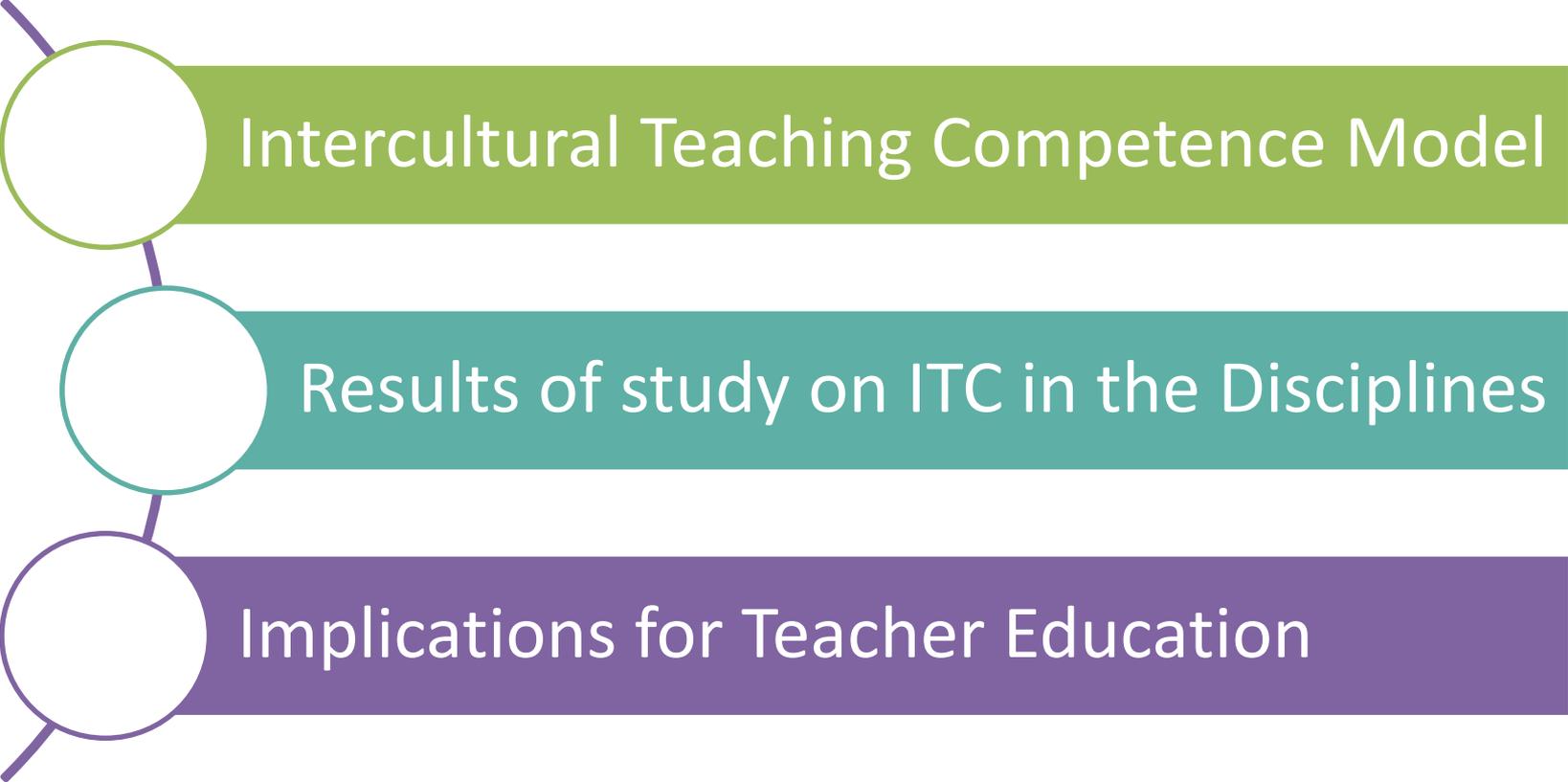


Intercultural Teaching Competence in the Disciplines: *Teaching Strategies for Intercultural Learning*

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Presentation Overview



Intercultural Teaching Competence Model

Results of study on ITC in the Disciplines

Implications for Teacher Education

Recent Publications on ITC

- 1) Dimitrov, N. & Haque, A. (2016). *Intercultural Teaching Competence: A Multidisciplinary Framework for Instructor Reflection*. *Intercultural Education. Special Issue: Learning at Intercultural Intersections*. 27(5). 437-456.
- 2) Dimitrov, N. & Haque, A. (2016). *Intercultural Teaching Competence in the Disciplines*. In Pérez, G. M. G. & Rojas-Primus, C. (Eds.) *Promoting Intercultural Communication Competencies in Higher Education*. (pp. 89-119). IGI Global: Hershey, PA.

