your students experience culture shock?

❖ How have you seen your students adapt and grow in order to achieve better person-environment fit?

Language Learning

❖ The Five Savoirs (Byram, 1997)

❖ Communicative competence

❖ Native speaker model → intercultural speaker model

Ruiz (2011) Flickr CC-BY-SA

Fisch (2011) Flickr CC-BY-SA

Language Learning

"Grappling with another language challenges how one perceives, conceptualizes, and expresses oneself; and in the process, it opens the possibility of developing alternative communication strategies on someone else's terms. This humbling process often results in transcending and transforming how one understands the world" (Fantini, 2001, p. 2).
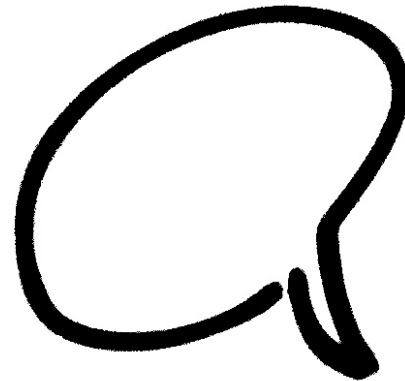
Language Learning

❖ Language learning and intercultural competence are not automatically calibrated

❖ Excellent linguistic command & repeated contacts with culturally different others…

≠

Intercultural competence

(Zarate, 2003)

Student Mobility

❖ Brooks & Waters (2011) argue that student mobility plays an ambivalent role

❖ Overseas study can challenge attitudes and perspectives "because of an all-embracing confrontation to a culture different from that at home" (Teichler, 2002, p. 11)

❖ But questions raised over dominance of Western bodies of knowledge (Robinson-Pant, 2009)

❖ Social segregation outside the classroom (Fincher & Shaw, 2009)

❖ Racism/ discrimination in the host country (Collins, 2010)

❖ "Horizontal" mobility more conducive to "border-crossing communication and discourse"(Teichler, 2002, p. 14).

How to encourage intercultural learning?

❖ Cultural mentoring

- ➢ Guided reflection
- ➢ Inquiry into one's own cultural assumptions, values & practices
- ➢ Explore other worldviews thru understanding how own lens influences interpretation of experiences of "others"

(Marx & Moss, 2011)

How to encourage intercultural learning?

❖ Language: vocabulary of cultural diversity & skills that support demonstration of affective component of intercultural competence (including non-verbal communication)

❖ Global variation of the English language → appreciation and attention to linguistic variety forms a base for sociolinguistic awareness (Kinginger & Blattner, 2008)

❖ Dialogue, including dialogic listening (Penman, 2014)

❖ Autonomous learning (eg: training in ethnographic techniques) (Aguilar, 2010)

Image courtesy of Stockimages at FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Interculturally competent teachers

❖ Detect occurrences of "solidification"
  ➢ culture and identity as unfixed & multidimensional
  ➢ Individuals navigate myriad different cultures (sexual, generational, educational etc) & groups → complex identities entangled in connections

❖ Pay attention to discourses
  ➢ ethnocentric, racist, exotic, xenophilic

❖ Aware of emotions → could result in culturalist conclusions

(Dervin, 2010)

Organisations can…

❖ Consider intercultural learning within curriculum, materials, assessment, pedagogy, induction of staff & students, professional development, policies

❖ Take the focus away from learning specific information about other countries and cultures (applies to both teachers & students)

❖ Organisation of classroom & processes (eg: group work or project-based learning)

❖ Support feeling & risk-taking within teaching

❖ Provide teachers opportunity to develop in practice and in reflection

❖ Encourage participation in learning experiences that involve risk/ reflection
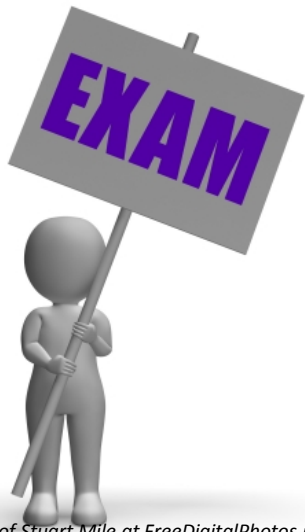
(Byram, Gribkova & Starkey, 2002)

THINKING POINT

❖ How would you rate the materials you currently use in the classroom in terms of how "cultures" are presented? Give examples.

❖ How confident are you performing the role of cultural mentor to your students?

❖ Do you feel you need more support in developing your own intercultural competence as a teacher?

