Mediation, the Intercultural Speaker and Education

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OVERVIEW

1. Concepts
   - 'Intercultural' competence [IC] and 'intercultural communicative' competence [ICC]
   - Mediation

2. An example to illustrate teaching ICC in foreign language classroom
   - Leading to : a Model of ICC

3. Connections to CEFR and RFCDC – for reference

4. An example to illustrate teaching 'Intercultural Citizenship'
   - From experiment to policy – the significance of policy statements
   - The theory of Intercultural Citizenship

5. Conclusion

We are language teachers BUT language is not enough …

- Spoken text and unspoken text:
  - In a meeting in a British university: "I hear what you say" [spoken] 'but I am not interested' [unspoken]

- Understood text:
  - By a British professor = 'He is not interested'

- By a French professor = 'He is listening to what I am saying' [or Chinese professor]

'Fluent fool' – language competence without intercultural competence (Bennett)

Concepts - IC and ICC

Intercultural competence (IC) - 2 people using one language to interact and their group identities are salient /prominent -

e.g. German 'teacher' and German 'lawyer' talking about an illegal incident in a school

[salient identity = 'profession']

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)- 2 people as above but using a language which is not L1 for one or both -

e.g. Chinese lawyer talking to German teacher in Chinese about an illegal incident during a stay abroad

[salient identities = profession AND nationality]

ICC = IC + language competence

Concepts - Mediation

- If German 'lawyer' and 'teacher' do not understand each other's 'ways of thinking/speaking'   [one aspect of 'culture']
  - They need a 'mediator' (using German language)
  - = Intercultural mediator (IC)

- If Chinese 'lawyer' and German 'teacher' do not understand each other's 'ways of thinking/speaking '
  - They need a 'mediator' (using German or Chinese OR both languages)
  - = intercultural mediator with language competence (ICC)

The best mediator is NOT the native speaker

- Mediator is 'intercultural speaker' = can use 'more and different' than native speaker knowledge/skills/attitudes

- THE INTERCULTURAL SPEAKER [NOT NATIVE SPEAKER] IS THE AIM OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Time for an example …

- A project - not every lesson – but project can have disproportionate effects …
- A project in Bulgaria teaching English
- Replicated by a Chinese teacher of English

BRITISH AND BULGARIAN CHRISTMAS CARDS: A RESEARCH PROJECT FOR STUDENTS
Krassimira Topuzova (Bulgaria)

Aims were:

- Analyse/reflect on whether Bulgarian Christmas tradition has changed – after 1990

- compare with British tradition and introduce other cultural issues

- 'research': analysing data, form concepts, draw conclusions.

Organization of the project

- _Before lessons start_
  -- each student to go to a shop and buy one Christmas card they'd like to post for Christmas.

- -- in shop, observe: who buys cards - age, sex, nationality - how many do they buy - which cards sell more and which less?

- -- school, exhibited cards and explained why he/she had bought a particular card: price, size or colour OR images and messages.

In the classroom: -- groups of 5/6 in order to analyse the cards.

- WHO BUYS CHRISTMAS CARDS?
  - 1.What age, sex, occupation are they?
  - 2.Are they local people or tourists?
  - 3.How many cards do they buy?
- WHAT CHRISTMAS CARDS?
  - 1.What size and format are they?
  - 2.What images are included?
  - 3.Who printed them?

  etc

- WHY BUY CHRISTMAS CARDS?
  - 1.What do Christmas cards mean to Bulgarians?
  - 2.Why do they buy them?
  - 3.Who do they send them to?
  - 4.What do they write on them?

- **Second stage**: classification **cards into types**, according to the images and messages -

  following types emerged:

  - Traditional Bulgarian Christmas cards - illustrating the traditional Christmas table

  - Religious Christmas cards with Biblical images   - new development -- official rejection of church before the changes.

