

CLEaR2014

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Developing intercultural openness –
how students describe and interpret
cultural texts?

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Poland

Plan of my speech

- Introduction
- 1. European documentary background for developing the attitude of openness
- 2. Educational frameworks and strategies to develop the attitude of openness
- 3. Learning about students' abilities of developing intercultural openness – research report
- Conclusion

1. European documentary background for developing the attitude of openness

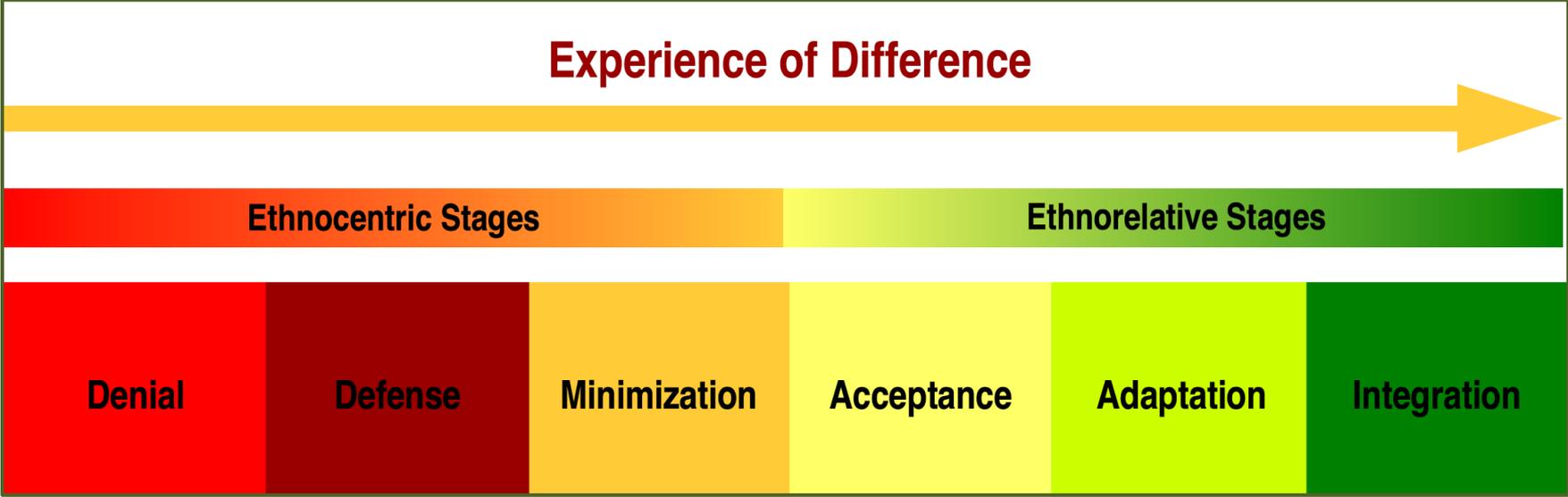
- Statements found in EU documents about development leading to wealthy future (*Europe 2020: Europe's growth strategy, Flagship initiatives*)
- Values – Millennium Development Goals, United Nations global survey „MY World”, values and attitudes in national curriculums
- Competences – intercultural competence found inside 8 European key competences for lifelong learning

2. Educational frameworks and strategies to develop the attitude of openness

- VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) Rubrics:
Intercultural Knowledge and Competence
Value Rubric template – **description of openness** at the level of Capstone – section 4:
Student initiates and develops interactions with culturally different others. Suspends judgment in valuing her/his interactions with culturally different others.

Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Experience of Difference



Ethnocentric Stages

Ethnorelative Stages

Denial

Defense

Minimization

Acceptance

Adaptation

Integration

Thanks to the framework a teacher can follow changes in increasing students' abilities in interpreting multicultural situations

Development Stages			Orientation	
1	Denial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little idea about cultural differences • Own culture perceived as the only true reality • Foreign cultures are ignored 	Ethno-centric world: <i>Own culture seen as central reality</i>	Development of intercultural sensitivity Experience of difference 
2	Defence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural differences more clearly • Stereotyping of foreign cultures • Own culture perceived as superior 		
3	Minimalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Everyone is equal" • Levelling of differences • Elements of own culture experienced as universal 		
4	Acceptance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of own cultural identity • Acceptance of other cultural contexts • Curiosity about and respect for other cultures 	Ethno-relative worldview: <i>own culture seen in the context of other cultures</i>	
5	Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of foreign cultures leads to appropriate behavior and sensitivity • Easier communication • Ability to see the world from the point of view of other cultures 		
6	Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own experience broadened to include multicultural points of view • Perception of oneself as "meandering through cultures" • Integration not necessarily the better prerequisite for intercultural competence than adaptation • Typical of long-term expats, "global nomads", "citizens of the world" 		

Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

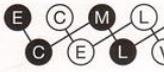
FREPA (Framework of References for Pluralistic Approaches)

The publication presents a comprehensive list of descriptors (KAS – Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills) considered as necessary or possible to use, within the perspective of multilingual and intercultural, multicultural education.

EMPOWERING LANGUAGE PROFESSIONALS
VALORISER LES PROFESSIONNELS EN LANGUES
SPRACHLEHRENDE IN IHRER ROLLE STÄRKEN

FREPA
A Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches
to Languages and Cultures
Competences and resources

Michel Candelier (coordinator), Antoinette Camilleri-Grima, Véronique Castellotti,
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3. LISTS OF RESOURCES

3.1 Knowledge



Resorting to pluralistic approaches is **NECESSARY** to develop the resource.



