Intercultural Teaching, Training, and Learning

Presented by:
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About Darla K. Deardorff...

Darla K. Deardorff is Executive Director of the Association of International Education Administrators, a national professional organization based at Duke University, where she is a research scholar in education and also teaches cross-cultural courses. In addition, she is an adjunct professor at North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and is on the faculty of the Summer Institute of Intercultural Communication in Portland, Oregon. She has published widely on topics in international education, intercultural competence and assessment and is editor of The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence (Sage, 2009) which features leading intercultural experts from around the world. Other forthcoming books include Through American Eyes (University of Michigan Press), a textbook on U.S. American culture, and Bridges to the Future: New Strategies for Internationalizing Higher Education in the 21st Century. She is considered to be one of the leading experts on intercultural competence and international education assessment in the United States, and serves as a consultant on these topics to universities and non-profit organizations.

She has worked in the international education field for over fifteen years and previously held positions at North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill where she has had experience in study abroad, international student services, cultural programming, international studies, and ESL teaching/teacher training. Most recently, she managed the Duke–UNC Rotary Center for International Studies in Peace and Conflict Resolution, one of only five such centers in the world. She is also an ESL instructor and teacher trainer and has lived, taught and worked in Germany, Japan, and Switzerland. In addition, she is cross-cultural trainer with nearly twenty years of experience in conducting intercultural training for non-profit organizations, companies, and post-secondary institutions.

Dr. Deardorff has given invited talks around the world, including at recent symposia in Japan and Colombia and at conferences in Germany and Mexico. She is the recipient of numerous awards including the 2001 “Excellence in International Education” award for the state of North Carolina, 2003 “Alumnus of the Year” from her undergraduate alma mater as well as “Distinguished Alumnus of the Year” for the department at her graduate alma mater of North Carolina State University in 2006. She was named a Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary in 2003 and she is featured in The Secret of Their Success: How 35 Women Made Their Dreams Come True, Carolina Women’s Press, 2000.

Dr. Deardorff holds a master’s and doctorate from North Carolina State University where she focused on international education. Her dissertation, focused on the definition and assessment of intercultural competence, has drawn national and international attention and her intercultural competence models developed through the research are being used by such organizations as the Bertelsmann Foundation in Germany and Sodesho in the United States. She was recently nominated as a “Rising Star in Academia” for the Chronicle of Higher Education.

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DEFINING TERMS....

Culture:

Stereotype:

Generalization:

Diversity:

Intercultural competence:

Other terms....
INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE MODEL


Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2006, 2009):

**DESIRED EXTERNAL OUTCOME:**
Behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately (based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes) to achieve one’s goals to some degree

**DESIRED INTERNAL OUTCOME:**
Informed frame of reference/filter shift:
- Adaptability (to different communication styles & behaviors; adjustment to new cultural environments);
- Flexibility (selecting and using appropriate communication styles and behaviors; cognitive flexibility);
- Ethnorelative view;
- Empathy

**Knowledge & Comprehension:**
- Cultural self-awareness;
- Deep understanding and knowledge of culture (including contexts, role and impact of culture & others’ world views);
- Culture-specific information;
- Sociolinguistic awareness

**Skills:**
- To listen, observe, and interpret
- To analyze, evaluate, and relate

**Requisite Attitudes:**
- Respect (valuing other cultures, cultural diversity)
- Openness (to intercultural learning and to people from other cultures, withholding judgment)
- Curiosity and discovery (tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty)

**NOTES:**
- Move from personal level (attitude) to interpersonal interactive level (outcomes)
- Degree of intercultural competence depends on acquired degree of underlying elements

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INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE MODEL


- **Attitudes:**
  - Respect (valuing other cultures)
  - Openness (withholding judgment)
  - Curiosity & discovery (tolerating ambiguity)

- **Knowledge & Comprehension:**
  - Cultural self-awareness
  - Deep cultural knowledge
  - Cross-cultural awareness
  - **SKILLS:**
    - To listen, observe & evaluate
    - To analyze, interpret & relate

- **Desired External Outcome:**
  - Effective and appropriate communication & behavior in an intercultural environment