  - Children's cards - e.g. children making snowmen, playing with snowballs

  - Winter-landscape cards -snowy woods or fields

  - Christmas-tree decorations - typical Bulgarian cards - traditional decorations

- **Third stage**: discussion **of the cultural implications**: traditional Bulgarian Christmas cards haven't changed; recently introduced innovations, e.g. UNICEF cards with 'Merry Christmas' in English

- *Comparisons*

-- distribute **British cards** to groups: **analyse as before** - four types: religious cards, winter-season cards, children's cards, Christmas decorations.

- -- **comparative analysis** of the Bulgarian and British Christmas cards; make two columns: for differences and for similarities; summarise the findings.

- **most striking difference**: information on cards: what **charity** and what material made of

Comment – evidence of Education (Bildung)

- The students found it difficult to accept the idea of buying Christmas cards to support a charity.

- This is a very interesting point of cultural difference that the students raised.
  - The concept of charity didn't exist in our culture before 1989. Under communist rule people were 'ideally' equal - we got equal wages, we had equal rights and obligations. There were literally no starving people.
  - It was a 'classless' society, people had their bread and homes without fear of losing them. We went to the same shops, selling nearly the same things at the same price.

- Now, the concept of charity has emerged with a clear shape and meaning. The 'classless society' has practically become non-existent. Instead, two distinct classes have formed - those of the rich and the poor. Homeless and unemployed people started to appear.

- At the same time, the first charity organizations appeared, usually founded and sponsored by people with money and power. (….)

Comment from Chinese teacher of English
Han Hui (Hellen) Professor Zhejiang Yuexiu University

- The images of British cards are different from Chinese Christmas cards. To their surprise, most of British cards don't contain Santa Clause, Christmas Trees, bells, socks, which are mostly printed on Chinese Christmas cards …
  - 'Attitudes of curiosity'

- Interestingly, British cards' greetings and wishes for the year are printed in the middle of the cards while Chinese ones are usually printed on the right corner leaving more space for Chinese to write their best wishes because China is a land of ceremony and propriety. Reciprocity is essential in relationships among Chinese people.
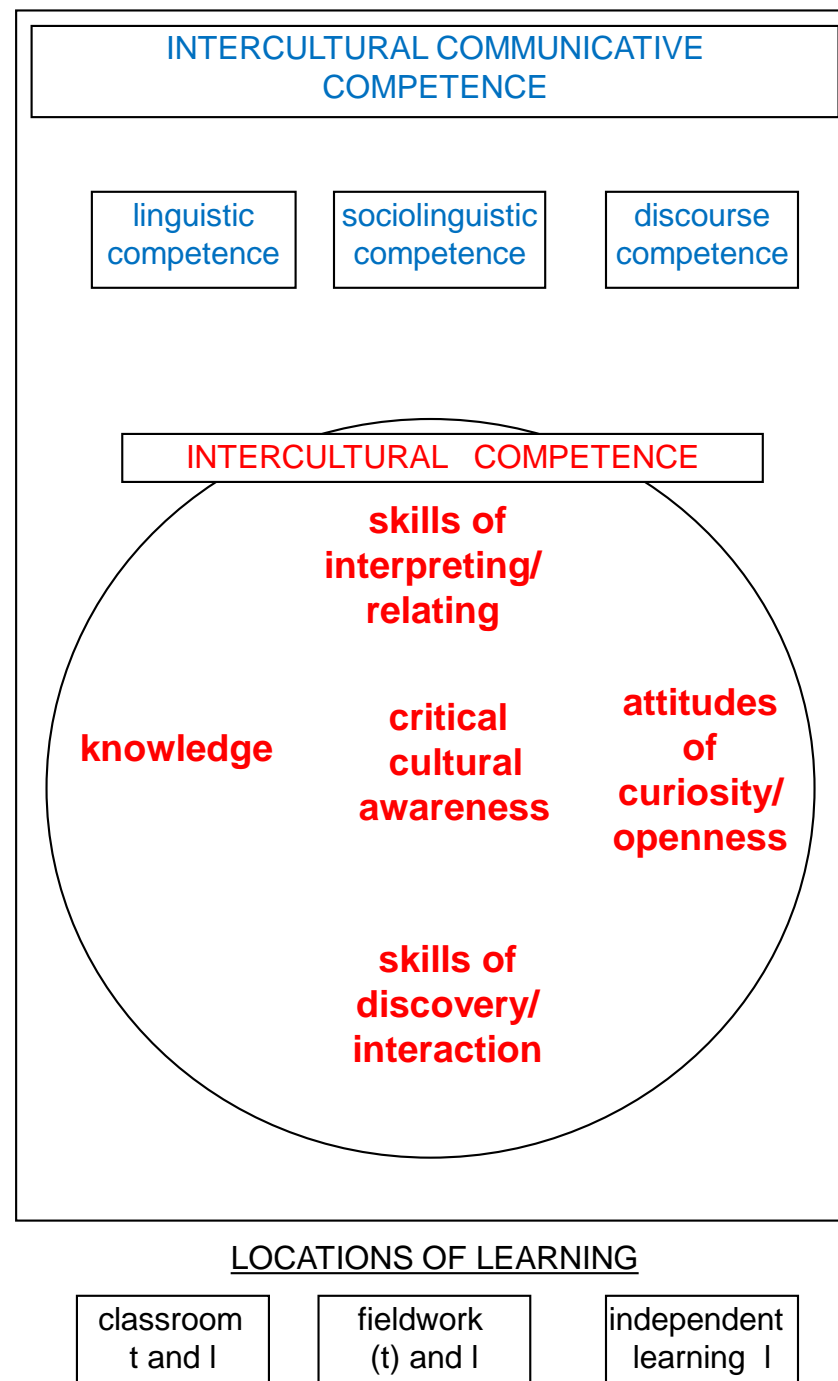 - 'Skills of interpreting/relating' [comparison = analysis NOT 'better than']

