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**Key Themes in Intercultural Communication
Pedagogy**

Abstracts

Keynote 1: Helen Spencer-Oatey, University of Warwick

Developing ‘Global People’: Insights from International Partnerships

International partnerships/collaborations are a vital element of current higher education, yet their intercultural aspects are frequently overlooked. For example, George Mason University has recently announced plans to close their branch campus in the United Arab Emirates, and a report announcing this closure concludes that a key lesson to be learned is “know your partner”. This concurs with the experiences of members of the eChina-UK Programme – that the roll-out of global programmes is less easily matched by the development of ‘global people’.

In this talk, I draw on the intercultural experiences of members of the eChina-UK Programme (<http://www.echinauk.org/>) in order to reflect on this issue of developing ‘global people’. The eChina-UK Programme was a major initiative between Britain and China (2003–2007), funded by HEFCE, which involved a number of British and Chinese universities working collaboratively to develop online teacher training materials. The project members experienced a number of challenges in working together – these were partly language issues but were also much more than that.

I start my talk by analysing some of these challenges and after this I describe the conceptual frameworks and practical resources that we have developed during the final phase of the programme (<http://www.globalpeople.org.uk/>) in order to help promote intercultural competence. I focus on two key components: the *Global People Competency Framework* and the *Global People Toolkit*. Each is grounded in both research and authentic experience – one provides a conceptual framework for considering intercultural competence; the other is a practical toolkit (with case studies, activities, tips and tools) for managing the life cycle of intercultural partnerships. I explain how these resources can help support all those (thinking of) engaging in international partnerships/collaborations, and I consider their applicability to other contexts and audiences (e.g. students).

Throughout my talk I will be reflecting on several key issues:

- The interconnection between communicative competence and intercultural competence;
- The learning process during intercultural interaction and how it can be optimised;
- The types of resources needed to help develop intercultural competence.

Brief Bio Information

Professor Helen Spencer-Oatey is Director of the Centre for Applied Linguistics at the University of Warwick. She has been manager for HEFCE of the eChina-UK Programme since its inception in 2002, and has directed the Global People project. She has worked extensively overseas, including teaching at Shanghai Jiaotong University for 7 years on a British Council project. Her book publications include *Culturally Speaking* (Continuum, 2000/2008), *e-Learning Initiatives in China* (Hong Kong University Press, 2007), *Handbook of Intercultural Communication* (Mouton de Gruyter, 2007) and *Intercultural Interaction* (Palgrave, 2009).

Keynote 2:
Mike Byram, University of Durham

Intercultural Communication as Training and Education

I will try to answer the four questions on which the seminar is based by looking at intercultural communication as both training and education. To do this I will refer to the educational purposes of universities, to their purpose as places of *Bildung*. In other words I will add a further, more general question about the educational role of courses in intercultural communication, and offer an answer which will also link to the concept of education for citizenship.

I will also consider the questions pragmatically and argue that they can all be addressed in empirical terms, including the use of action research. In order to be concrete in discussing what this might mean I will focus in particular on the final question about an intercultural approach in syllabi whose main focus is on language learning.

Biographical information

Michael Byram is Professor Emeritus at the University of Durham. He is also an adviser to the Council of Europe Language Policy Division.

His main research has focused on foreign language teaching and its cultural dimension and language education policy, and recent publications include:

Feng, A., Byram, M. and Fleming, M. (eds) 2009 *Becoming Interculturally Competent through Education and Training*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters

Hu, A. and Byram, M. (eds) 2009 *Interkulturelle Kompetenz und fremdsprachliches Lernen. / Intercultural Competence and Foreign Language Learning*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag

Adam Brandt
Newcastle University

Culture in interaction: What micro-analysis of real life interactions can contribute to the study of intercultural communication.

Abstract

To demonstrate the importance of a discourse approach to the understanding of intercultural communication (ICC), this paper will present a conversation analytical interpretation of interculturality. This ethnomethodological approach will be shown to offer an alternative perspective on ICC, by explicating what people *actually* say and do (as opposed to what they are purported to do) in interaction.

