

Appendix

Intercultural Competences and its impact on teacher education

Milton Bennet is focussed on sensitivity as to enhance intercultural cohesion and has constructed a theoretical basis:

Assumption:

As one's experience of cultural difference becomes more complex and sophisticated, one's competence in intercultural relations increases. Bennet distinguishes ethnocentric and ethno relative stages that you can recognize in societies.

The three ethnocentric stages:

Denial

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. Environment is in the blind spot, Variety is internal get along with everybody. We don't have intercultural problems, only normal people

Defence

Defence 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 Defence 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.

- Us or Them
- That's typical....
- The way they act is impossible

Minimization

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' behaviour to match their expectations.

- Basically we are interested in the same things
- Everybody is like me
- We are all equal
- Everybody wants to be respected...

The three ethno relative stages

Acceptance

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.
- Differentiated Categories of Distinction
- Wine-Expert
- It is different, not necessarily better
- The more variety the better

Adaptation

Adaptation to cultural difference is the state in which the experience of another culture yields perception and behaviour 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 behaviour to communicate more effectively in another culture.

- Has different styles of behaviour at hand
- See the world through other eyes
- Empathy
- My behaviour is shaped by the context

Integration

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-dominant minority groups, long-term expatriates, and "global nomads."

- Can switch between perspectives
- Flexible identity
- Home is where my friends are

The lemniscat

"The Mobius Strip (lemniscat) is an expression of non-duality. It reveals the Unity of all polarities, creating a state of Oneness, joining the whole and the part, the masculine and the feminine, expansion and contraction, spirit and matter, etc. Everything is One and nothing can be separated from anything else. All is completely intertwined, infinitely. The Mobius Strip is a spiritually significant symbol of balance and union. (Yoga=Union) The Buddhist philosophy of Tantrism also is expressed by the Mobius Strip shape. "Tantra" is continuity; the word derived from the root 'tan', meaning to extend... extend continuously, to flow, to weave. The continuum is descriptive of the Nature of Reality, by contemporary physicist David Bohm..."a single unbroken wholeness in flowing movement."