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- The students didn't understand and asked me why there are some registered charity number on the cards, which don't exist in our Chinese ones . I encouraged them to use their imagination and creative thinking by carefully looking at some words printed on them, such as sold in aid of 'Breast cancer care' ,'help the aged' 'working together with the world poor' and so on , which threw light on their understanding.
  - 'Skills of discovery'

- A very lively discussion took place about British charities, their role and value in society. They associated this with the Chinese charity business 'Hope Project' which aids those who can't afford to go to school. The money is usually donated by some big enterprises, companies or by some famous film stars, singers, not by selling cards by registered charity. It should be a social behavior for every one in China to show their love and care.
  - 'Critical cultural awareness' [of our values and theirs]

Teaching methods : Skills, attitudes, - and then knowledge…

- Focus on skills and attitudes:
    - Teacher does not provide (native speaker) 'knowledge'
- Knowledge is lower priority – comes later … [includes 'knowledge about communication' e.g. stereotypes]

Han Hui writes

- After discussion they still wanted to know more (attitude: curiosity!) about:
    1) How much does a common card cost in UK?
    2) We want to know more about architectural culture, food culture of Britain.
    3) What do English people write on the cards?
    4) We want to know more biblical stories.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

linguistic competence

sociolinguistic competence

discourse competence

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

skills of interpreting/ relating

knowledge

critical cultural awareness

attitudes of curiosity/ openness

skills of discovery/ interaction

LOCATIONS OF LEARNING

classroom t and l

fieldwork (t) and l

independent learning l

Connections for Assessment … [for later …]

- Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) – Companion volume : https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages

- Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture : https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture

As part of 'Mediating communication' – Facilitating pluricultural space (Companion to CEFR p. 120)

- **B2**
- Can encourage a shared communication culture by expressing understanding and appreciation of different ideas, feelings and viewpoints, and inviting participants to contribute and react to each other's ideas.

- Can work collaboratively with people who have different cultural orientations, discussing similarities and differences in views and perspectives.

- Can, when collaborating with people from other cultures, adapt the way he/she works in order to create shared procedures.

- Can support communication across cultures by initiating conversation, showing interest and empathy by asking and answering simple questions, and expressing agreement and understanding.

- Can act in a supportive manner in intercultural encounters, recognising the feelings and different world views of other members of the group.

RFCDC
Assume 'intermediate' = B2 (?)