Using recordings of naturally-occurring talk, the role of culture and cultural identities in interaction will be explored. Two collections of data will be drawn upon: video recordings of international university students chatting in their kitchen, and audio recordings of English language Skypecasts (multinational, multi-participant online voice-based chatrooms). Examples from these corpora, as well as from previous research (e.g. Mori 2003; Nishizaka 1995), will be used to show: (1) how the relevance of interculturality in interaction can change on a moment-by-moment basis, (2) that culture and cultural identities can be used by interlocutors as interactional resources and (3) that cultures and cultural practices are not treated as static entities by interactants, but are contested, negotiated and co-constructed through talk.

It will be argued that an alternative perspective on ICC can be offered by such fine-detailed examination of interactants' actual behaviour. From this view, culture and cultural identities are not assumed to be omnirelevant in communication. Instead, they can be viewed as resources upon which interlocutors can draw to achieve social and interactional goals. Further, interculturality can be seen to be an on-going, dynamic phenomenon both shaped by, and shaping, communication. It will also be argued that it is essential to consider such an approach when teaching ICC, not least because, in order to fully understand interaction, one should examine what is demonstrably relevant to those engaged in it.

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Nishizaka, A. (1995). The interactive constitution of interculturality: How to be a Japanese with words. *Human studies*, 18, 301-326.

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Richard Fay
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Developing IC courses in a vacuum: Some emergent pedagogical issues

Abstract

This paper explores some intercultural communication pedagogy issues arising in my particular HE context. Despite lofty international aspirations, Manchester has as an under-elaborated internationalisation philosophy and no philosophy to speak of regarding interculturalisation and the development of student and staff attitudes, understandings and skills in intercultural communication. Indeed, it is only recently (as an outcome of a review of u/g provision) that our institutional discourse has begun to use *cultural awareness*, *global awareness*, and *global citizenship*. But even so, intercultural concerns do not have a secure place in the institutional agenda. Thus, as a context, I would characterise Manchester as a 'vacuum' vis-à-vis IC pedagogy. However, in this vacuum (which I sense is far from unique), there have been some (largely bottom-up) intercultural communication course developments. I have been involved in these three in particular:

- *Computer-Mediated Intercultural Communication (CMIC)*, an interculturalisation-at-home initiative for the BA Language, Literacy and communication programme;
- *Going Global: Intercultural Communication for International Experience*, an initiative seeking to consolidate interculturalisation-through-study-abroad through elective study by any outgoing study abroad student; and
- *Language Education as Intercultural Practice*, an interculturalisation-as-professional-competence initiative for Masters-level experienced TESOL practitioners as part of their academically-situated, continuing professional development.

In this paper, I briefly examine these three courses and then identify: a) key characteristics of the emerging IC pedagogy they embody; and b) some of the challenges of developing IC courses in this unsupportive HE context.

Sonia Gallucci
University of Birmingham

What does it mean to be prepared for the Year Abroad? And who can really benefit from this experience?

Abstract

In this paper, I shall give an overview of the Year Abroad (YA) research context, highlighting a number of studies carried out within and outside Europe and considering current issues in this field, among which the need of more intercultural pedagogic preparation for people embarking on the YA experience. These will be treated in relation to my research study, whose overarching questions are: *What does it mean to be prepared for the Year Abroad (YA)? And who can really benefit from this experience?*

The paper is divided into four main sections. I will start with a brief overview of the recent phenomenon of student mobility across and outside Europe and the EU student mobility scheme in which my participants took part for one academic year, that is the ERASMUS exchange programme (Coleman: 1995, 1998; Roberts et al: 2001; Papatsiba: 2006, Alred & Byram: 2002, 2006; Freed: 2008).

Secondly, I shall talk about the cultural turn in studies of residence abroad that embraces the theorisation of intercultural communicative competence (Hymes: 1972; Wiseman: 2001; Deardoff: 2006; Byram & Feng: 2006), intercultural awareness (Hanvey: 1976; Hall & Toll: 1994) and intercultural sensitivity (Bennet: 1986, 1993) as separated but mutually dependant key concepts that can lead individuals to a successful intercultural interaction (Chen, 1997: 9).

Thirdly, I shall provide some examples of intercultural encounters of my participants during their stay in Italy, with the main aim of highlighting the particular ways in which they experienced and dealt with cultural difference, and the extent to which they adjusted or/and adapted to the new Italian surroundings.

Last but not least, I will present some *work-in-progress* materials that I developed and used in Higher Education, with the main objective of raising intercultural awareness among learners of Italian in preparation for their YA experience as ERASMUS students. These are based on my research findings and on pre-existing materials in English translated by me into Italian (Jenks: 1997; Byram: 1997; Hall & Toll: 1994; Paige: 1993; Landis et al: 2004).