INTERCULTURAL TEACHING COMPETENCE

A Multidisciplinary Framework for
Instructor Reflection

The model is a tool for instructor reflection that allows teachers to

- ✓ recognize ways they already model intercultural competence in the classroom
- ✓ identify areas in which they may need to continue to develop their skills
- ✓ discover new facilitation strategies they can add to their repertoire

Discussion

- How can the ITC framework help prepare teacher candidates for their practicums or for experiences in international schools or TESL?
- Which competencies would be most relevant for instructors working in the K-12 environment?

Related terminologies

- Intercultural competence
- Intercultural fluency
- Intercultural mindfulness
- Intercultural maturity
- Cosmopolitan literacies
- Global awareness
- Culturally relevant teaching
- Inclusive teaching

Model has 3 subsets of competencies

Foundational

instructor's knowledge of their own positionality and ability to respond to difference

Facilitation

instructor's ability to create a safe, inclusive learning environment and promote dialogue in the classroom

Curriculum Design

ability to enrich the curriculum with diverse perspectives through selection of content, learning activities, and assessments

Foundational competencies

1. Develop an awareness of one's own cultural and disciplinary identities and positionality in the classroom
2. Anticipate, value, and accept differences among learners and ways of learning; create cultural safety and trust
3. Model and encourage perspective taking in the classroom
4. Model and encourage non-judgemental approaches to exploring difference
5. Model tolerance for ambiguity

Facilitation competencies

6. Facilitate discussion among students with a variety of communication styles
7. Provide feedback across cultures in a variety of ways
8. Tailor messages to audiences with different levels of linguistic ability
9. Recognize the barriers students may face in participating in class
10. Identify risk factors for learners that might surface during classroom activities
11. Create opportunities for peer learning and interaction among diverse learners
12. Build and navigate relationships with students who have different perceptions of power distance
13. Articulate and mediate differences in the roles of teachers and learners across cultures
14. Mentor students during their transition to new cultures and disciplines
15. Articulate the meaning of academic integrity in one's own discipline

Curriculum design competencies

16. Include concrete learning outcomes related to intercultural or global learning at the course and curriculum levels
17. Incorporate content and learning resources that represent diverse perspectives, paradigms, or disciplinary approaches
18. Create learning activities that allow students to explore difference and practice perspective-taking
19. Design assessments that recognize and validate cultural differences in writing and communication styles
20. Provide opportunities for students to reflect on and gain a better understanding of their own multiple cultural, personal, and disciplinary identities