4. Openness to cultural otherness

|		
21	Shows interest in learning about people's beliefs, values, traditions and world views	Basic
22	Expresses interest in travelling to other countries	
23	Expresses curiosity about other beliefs and interpretations and other cultural orientations and affiliations	Intermediate
24	Expresses an appreciation of the opportunity to have experiences of other cultures	
25	Seeks and welcomes opportunities for encountering people with different values, customs and behaviours	Advanced
26	Seeks contact with other people in order to learn about their culture	

- See APPENDIX for more detail

[Copies of whole PowerPoint from : m.s.byram@dur.ac.uk]

Time for another example …

From ICC to 'Intercultural Citizenship'

- Combining theory of ICC and citizenship education
  - Citizenship [usually national] becomes transnational
  - ICC [usually 'for the future' and learned in the classroom] becomes active in the 'here and now' in society/community

Green Kidz project
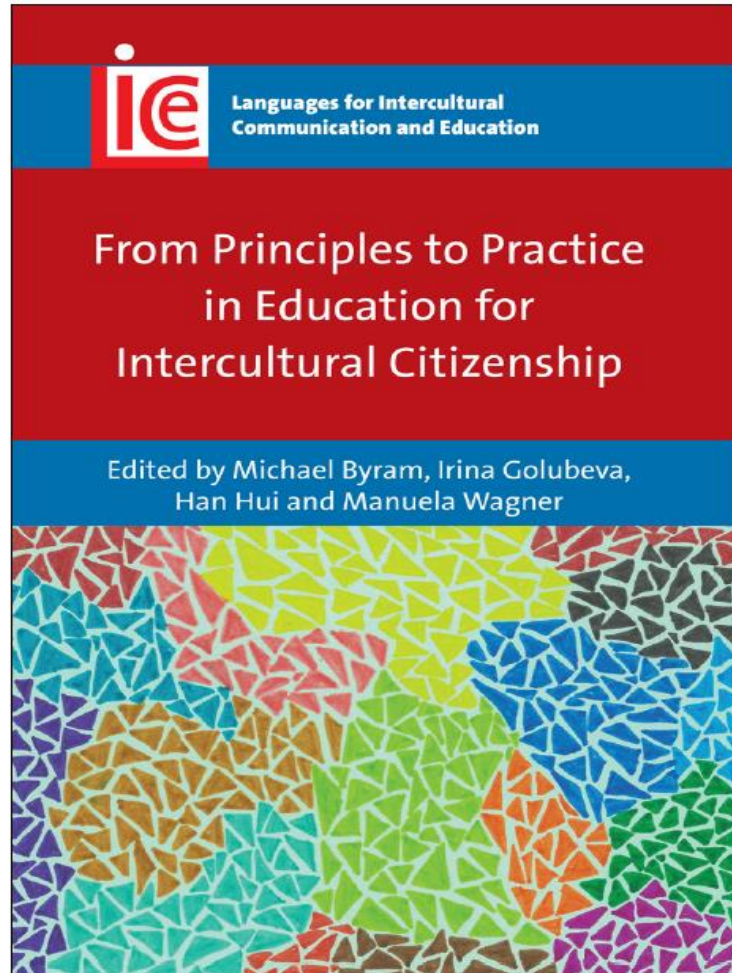
Green Kidz: Young learners engage in intercultural environmental citizenship in English language classroom in Argentina and Denmark.

Melina Porto, Petra Daryai-Hansen, María Emilia Arcuri and Kira Schifler

In: Byram, Golubeva, Han and Wagner (eds) 2016, **Education for Intercultural Citizenship – Principles in Practice.** Multilingual Matters

Participants and aims

Learners in Argentina and in Denmark - learning English (ages 10-12) – connected by internet

Aims:

CRITICAL THINKING

- encouraging children to explore and reflect on environmental issues - globally and locally
- understand environmental issues and how to recognize them in their own surroundings,
- challenge taken-for-granted representations of the environment,

ACTING

- engage in trash sorting and recycling practices,
- contribute to improving the environment in their local communities = ACTION IN THE COMMUNITY

Activities in 4 stages

STAGE 1 – DISCOVER ABOUT 'US' AND PREPARE FOR
'THEM'

- Pupils identified green crimes in their schools and in their communities and drew or video-taped these crimes.