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Some pedagogy tools for early communication in a foreign language (3 – 5 years old)

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Abstract

Emergent awareness is being given to young language learners' research, following a global trend to introduce second or foreign languages at earlier stages of the curriculum. In Europe, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is becoming a trend and widespread practice of immersion education. In opposition, at a National context – Portugal, is still a country far away from this practice. The introduction of a second language in state Kindergartens is foreseen in official documentation from Ministry of Education since 1997. The Portuguese Government and the Ministry of Education have already given some steps forward when deciding to introduce a foreign language (English) in state Primary schools (2005). Moreover it is a decisive criterion from parents when deciding the Kindergarten their children are going to.

Within this research, our research question was to discover how can very young language learners' potential and communication skills be enhanced most effectively? Therefore this paper describes the research project outcomes of classroom investigation and small-scale ethnographic research in a Northeast Portuguese kindergarten setting; children aged 3 to 5 years old in the process of learning a foreign language (English). The types of data used were lesson audio recording, transcription, content analysis, document analysis.

The used approach was within a cross-curricular scope, materials and strategies were carefully selected, interconnecting L1 contents through the L2. Very young language learners were followed throughout a school year. They have had English lessons once a week for a period of 45 minutes. Unlike other European countries, given the fact that a bilingual approach in Kindergarten is not possible at the moment, at least children should be exposed to quality foreign language programmes.

Throughout the year it was possible to verify that there were high levels of involvement achieved, the sharing of their learning with their peers in Kindergarten and with their families at home, the willingness and ability of picking up a foreign accent very naturally, and to learn the language of the Other, creating an awareness of different languages and different cultures. All these emphasize the building in of intercultural communication. Later in life children will need to communicate with other languages and other cultures. Therefore a suitable approach for foreign languages might be a starting point in creating an interest for foreign languages and cultures in the long life course. Early foreign language exposure, is a major contribution to the learners' whole learning processes, skills development, impacting in the landscape of consciousness and emotion, especially at an age where children are laying the foundations for later in life in a globalized world.

This is an extremely crucial area of research and practice and careful must be taken when approaching very young language learners because these young children will be the next generation of citizens within a multi-cultural and plurilingual Europe.

Keywords: Early years (3 – 5 years old), involvement, cross-curricular approach, communication, pedagogy, foreign language programme.

Dr Celia Thompson
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Exploring a *dialogic* approach to intercultural communication pedagogy

Abstract

When deciding on which pedagogical approach to adopt in the teaching of intercultural communication, there are clearly many factors to consider, such as theoretical orientation, purpose, context, study level and the educational and cultural backgrounds of the target learners. In this paper, I explore the ways in which Bakhtin's concept of *dialogism* (e.g. Bakhtin, 1981) and Kristeva's work on the poststructural concept of *the subject-in-process* (e.g. Kristeva, 1986) can be used as a framework through which new approaches to the pedagogy of intercultural communication can be developed.

In the paper I discuss a first year undergraduate subject currently entitled 'Intercultural Communication' that is offered by the University of Melbourne. The subject aims to explore how and why intercultural communication may be problematic by providing a broad overview of issues and theoretical approaches to the study of this field. The subject introduces a range of discourse analytic approaches to communication, including interactional sociolinguistics, pragmatics, ethnography of communication and conversation analysis. Students complete two short empirical studies for assessment.

By drawing on a *dialogic* and poststructural view of identity and communication, I argue that the term 'transcultural' as opposed to 'intercultural' may more accurately capture the kind of communication that occurs as people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds interact. I support this position with examples taken from hip hop and classical music collaborations between musicians of very different cultural origins in Australia and the Middle East.

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Peter Sercombe
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Intercultural communication pedagogy: out of the pan and into or out of the fire?