Resorting to pluralistic approaches is **IMPORTANT** to develop the resource.

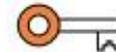
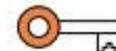
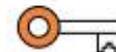


Resorting to pluralistic approaches is **USEFUL** to develop the resource.

Language (Sections I to VII)

Section I. Language as a semiological system

K 1	Knows some of the principles of how languages work
K 1.1	Knows that "language is / languages" are composed of signs which form a (semiological) system
K 1.2	Knows that the relationship "between words and their "referent", <the reality which they designate> / between the "signifier" <the word, the structure, the intonation ...> and the meaning" is a priori an arbitrary one
K 1.2.1	Knows that even cases of onomatopoeia, where a link does exist between word and referent, retain a degree of arbitrariness and vary from one language to another
K 1.2.2	Knows that two words which may "have the same form / look alike" in different languages do not automatically mean the same thing
K 1.2.3	Knows that grammatical categories are not "the" replica of reality but one way of organising this in language
K 1.2.3.1	Knows that grammatical gender and sexual gender are not the same thing



K 10.6	Knows that the perception of one's own culture and of the culture of others depends also on individual factors {previous experiences, personality traits...}
K 10.7	Knows [is aware of] one's own reactions to (/ linguistic / language / cultural /) difference
K 10.8	Has cultural references which structure one's knowledge and perception of °the world / other cultures° as well as one's intercultural, social and communicative practices
K 10.8.1	Has knowledge about cultures °which are the object of formal learning / which belong to other learners in the class / which one finds in the immediate environment°
K 10.8.2	Knows certain elements which are characteristic of one's own culture in comparison to other cultures °which are the object of formal learning / which belong to other learners in the class / which one finds in the immediate environment°
K 10.9	Knows strategies which one can use to resolve intercultural conflicts
K 10.9.1	Knows that the causes of misunderstanding must be °sought / clarified° in common



3. Learning about students' abilities of developing intercultural openness – research report

- Methodology, responders, aims of the research
- Research problems:
- **How cultural texts help to develop Polish students' attitude of openness?**
 - 1. How do students describe a cultural text, what elements do they perceive in an external and objective layer?
 - 2. How far and deep responders try to interpret the text? Are their previous experiences seen in those interpretations?

3. Learning about students' abilities of developing intercultural openness – research report

- 3. What kind of values and attitudes responders present? How those values and attitudes influence the development of students' openness?
- 4. How do students “anchorage” their interpretation, how do they articulate/express their main meaning?
- 5. How far goes the openness of Polish students in the light of American colleges and universities VALUE Rubrics and Milton Bennett's DMIS scale?
- 6. How far a contact with a cultural text from a different culture may help to develop European key competences?

A Turkish carpet



From author's private photo gallery

Students' descriptions and interpretations of the above photo in the relation to given titles and values important for the responders

No.	Student's title (Anchorage)	Student's description	Student's interpretation	Values important for responders (researcher's interpretation)
6.	"Dreams swept under the carpet"	The photo shows a Persian carpet lying on a concrete floor. Our attention is attracted by a fragment of a tree seen in the left and bottom corner of the picture.	From my early childhood I link a carpet with fairy-tales, with colourful, carefree, and unreal life. With magic which helps to tear oneself from the prosaic life. In fairy-tales heroes fly on carpets between clouds (a lot of children dream about the same adventure). At the picture the carpet is abandoned, left to be forgotten. For me it symbolises abandoned dreams – a grown up people's state of life, the loss of child's happiness of life.	Value of huge, brave, unrealistic dreams, which bring higher sense to human life. Critics of prosaic life led by grown-up people who forget their childhood dreams and wishes, and sacrifice their lives to technical, routinized, and expected existence.

What kind of values and attitudes responders present? How those values and attitudes influence the development of students' openness?

- Students show that a lot of the values and attitudes creating national curriculums are close to their convictions.
- In addition **Polish students highly judge such values as:** value of family and home happiness, independence, individualism, aesthetic values in developing human being, and in creating a better world,

What kind of values and attitudes responders present? How those values and attitudes influence the development of students' openness?

- value of huge, brave, and unrealistic dreams, which bring higher sense to human life, respect for other religions, traditions, family customs, value of tolerance, esteem for nature and its beauty, understanding a man as a part of God's world and universe, value of mutual respect, co-existence in multicultural world, and respect to elders/old generations.

What kind of values and attitudes responders present? How those values and attitudes influence the development of students' openness?

- **Students critic:** blind desires of following consumer trends, and compliant attitude towards consumerism, mass culture, and manipulation. They are against a changing and passing by tradition, not only that practical, material one, but aesthetical and spiritual ones as well. They do not agree with prosaic life led by grown-up people who forget their childhood dreams and wishes.

Conclusion

- My thesis: **openness** enables a good start or a promising development of mutual, multicultural interactions.
- **Openness** as a means of true and vital multicultural contacts may play a successful role as a leverage of new contacts between people representing different ways of thinking, expressing feelings, building social relations, looking for truth, differently valuing goods and various life situations.

Conclusion

- Thanks to the **ability of openness** we can responsibly, and with no fear meet with other cultures.
- We may carry on a successful conversation, effectively communicate, and develop a meaningful dialog on various levels of needs and interests.

Thank you for your attention