- trash analysis listing, classifying and sorting trash in waste bins in schools

STAGE 2 – PRESENT 'US' TO 'THEM' AND COMPARE

- compared and discussed results using a wiki.

- survey among family members, friends, etc. about their environmental habits - compared on wiki

- analyzed critically (audio) visual media images and texts, produced in Argentina and in Denmark,

STAGE 3 – WORK TOGETHER – IN 'US AND THEM' GROUP

- **collaboratively** online using skype and wiki (i.e. Argentinean and Danish pupils in mixed groups) designed **advertisements to raise awareness** of environmental issues

- Using the internet to share understanding
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uysvpqx2vN0
  - https://www.facebook.com/pages/Save-the-Planet-Argentina/603179783054514
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uysvpqx2vN0
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zTlOCskmo8
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjgTR6QeetQ
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGE9oq3hTdo

Action in the community

STAGE 4 – FOCUS AGAIN ON 'US' AND ACTING …

Act to change/improve 'our (= us)' community after 'our (= them + us' i.e. transnational) critique

For example - Argentine pupils:

- created videos and songs and shared in facebook page
- were interviewed by a local journalist and got the collaborative posters published in local newspaper,
- designed a "pasacalles" (banner) and hung in the school street.

From experiment to policy

- European policy – RFCDC
- National policy – example from Norway

1   Norway Aims for Language teaching

Purposes/Aspirations **[and Aims]**

1. Foreign languages are both an *educational subject and a humanistic subject.* This area of study shall give opportunity for experiences, joy and personal development, at the same time as it opens greater possibilities in the world of work and for study in many language regions.

2. Competences in language and culture shall give the individual the possibility to understand, to 'live into ' and value other cultures' social life and life at work, their modes and conditions of living, their way of thinking, their history, art and literature.

3.   The area of study (languages) can also contribute to developing interest and tolerance, *develop insight in one's own conditions of life and own identity,* and contribute to a joy in reading, creativity, experience and personal development.

4. Good competence in languages will also lay the ground for participation in activities which build **democracy beyond country borders** and differences in culture.

(My (literal) translation – emphasis and numbering added)

//www.udir.no/kl06/PSP1-01/Hele/Formaal - accessed March 2018

THEORY :
FLT + Cit Ed = Intercultural citizenship

- FLT : focus on communication with 'others beyond our frontiers'

- CiT Ed : focus on being a 'good citizen' (within our frontiers) by acting here and now

- Intercultural Citizenship = communicating with others + acting here and now in 'internationalist perspective'

Internationalist perspective

- What I mean by internationalism is a readiness to act on the assumption that mankind as a whole is the proper society to have in mind for matters that cannot with safety or with such good effect be left exclusively within the domain of smaller social groups such as nations.

  - Elvin, H. L. (1960). Nationalism and internationalism in education. *The School Review, 68*(1), 1–22.

- CONTRAST: nationalism and chauvinism hiding behind patriotism

In the projects: creation of an international identification → evidence from discourse

Further reading for examples…

- Wagner, M., Cardetti, F. and Byram, M. (in press/September 2019) *Intercultural Citizenship Across the Curriculum. The role of language education.* New York: ACTFL.

- Byram, M., Golubeva, I., Han, H., and Wagner, M. (eds) (2017) *From Principles to Practice in Education for Intercultural Citizenship.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters .

- Wagner, M., Conlon Perugini D. & Byram, M. (eds) (2018) *Teaching Intercultural Competence across the Age Range: from Theory to Practice.* Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Conclusion

- No conclusion …. But a question…

- Question: Are we language teachers or 'language-and-culture' teachers [OR languaculture teachers]

- Further questions:
  - Ethical issues – Should I as teacher encourage/require my learners to 'take action'?
  - Relativism – are there universal values or only relative values
  - Are there specific issues to address in CFL e.g. 'Asian values', 'Human Rights', Xinjiang, Hong Kong and democracy etc…

→ Your comments and questions….