Abstract

A major, perhaps 'the', role of Intercultural Communication (ICC) is to consider how people from dissimilar cultural backgrounds communicate with each other. Twenty years ago, Blackman (1980) notes ICC studies needs to: develop theory from contact with data, rather than utilise deductively derived theories imposed from a priori premises; and ensure ICC's postulates parallel natural human processing. Thus, ICC attempts to provide interpretations of (among other things): examples of actuation, i.e. authentic communication between people; ways in which cultural patterns and verbal codes relate to intercultural communication; and how one might identify aspects of one's own and others'¹ cultures and consider how these influence and, in turn, are influenced by acts of communication. More recently, Devoss et al. (2002: 76) propose a number of challenges in teaching ICC including: a need to focus on characteristics of students' own cultures (although the authors seem to spoil what seems a sound idea by suggesting that students need 'to see themselves as part of a distinct culture'); and replace notions of cultural stereotypes with more fluid, dynamic understandings of cultural positionings. Inherent in the ideas above appears to be an underlying need to engage with authentic data, as well as provide a richer account of context (Goodwin & Duranti 1992) which can often be missing from textbooks with ICC in their titles. This paper considers more pedagogically useful literature (according to the author, at least) and tentatively suggests how students, relatively new to this interdisciplinary field, might use this as a basis for progressing to analyses of their own data in order to become more critical students of ICC.

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¹ I accept that the idea of 'other' (or otherisation) is problematic and may mistakenly assume differences in the same way that it is problematic to assume similarities between people of a similar cultural background.

Jane Woodin
University of Sheffield

Native/ intercultural speaker: Evidence from tandem learner conversations

Abstract

Tandem learning is defined as a language learning activity involving two native speakers and learners of each others' language who get together to learn from each other and to help each other learn. Based on the principles of autonomy & reciprocity, the tandem activity is assumed to be 'intercultural' in nature (Brammerts 1995). This paper will consider evidence from tandem learners with regard to the notion of the native speaker.

In an activity focused on the discussion of word meaning, tandem learners are found to adopt a variety of positions with regard to the word meaning, themselves, their partner, their language, and country. This paper will focus upon interlocutors' positioning of themselves as native or non-native speaker (NS-NNS) through drawing in particular on instances of repair which clearly identify these roles in the tandem partnership. The points in the conversation when NS-NNS identification happens and ceases to happen are considered, as are the purposes for which such identification takes place.

It appears that while NNSs will request support from native speakers on issues relating to linguistic accuracy and vocabulary, word meaning is not an issue on which NNSs systematically defer to their partner. This raises interesting questions with regard to interlocutors' understanding of the task, the role of the native - or intercultural - speaker and implications for ownership of the language.

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**Intercultural Communicative Competence and the teaching of English:
Exploring teachers' beliefs and practices**

Abstract

Over recent years, the central importance of 'culture learning' has been stressed by theoreticians with an interest in language learning as social interaction (e.g. Kramsch, 2004, Sercu, 2005). Despite this, until very recently approaches to intercultural communication were largely absent from language learning curricula and from language teacher education programmes. Theoretical frameworks are now in place to facilitate the incorporation of intercultural competence and language learning (Byram, 1997; Council of Europe, 2001; Risager, 2007). The theoretical landscape is rich and varied, with available frameworks incorporating social psychological perspectives on groups and group interaction, as well as more specifically postmodern approaches to identity and culture as social construction. Such approaches promote critical orientations incorporating relativistic perspectives and a critical internationalism (Byram, 2008). They also stress the importance of resistance to processes of 'otherisation', the reification of culture and the stereotypical representations of target groups.

Empirical investigation of the application of intercultural theory to pedagogy remains surprisingly unusual (Byram & Feng, 2004; Young, Sachdev & Seedhouse, 2009). The multimodal, exploratory study reported here investigated the extent to which one of the more widely known and influential frameworks, Byram's (1997) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC), is informing English language teaching in three locations in the USA, UK and France. A survey investigated 104 experienced teachers' beliefs and practices regarding the development of ICC on current programmes. The investigation was then extended in diary studies, and in focus group interviews in each of the three locations. Analysis of findings indicated an apparent disparity between teachers' beliefs and classroom content. Teachers generally supported the model as a way forward, and stressed that 'good' learners and teachers tended to exhibit high ICC. However, the development of intercultural competence was given relatively little emphasis in syllabi negotiated with learners, who were perceived as more concerned with developing skills (most especially speaking). Other reasons for the lack of emphasis on intercultural competence included a perceived absence of an ICC element in language testing, a lack of support for effective and non-stereotypical culture learning in published materials, and teachers' beliefs that any critical exploration of intergroup difference might be in some way 'dangerous', especially in multicultural classrooms.

These findings will be outlined and explored in detail. A possible research agenda for the further exploration of intercultural effectiveness in learning languages will also be set out.

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