



Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences

ECTS MA ANNUAL MEETING and STAFF TRAINING

Bologna May 2016

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES





MY TALK TODAY

How do we define intercultural competences?

How can we facilitate cultural learning?

Before-During-After

Intercultural exercises
- practical examples



Student Exchange – OUTCOMES



ACADEMIC	PERSONAL	INTERCULTURAL
<p>Discipline specific knowledge</p> <p>Broader/deeper understanding of the subject matter</p> <p>New skills incl. language</p>	<p>Personal development and growth</p> <p>Self-confidence, independence</p> <p>Friends /Networks</p>	<p>?</p>

Intercultural Competences - Definition

It is defined as the

ability to behave and communicate effectively and appropriately based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

D.K.Deardorff, 2006



➤ **ATTITUDES**

Respect - Valuing other cultures, cultural diversity
Openness to people from other cultures, withholding judgement
Curiosity and discovery, tolerating uncertainty

➤ **KNOWLEDGE**

Cultural self-awareness
Culture specific knowledge
Sociolinguistic awareness

➤ **SKILLS**

To listen, observe and interpret,
To analyze, evaluate, and relate

D. K. Deardorff, 2004



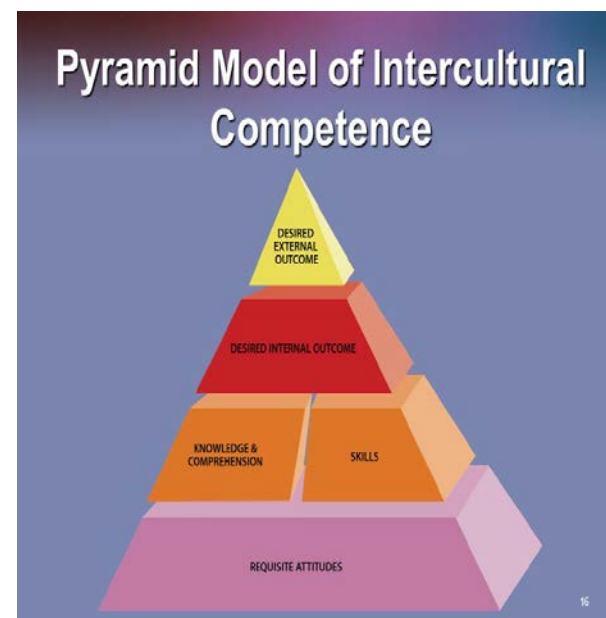
Intercultural Competence

External outcome

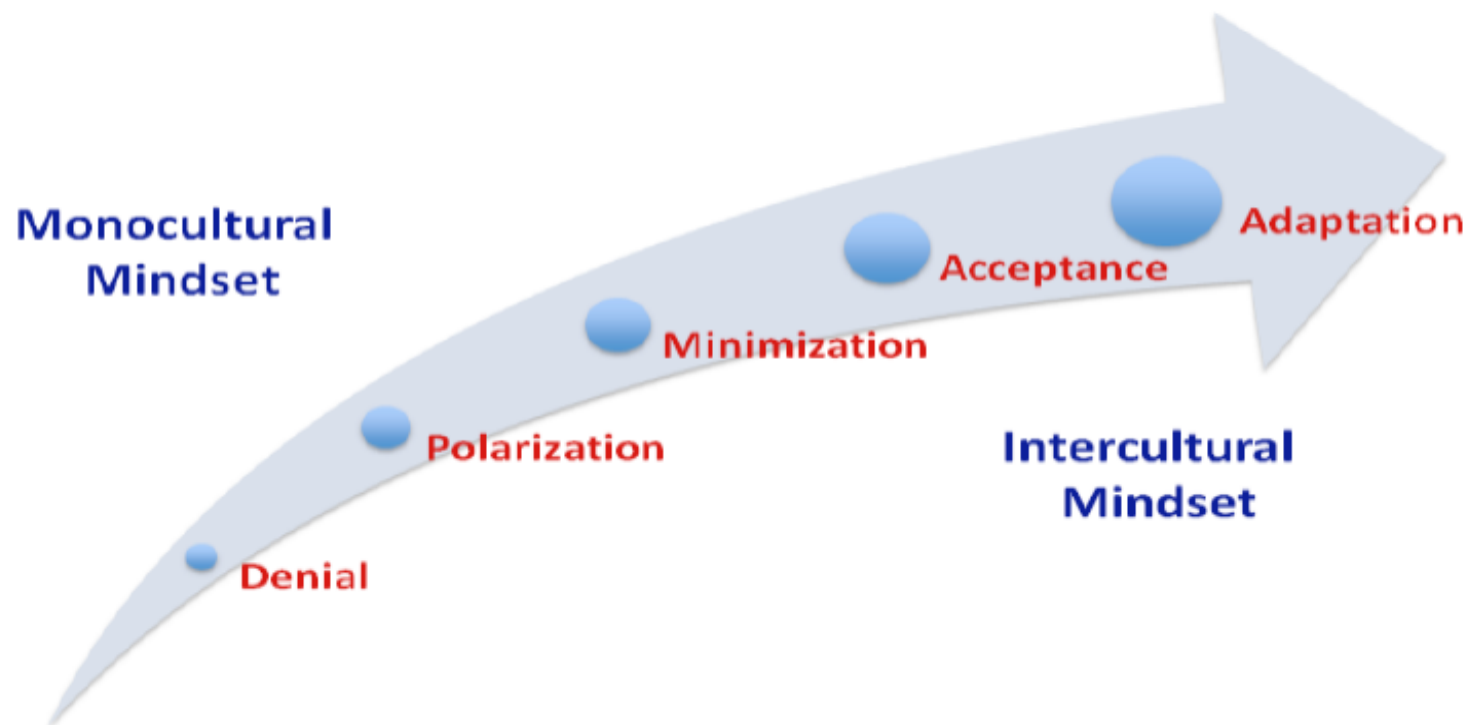
Behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately

Internal outcome

- Adaptability