谢谢
Danke
Thankyou

Appendix for reference

- Common European Framework of Reference for Languages [Companion Volume – https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages

- Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture

- https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture

Council of Europe

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- "Building on a pluricultural competence"   [Companion Volume p. 145]

NB Does not assess intercultural competence but pluricultural competence

- Key concepts operationalized in the scale at most levels include the following:

- ► recognising and acting on cultural, socio-pragmatic and socio-linguistic conventions/cues;

- ► recognising and interpreting similarities and differences in perspectives, practices, events;

- ► evaluating neutrally and critically.

"Building on a pluricultural competence" - B2

- Can identify and reflect on similarities and differences in culturally-determined behaviour patterns (e.g. gestures and speech volume) and discuss their significance in order to negotiate mutual understanding.

- Can, in an intercultural encounter, recognise that what one normally takes for granted in a particular situation is not necessarily shared by others, and can react and express him/herself appropriately.

- Can generally interpret cultural cues appropriately in the culture concerned.

- Can reflect on and explain particular ways of communicating in his/her own and other cultures, and the risks of misunderstanding they generate.

- Can generally act according to conventions regarding posture, eye contact, and distance from others.

- Can generally respond appropriately to the most commonly used cultural cues.

- Can explain features of his/her own culture to members of another culture or explain features of the other culture to members of his/her own culture.
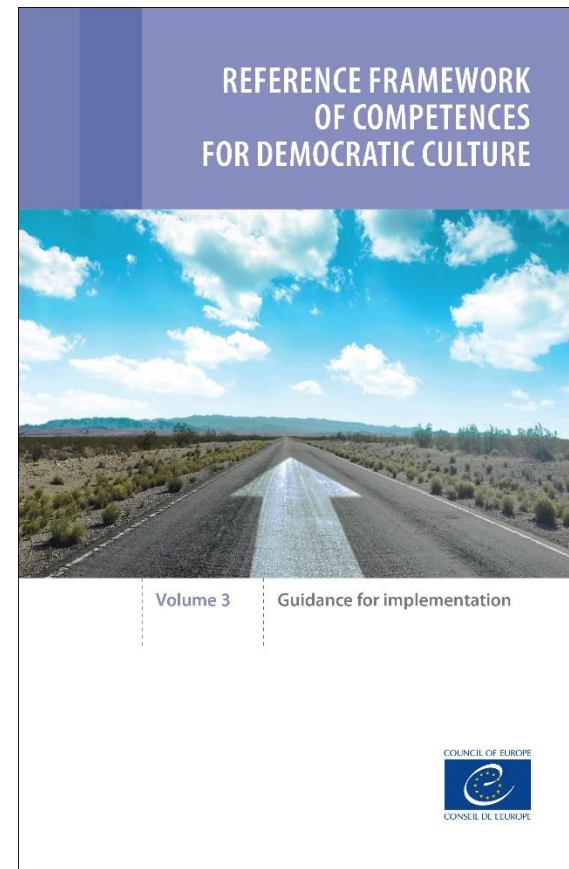
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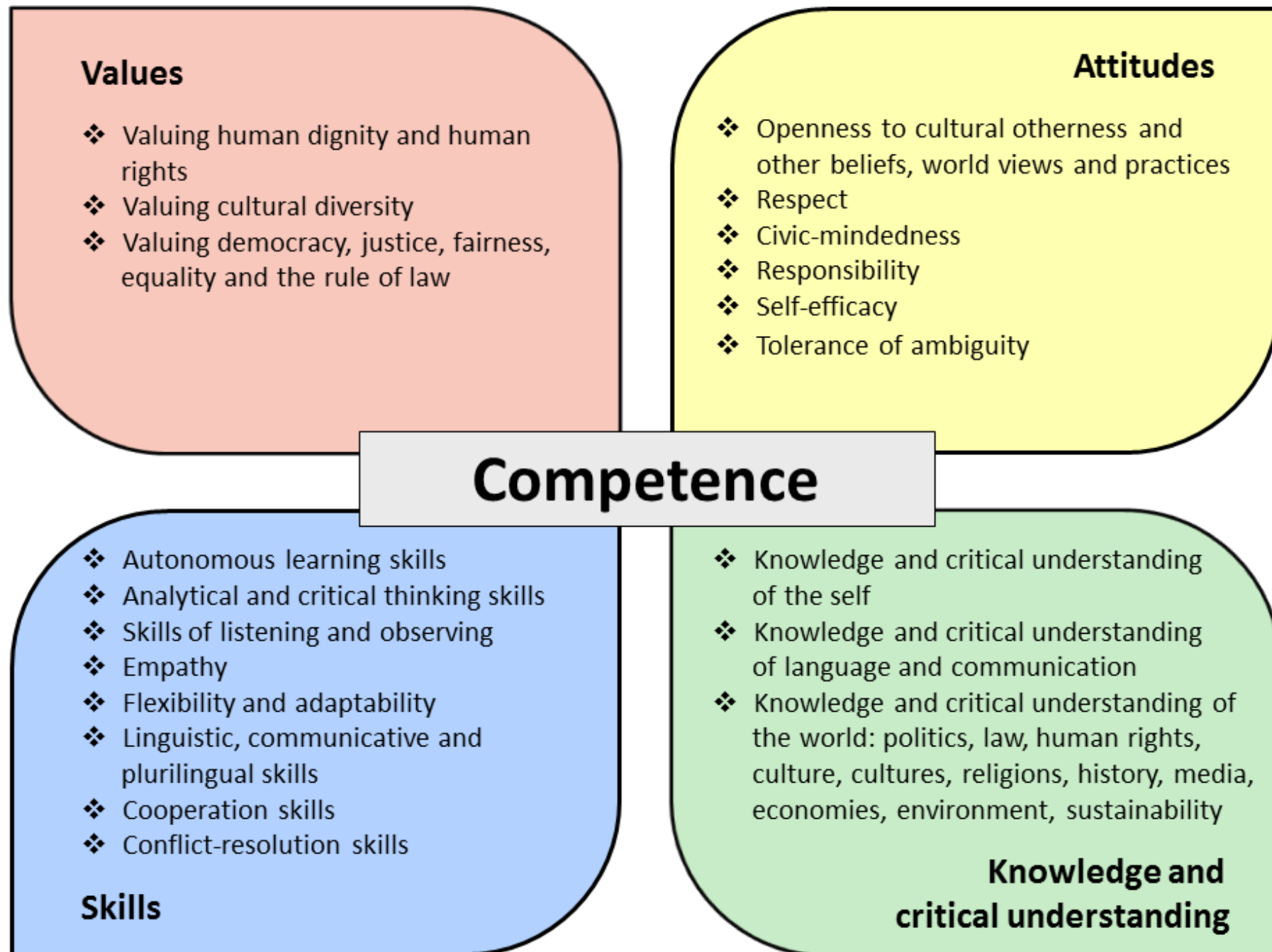
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Council of Europe

- Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture

- https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture

The three volumes of the RFCDC

Values

- ❖ Valuing human dignity and human rights
- ❖ Valuing cultural diversity
- ❖ Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law

Attitudes

- ❖ Openness to cultural otherness and other beliefs, world views and practices
- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Civic-mindedness
- ❖ Responsibility
- ❖ Self-efficacy
- ❖ Tolerance of ambiguity

Competence

- ❖ Autonomous learning skills
- ❖ Analytical and critical thinking skills
- ❖ Skills of listening and observing
- ❖ Empathy
- ❖ Flexibility and adaptability
- ❖ Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills
- ❖ Cooperation skills
- ❖ Conflict-resolution skills

Skills

- ❖ Knowledge and critical understanding of the self
- ❖ Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication
- ❖ Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: politics, law, human rights, culture, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability

Knowledge and critical understanding

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Examples of scaled key descriptors: Civic-mindedness

- **Basic level of proficiency**
  - Expresses a willingness to cooperate and work with others
  - Collaborates with other people for common interest causes