- **Desired Internal Outcome:**
  - Informed frame of reference shift (adaptability, flexibility, ethnocentrism)

**Notes:**
- **Begin with attitudes:** Move from individual level (attitudes) to interaction level (outcomes)
- **Degree of intercultural competence depends on acquired degree of attitudes, knowledge comprehension, and skills**

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INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE: SELF-EVALUATION

PART ONE. The items listed below are invaluable in developing intercultural competence and in interacting effectively and appropriately with persons from other cultures. Please rate yourself on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>5=very high</th>
<th>4=high</th>
<th>3=average</th>
<th>2=below average</th>
<th>1=poor</th>
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<td>1. Respect (valuing other cultures)</td>
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<td>2. Openness (to intercultural learning and to people from other cultures)</td>
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<td>3. Tolerance for ambiguity</td>
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<td>4. Flexibility (in using appropriate communication styles and behaviors; in intercultural situations)</td>
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<td>5. Curiosity and discovery</td>
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<td>6. Withholding judgment</td>
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<td>7. Cultural self-awareness/understanding</td>
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<td>8. Understanding others’ worldviews</td>
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<td>9. Culture-specific knowledge</td>
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<td>10. Sociolinguistic awareness (awareness of using other languages in social contexts)</td>
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<td>11. Skills to listen, observe and interpret</td>
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<td>12. Skills to analyze, evaluate, and relate</td>
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<td>13. Empathy (do unto others as they would have done unto them)</td>
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<td>14. Adaptability (to different communication styles/behaviors; to new cultural environments)</td>
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<td>15. Communication Skills (appropriate AND effective communication in intercultural settings)</td>
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PART TWO. Reflect on situations requiring intercultural competence—what helped you more appropriate and effective in your interactions? Now reflect on how you can continue to develop your intercultural competence, especially areas you rated as lower. (You can write down your reflections on the back of this paper if that is helpful.)

INTERCULTURALLY COMPETENT TEACHING – REFLECTION QUESTIONS
(based on the Deardorff Intercultural Competence models, 2006)

**Attitudes**

- How truly open am I to those from different cultural, socio-economic, and religious backgrounds?

- Do I make quick assumptions about a student? Do I pre-judge students or situations or do I withhold judgment while I explore the multifacets of the situation?

- Do I measure a student’s behavior based on my own culturally-conditioned expectations or do I try to understand a student’s behavior based on his or her own culturally-conditioned background?

- Do I value those from different backgrounds? How do I demonstrate that I value others, even when I may disagree with their beliefs and opinions?

- Am I eager to learn about different cultures and specifically, am I eager to learn about my students’ backgrounds and experiences? Do I make an effort to learn more?

**Knowledge**

- Can I describe my own cultural conditioning? For example, what cultural values impact how I behave and communicate with others? What are some of my core beliefs and how have they been culturally influenced?

- How would I describe my worldview?

- How would I describe some of students’ worldviews? How might these differ from the ways in which I see the world?

- How much do I know about my students’ cultural backgrounds? What information am I missing and how can I get that information?

- How can I incorporate my students’ worldviews into my course materials?

- What worldviews are demonstrated through the course materials I currently use? How can I enhance those materials so that other worldviews are represented?
Skills:
- How much do I really listen to my students?
- Do I engage in active observation in my classroom, paying attention to subtle nuances and dynamics among my students? In my interactions with my students?
- Do I engage in active reflection of my teaching practice and of my interactions with those from different cultural backgrounds? Do I not only seek to understand why something occurred but what lessons I learned from the situation?
- Do I know how to evaluate interactions and situations through an intercultural lens, seeking to understand underlying cultural explanations for what occurred?

Internal Outcomes (adaptability, flexibility, etc)
- Do I know how students want to be treated or do I assume they want to be treated by my cultural standards?
- Am I able to adapt my behavior and communication style to accommodate students from different culturally-conditioned communication styles?
- Am I able to be flexible in responding to students’ learning needs, seeking to understand those needs from their cultural perspectives?
- Can I easily view knowledge, cultural artifacts, or a situation or issue from multiple perspectives?