Assessment

❖ Can something which is an "intensely individual quest" be assessed? (Kramsch, 1993, p. 257)

❖ Commercially available tools

❖ Self-assessment, reflective journal, critical incident reports, role plays

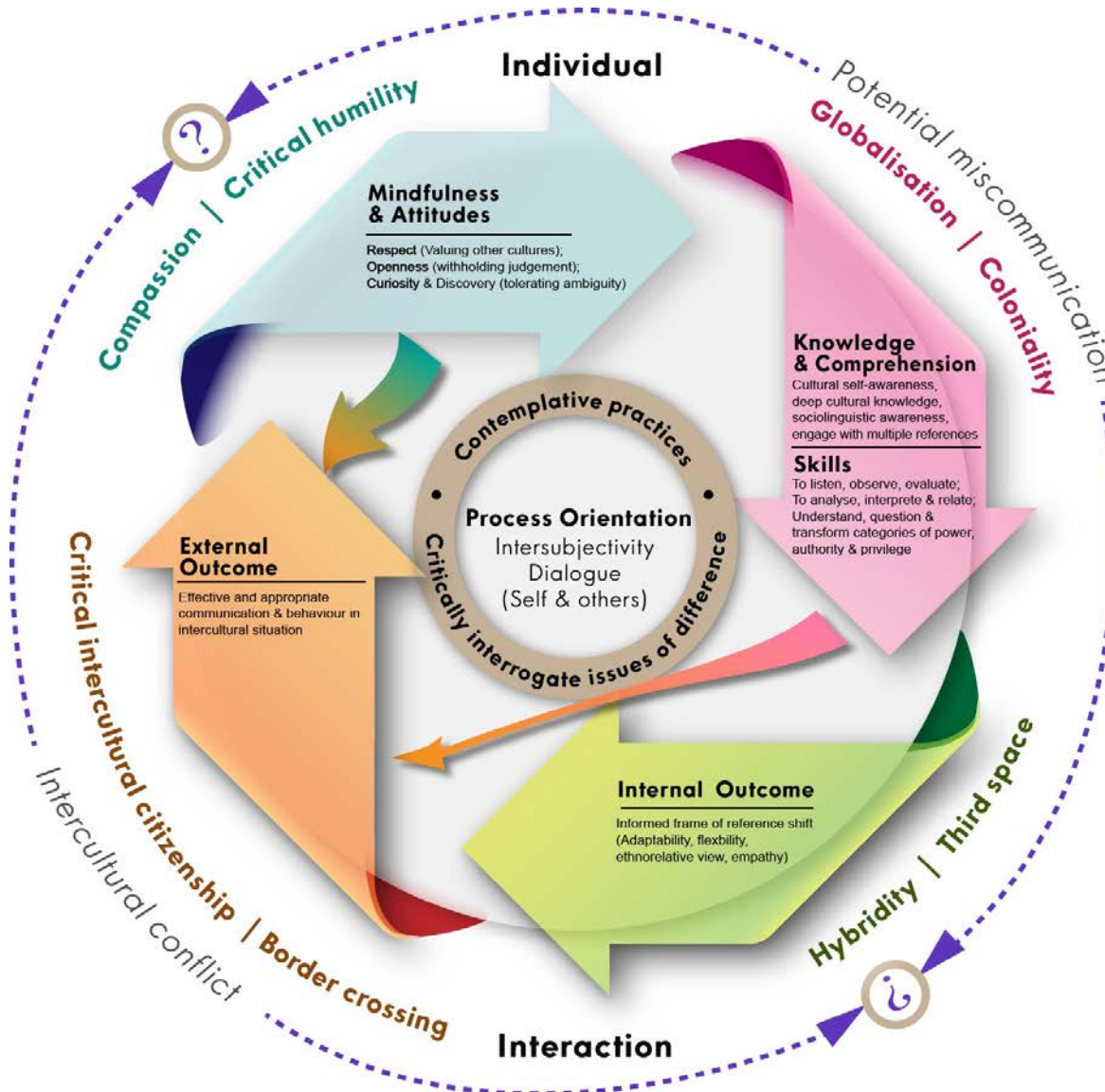❖ Portfolio: Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters (Byram, 1997).