- **Intermediate level of proficiency**
  - Expresses commitment to not being a bystander when the dignity and rights of others are violated
  - Discusses what can be done to help make the community a better place

- **Advanced level of proficiency**
  - Exercises the obligations and responsibilities of active citizenship at either the local, national or global level
  - Takes action to stay informed about civic issues

Examples of scaled key descriptors:
Skills of listening and observing

- **Basic level of proficiency**
  - Listens attentively to other people
  - Listens carefully to differing opinions

- **Intermediate level of proficiency**
  - Can listen effectively in order to decipher another person's meanings and intentions
  - Watches speakers' gestures and general body language to help himself/herself to figure out the meaning of what they are saying

- **Advanced level of proficiency**
  - Pays attention to what other people imply but do not say
  - Notices how people with other cultural affiliations react in different ways to the same situation

Examples of scaled key descriptors:
Knowledge and critical understanding of the self

- **Basic level of proficiency**
  - Can describe his/her own motivations
  - Can describe the ways in which his/her thoughts and emotions influence his/her behaviour

- **Intermediate level of proficiency**
  - Can reflect critically on his/her own values and beliefs
  - Can reflect critically on himself/herself from a number of different perspectives

- **Advanced level of proficiency**
  - Can reflect critically on his/her own prejudices and stereotypes and what lies behind them
  - Can reflect critically on his/her own emotions and feelings in a wide range of situations

Examples of scaled key descriptors: Valuing human dignity and human rights

- **Basic level of proficiency**
  - Argues that human rights should always be protected and respected
  - Argues that specific rights of children should be respected and protected by society

- **Intermediate level of proficiency**
  - Argues that all public institutions should respect, protect and implement human rights
  - Defends the view that no one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

- **Advanced level of proficiency**
  - Defends the view that when people are imprisoned, although they are subject to restrictions, this does not mean that they are less deserving of respect and dignity than anyone else
  - Expresses the view that all laws should be consistent with international human rights norms and standards

How is this related to Foreign Language Education?

- Links language teaching into RFCDC – now supported by CoE countries [and Education Policy Advisors Network (EPAN)]

- Provides bank of descriptors which have been properly validated

From RFCDC

- **Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices**
- Openness is an attitude towards people (…) or towards beliefs, world views and practices which differ from one's own. It involves (…) willingness to engage with other people and other perspectives on the world.

Assume 'intermediate' = B2 (?)

4. Openness to cultural otherness

21	Shows interest in learning about people's beliefs, values, traditions and world views	Basic
22	Expresses interest in travelling to other countries	
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25	Seeks and welcomes opportunities for encountering people with different values, customs and behaviours	Advanced
26	Seeks contact with other people in order to learn about their culture	

From RFCDC

- **Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills**
- (…) the skills required to communicate (…) with people who speak the same or another language, and to act as a mediator between speakers of different languages.

15. Linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills

88	Can express his/her thoughts on a problem	Basic
89	Asks speakers to repeat what they have said if it wasn't clear to him/her	
90	Asks questions that show his/her understanding of other people's positions	Intermediate
91	Can adopt different ways of expressing politeness in another language	
92	Can mediate linguistically in intercultural exchanges by translating, interpreting or explaining	Advanced
93	Can avoid successfully intercultural misunderstandings	

From RFCDC

- **Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication**
- (…) of the socially appropriate verbal and non-verbal communicative conventions that operate in the language(s) which one speaks, (…) of how every language expresses culturally shared meanings in a unique way.

19. Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication

112	Can explain how tone of voice, eye contact and body language can aid communication	Basic
113	Can describe the social impact and effects on others of different communication styles	Intermediate
114	Can explain how social relationships are sometimes encoded in the linguistic forms that are used in conversations (e.g. in greetings, forms of address, use of expletives)	
115	Can explain why people of other cultural affiliations may follow different verbal and non-verbal communicative conventions which are meaningful from their perspective	Advanced
116	Can reflect critically on the different communicative conventions that are employed in at least one other social group or culture	