External outcomes (communication, behavior)
- How culturally appropriate have I been in my interactions with my students? In my teaching? How would my students answer this question?
- Was I able to meet my goals in an appropriate and effective manner?
- What could I do differently in the future to be more appropriate and effective in my communication and behavior, both in interpersonal interactions and in my teaching?

General Reflection Questions
In reflecting on how teachers can help development students’ intercultural competence, the following questions arise:
- How can teachers specifically incorporate students’ cultural perspectives into the course?
• How can teachers allow space for students to reflect on their own intercultural competence development?
• What role can teachers play in mentoring students in this development?
• What role can others in the broader community play in developing students’ intercultural competence?
• What role can technology play in students’ development of knowledge and skills in relating to those from different backgrounds?
• How can teachers help students demonstrate respect (in culturally-appropriate ways) and openness to other ways of viewing the world?
• How can students work together effectively and appropriately in small groups during the course?
• How can teachers move beyond “objective culture” in the classroom to pushing students to learn more about “subjective culture,” which impacts the ways in which students actually interact with others?
• How can teachers help students develop an “intercultural lens” through which to view the world? (Or as Derek Bok proposed, how can we teach students to “think interculturally?”)

References:


MOVING BEYOND ASSUMPTIONS: THE O.S.E.E. TOOL

O - ____________what is happening

S - _________what is happening objectively

E - EXPLORE ______________for
    what is happening

E - _____________the explanations

Developed by D.K. Deardorff & D.L. Deardorff, 2000
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FOUR LEVELS OF CULTURAL AWARENESS

1. **Unconscious Incompetence**
   Blissful ignorance, unaware of cultural differences, act as you always have, misinterpretation of others' behaviors

2. **Conscious Incompetence**
   Differences exist but not sure why, difficult to figure out others, difficult to understand

3. **Conscious Competence**
   Differences exist and you adjust your behavior accordingly, remain objective

4. **Unconscious Competence**
   Culturally appropriate behavior is second nature, trust your reconditioned instincts, culturally sensitive

Paradigm based on work by William Howell
The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) was created by Dr. Milton Bennett (1986, 1993) as a framework to explain the reactions of people to cultural difference. In both academic and corporate settings, he observed that individuals confronted cultural difference in some predictable ways as they learned to become more competent intercultural communicators. Using concepts from cognitive psychology and constructivism, he organized these observations into six stages of increasing sensitivity to cultural difference. The underlying assumption of the model is that as one’s experience of cultural difference becomes more complex and sophisticated, one’s competence in intercultural relations increases. Each stage indicates a particular cognitive structure that is expressed in certain kinds of attitudes and behavior related to cultural difference. By recognizing the underlying cognitive orientation toward cultural difference, predictions about behavior and attitudes can be made and education can be tailored to facilitate development into the next stage.

The first three DMIS stages are ethnocentric, meaning that one’s own culture is experienced as central to reality in some way:

Denial of cultural difference is the state in which one’s own culture is experienced as the only real one. Other cultures are avoided by maintaining psychological and/or physical isolation from differences. People at Denial generally are disinterested in cultural difference, although they may act aggressively to eliminate a difference if it impinges on them.

Defense against cultural difference is the state in which one’s own culture (or an adopted culture) is experienced as the only good one. The world is organized into “us and them,” where “we” are superior and “they” are inferior. People at Defense are threatened by cultural difference, so they tend to be highly critical of other cultures, regardless of whether the others are their hosts, their guests, or cultural newcomers to their society.

Minimization of cultural difference is the state in which elements of one’s own cultural worldview are experienced as universal. Because these absolutes obscure deep cultural differences, other cultures may be trivialized or romanticized. People at Minimization expect similarities, and they may become insistent about correcting others’ behavior to match their expectations.

The second three DMIS stages are ethno-relative, meaning that one’s own culture is experienced in the context of other cultures.

Acceptance of cultural difference is the state in which one’s own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews. Acceptance does not mean agreement—cultural difference may be judged negatively—but the judgment is not ethnocentric. People at Acceptance are curious about and respectful toward cultural difference.

Adaptation to cultural difference is the state in which the experience of another culture yields perception and behavior appropriate to that culture. One’s worldview is expanded to include constructs from other worldviews. People at Adaptation are able to look at the world “through different eyes” and may intentionally change their behavior to communicate more effectively in another culture.