- Flexibility
- Ethnorelative View
- Empathy



Intercultural Development Continuum



Built on Intercultural Sensitivity Model by Milton Bennett ,1993



HOW TO FACILITATE LEARNING – three elements

The culture meeting

Typical reactions, Culture shock
National stereotypes

Core cultural values

Multicultural learning environment



CULTURE

Culture refers to values, beliefs, attitudes, preferences, customs, learning styles, communication styles, history/historical interpretations, achievements/accomplishments, technology, the arts, literature, etc. – the total sum of that what a particular group create together, share and transmit."

R.Michael Paige, 2002



Typical reactions to meeting different cultures – otherness

- Differences are **problems to be solved** – a bit annoying, but something that needs to be overcome
- Differences create **nervousness** – feeling rather uncomfortable, perhaps pulling away and **isolating** oneself
- Differences as an **opportunity for learning** – not only exchanging academic knowledge, but also fostering a deeper understanding.

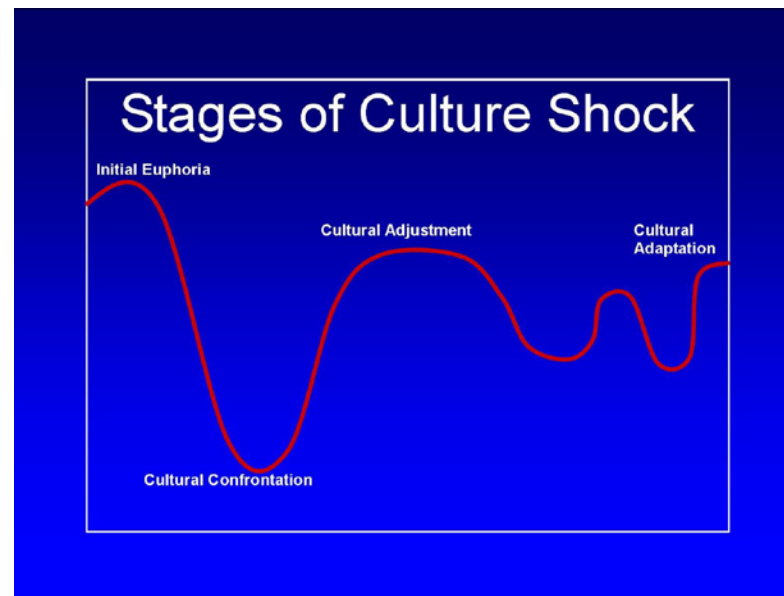
Not only focusing on HOW things are done – but also WHY



CULTURE SHOCK

Disorientation experienced when suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture or way of life”

Oxford Dictionary



National Stereotypes

Stereotypes = "pictures in our heads"

"For the most part we do not first see and then define, we first define and then we see."