Scenario

Atsushi, an international student in Australia:

One day, the lecturer asked him to demonstrate how Japanese people greet each other. Atsushi lifted his hand, wiggled his fingers, and said « hello ». Not satisfied, the lecturer insisted : « No, I mean how do you greet people in a formal situation ? » Atsushi shrugged and repeated that this was how he greeted people. Getting annoyed, the lecturer-who was of course expecting Atsushi to perform a bow-said « Okay then, how would you greet the emperor ? » Atsushi, feeling harassed, responded that he would prefer not to meet the emperor. Finally, the lecturer was obliged to perform the bow herself, but Atsushi felt stereotyped and kept complaining about the incident for weeks. (Breidenbach & Nyiri, 2009, p. 281).

❖ How would you attempt to repair the above relationship? In what ways would your attempt demonstrate aspects of your intercultural competence?

❖ We often use nationality as a common starting point in intercultural encounters. Why do you think the lecturer used the stereotype of "bowing Japanese"? How is this stereotype formulated?

Border Pedagogy for Living Together-in-Difference (Townsin & Walsh, 2015)

Questions?

Thank you for your attention and participation today.

Kate Ter Haar (2010) Flickr CC-BY

References

Aguilar, M. (2010). Intercultural Communicative Competence as a Tool for Autonomous Learning. *Revista canaria de estudios ingleses*, (61), 87-98.

Aman, R. (2014). Why Interculturalidad is not Interculturality. *Cultural Studies*, 1–24. doi:10.1080/09502386.2014.899379

Bennett, M. (2004). Becoming Interculturally Competent. In J. Wurzel (Ed.), *Toward multiculturalism: a reader in multicultural education* (2nd ed., pp. 62–77). Newton, MA: Intercultural Resource Corporation.

Bennett, M. (2010). A short conceptual history of intercultural learning in study abroad. In W. Hoffa & S. Depaul (Eds) *A history of U.S. study abroad: 1965-present.* Special publication of *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, pp. 419-449.

Breidenbach, J. and Nyíri, P. (2009). *Seeing culture everywhere*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Brooks, R. and Waters, J. (2011). *Student mobilities, migration and the internationalization of higher education*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence. Assessment* (1st Ed.). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M., Gribkova, B. & Starkey, H. (2002). Developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching: a practical introduction for teachers. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Collins, F. (2006). Making Asian students, making students Asian: The racialisation of export education in Auckland, New Zealand. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 47(2), 217-234.

Deardorff, D. K. (2006). Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *10*(3), 241–266. doi:10.1177/1028315306287002

Dervin, F. (2010). Assessing intercultural competence in language learning and teaching: a critical review of current efforts. In F. Dervin & E. Suomela-Salmi (eds.). *New Approaches to Assessment in Higher Education.* (pp. 157-173). Bern: Peter Lang.

Fantini, A. (2001). Exploring intercultural competence: a construct proposal. Presented at NCOLCTC Fourth Annual Conference, Brattleboro, USA.

Fincher, R. and Shaw, K. (2009). The unintended segregation of transnational students in central Melbourne. *Environment and planning. A*, 41(8), 1884-1902.

Hammer, M. (2012). The Intercultural Development Inventory: A new frontier in assessment and development of intercultural competence. In M. Vande Berg, R.M. Paige, & K.H. Lou (Eds.), Student Learning Abroad (Ch. 5, pp. 115-136). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J., & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *27*(4), 421–443. doi:10.1016/S0147-1767(03)00032-4

Kim, Y. Y. (2009). The identity factor in intercultural competence. In D. K. Deardorff (Ed.), *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence* (pp. 53–65). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.

Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and culture in language teaching*. Oxford: OUP.

Kinginer, C., & Blattner, G. (2008). Histories of engagement and sociolinguistic awareness in study abroad. In L. Ortega & H. Byrnes (Eds.), *The Longitudinal Study of Advanced L2 Capacities* (pp. 223–246). New York: Routledge.

Marx, H., & Moss, D. M. (2011). Please Mind the Culture Gap: Intercultural Development During a Teacher Education Study Abroad Program. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *62*(1), 35–47. doi:10.1177/0022487110381998

Penman, R. (2014). Dialogic listening. Retrieved from https://centerforinterculturaldialogue.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/key-concept-dialogic-listening.pdf.

Robinson-Pant, A. (2009). Changing academies: exploring international PhD students' perspectives on 'host' and 'home' universities. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *28(4)*, 417-429, DOI: 10.1080/07294360903046876

Teichler, U. (2004). The changing debate on internationalisation of higher education. *Higher education*, 48(1), 5-26.

Zarate, G. (2003). Identities and plurilingualism: preconditions for the recognition of intercultural competences. In M. Byram. (ed.). *Intercultural competence* (pp. 84-119), Strasburg: Council of Europe.