Integration of cultural difference is the state in which one’s experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews. People at integration often are dealing with issues related to their own “cultural marginality.” This stage is not necessarily better than Adaptation in most situations demanding intercultural competence, but it is common among non-minority groups, long-term expatriates, and “global nomads.”

The DMIS has been used with great success for the last fifteen years to develop curriculum for intercultural education and training programs. Content analysis research has supported the relevance of the stage descriptions and has suggested that a more rigorous measurement of the underlying cognitive states could yield a powerful tool for personal and group assessment.

© Milton Bennett and Mitchell Hammer, 1998

References


CROSS-CULTURAL STRATEGIES/INSIGHTS FROM TEACHERS

- Know your students - really make an effort to learn about their cultural and family backgrounds, as well as communication styles and preferred learning styles - and recognize that each student will ultimately be completely different
- Use the OSEE tool in adapting to different communication styles and evaluating situations
- Be careful about your expectations of students and their responses - don't always expect direct answers or even questions
- Be very intentional about providing an environment where students of all cultural backgrounds (and communication styles - especially indirect styles) feel welcome and able to express themselves in ways that are comfortable for them
- Use more visuals!!! And non-verbal cues!
- Learn key words in students' languages (hello, thank you, please, goodbye)
- Be willing to adapt your own communication style - to tone down or play up facets of your own style to mesh better with students styles
- Don't assume that students know what you're talking about - even very basic things
- Clearly state what is expected from students - don't assume they know!
- Be willing to laugh at yourself
- Don't force students to communicate in a certain way (i.e. make eye contact if they don't feel comfortable)
- Keep learning more about yourself - and be willing to push your comfort zone
- Take cues from your students
- Be aware of body language (inc. space) used in class - by you and by the students
- Be careful not to single out students in class
- Incorporate writing activities to allow opportunities for students to communicate through the writing to you
- Be sensitive to the way in which you convey criticism to students (so they don't "loose face")
- Realize that students are not always thinking about/approaching things in the same way
- Remember how it feels to be uncomfortable and how that can impact one's ability to learn...
- Bring different cultures and traditions into the classroom and into the lectures
- Don't judge students
- Consider pairing up students of different cultural backgrounds for activities (i.e. native Spanish speakers could teach some words to non-native Spanish speakers)
- Honor all cultures in the classroom - Build a culture of respect
- Be aware and knowledgeable of the many different culturally-conditioned communication styles of your students!

OTHER STRATEGIES:

(D.K. Deardorff, 2009)
Seven Lessons Toward Cross-Cultural Understanding

One: Don't assume everyone is the same.

Two: Familiar behaviors may have different meanings.
The same behavior - saying yes, for example, can exist in different cultures and not mean the same thing. Just because you've recognized a given behavior, don't assume you've understood it.

Three: What you think of as normal behavior may only be cultural.
A lot of behavior is universal, but certainly not all. Before you project your norms on the human race consider that you might be wrong.

Four: Don't assume that what you meant is what was understood.
You can be sure of what you meant when you say something, but you can't be sure how this is understood by someone else. Check for signs that the other person did indeed understand you.

Five: Don't assume that what you understood is what was meant.
You are obliged to hear what others say through the medium of your own culture and experience. You know what those words mean to you, but what do they mean to the person speaking them? Always double check!

Six: You don't have to like "different" behavior, but understanding where it comes from may help you respond with more sensitivity.

Seven: Most people do behave rationally; you just have to discover the rationale!

Discussion - Next steps:

1) What frames/theories/models have you found useful in your intercultural work?

2) What are some activities/resources that work really well in your intercultural context?

3) What are some challenges/questions you currently have in your intercultural training/teaching and what ideas do others have about how to address those challenges/questions?

4) What are some key resources (on campus, in the literature, technology-wise, etc) that others should know about?

5) Based on workshop discussions, what can we do differently in better reaching and meeting the needs of culturally-diverse students?

6) What are some next practical next steps for staff, faculty and students to take in developing a greater degree of intercultural competence and mutual understanding?

7) What other questions would we like to discuss at this point related to intercultural learning/teaching?