"... we already pick out what our culture has already defined for us..."

Walter Lippmann, Public Opinion, 1922



We all carry stereotypes

- *we all wear cultural glasses*

- Simple rather than complex or differentiated- generalisations
- Means of orientation
- Acquired second hand rather than through direct experience – handed down from generation to generation
- Resistant to change or modification by new experience – people see what they **expect** to see rather than what is really there



Stereotypes in intercultural communication

Necessary and unavoidable – we all have them!

Helpful when:

- Consciously held
- Seen as subjective beliefs – never neutral, but influencing the way we perceive others/the world
- Group norm, never describing an individual
- Descriptive rather than evaluative
- Constantly open to modification/change according to actual observation and experience



EXERCISE

Exercise 1: AUTOSTEREOTYPES

List stereotypes describing your own country and nationality.

My country is known for

People from my country are generally seen as

Exercise 2: HETEROSTEREOTYPES

List stereotypes describing Denmark



Working with Core Cultural Values and Orientations

- **Time: rigid-time vs fluid time**
Be on time / Time is approximate

- **Informal vs. Formal behaviour**

- **Activity focussed vs relationship focussed**
Let´s write the report / Let´s be together

- **Individual vs collective performance**
My result vs group results

- **Expressive vs. reserved**

- **Direct vs indirect communication style**
No beating around the bush / indirect statements



INTERCULTURAL EXERCISE



The multicultural learning environment

➤ Language

All in English – or rather in many types of English
Listen carefully – Tolerate global English

➤ Communication styles

Paraverbal communication

- voice volume, use of silence, conversational overlap

Non-verbal communication/bodylanguage

- interpersonal distance, touch behaviour, gestures



➤ Teaching

Student-driven learning / teacher-driven teaching

Responsibility for own learning

Critical analysis

Interdisciplinary approach

Problem based learning – hands-on

Group work



➤ **Interpersonal relationship**

Power distance

Teachers are experts transferring information,

Good discussions

Informal tone – first name

Open discussions – expectation: active, critical



When abroad

- Become an ethnographer
- Explore the new culture – be assertive!
- Challenge your stereotypes
- Analytical and critical approach - go beyond the surface!
- **Journal** - reflections on cultural encounters , successful strategies - ALSO WITH SUPERVISOR



Re-entry

Reflektions:

What are the most important lessons learned – academically, personally?

New intercultural insights – and skills?

In which ways might I have changed? - and my family and friends?



**Revisit Intercultural Competence
definition & Core Cultural Values & Journal**



Life-long learning

How to continue the learning?



Debriefing meetings - academic outcome, practicalities & cultural learning

International dimension in teaching context

Join Buddy programme, Presentations

Maintain networks – enter new

Internships in international cooperations

To sum up

Building up transferable intercultural competences is an integral part of student exchanges

We need to recognize and support the unique cultural learning potential

We need to prepare our students before-during-after

**NEED FOR
EXPLICIT
INTERCULTURAL LEARNING OUTCOMES**



"Tomorrow's graduates will live in a world where conflict, poverty, inequality, migration, climate change and other challenges are widespread. They will need a deep awareness of different cultures, perspectives and identities, and how they respond to each other at a time when cooperation is a prerequisite for progress. They will need knowledge about the world and its various peoples, cultures, places and processes, and the critical thinking skills that help them make real sense of that knowledge"

EAIE, FORUM, Spring 2016
Heleta and Hart, 2013, University of Oxford

Thank you for your attention!

Director of International Relations
Anne-Grethe Routley
Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences
University of Copenhagen
agr@sund.ku.dk