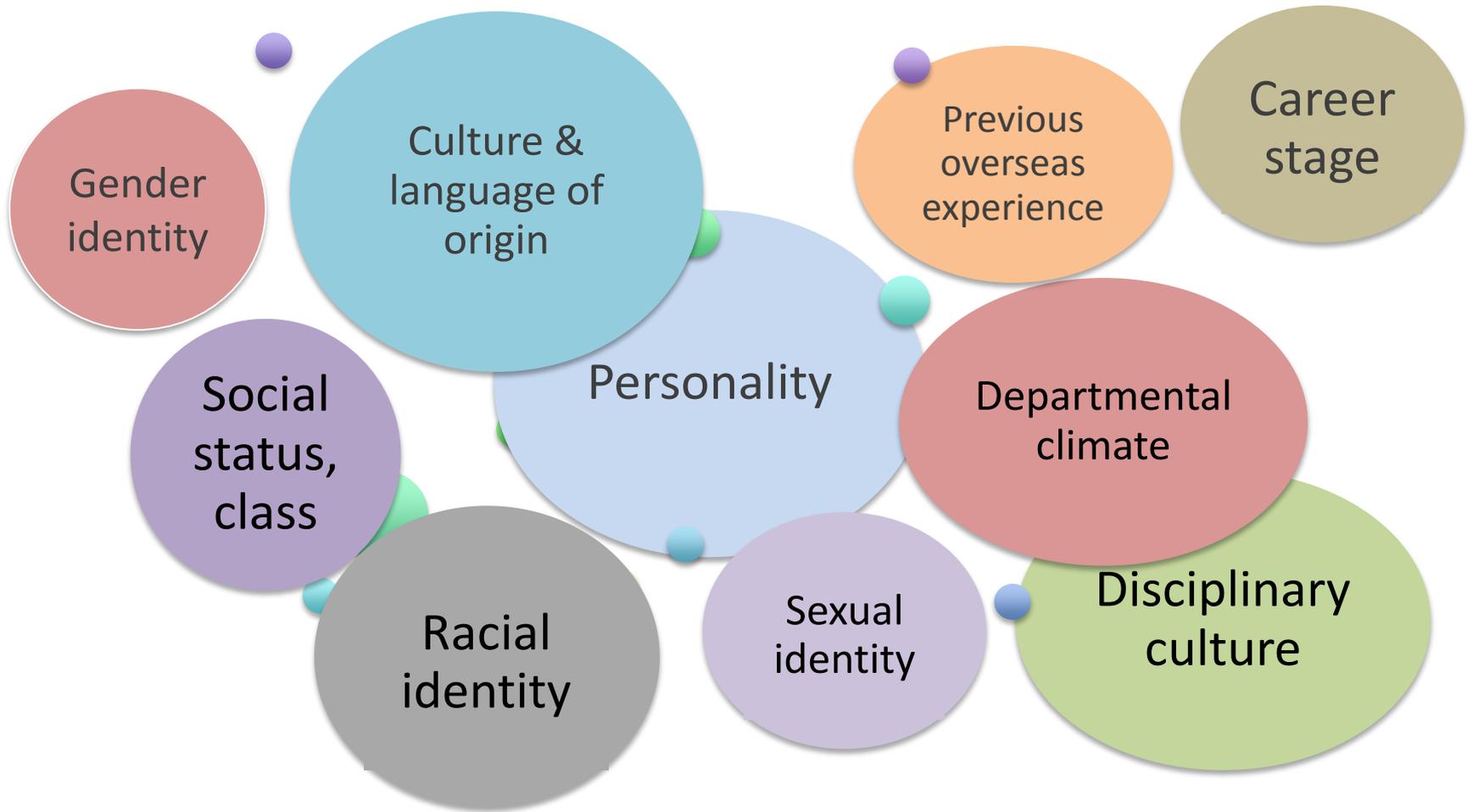
What is ITC? A set of skills that...

- enables instructors to **support the learning of** students across difference – *wide definition of perceived difference and group identity*
- allows instructors to establish meaningful **relationships among students**, so they can work together to achieve common learning goals
- includes the ability to **facilitate dialogue about difference** in the classroom
- engage students in learning activities that **promote global or intercultural learning goals**

Modelling & Curriculum Design

- **model intercultural competence for students**
 - e.g. facilitate dialogue about global issues using respectful, inclusive, and culturally relevant teaching strategies.
- **demonstrate openness to diverse ways of knowing**
 - represent multiple perspectives when they select content, readings, and learning
 - provide opportunities for multiple ways of representing knowledge in assessment

Academic relationships influenced by a multitude of cultural and personal identities



ITC draws on 2 research literatures

- Research on intercultural competence models
- intercultural comm. literature on interculturally competent teaching

intercultural

education

- Research in educational development & educational psychology on effective teacher behaviours
- TA competencies
- inclusive & culturally relevant teaching

Grounded in 10 years of intercultural teaching program development at Western

- Program goal: to develop intercultural teaching fluency
- 500-600 registrants/ year in intensive ITA intercultural programs (8-20 hrs)
- High rate of repeat participation
- 250 TAs per year in TATP “Teaching in the Intercultural Classroom” session
- 4000 registrants in all TA programs (50% ITAs)
- See Dawson et. al (2013) for comparison of the impact of general and intercultural TA programs

Applications of ITC

- Engage instructors in critical reflection about their teaching practices and classroom climate
- Identify learning outcomes for teaching programs with intercultural focus (esp. with novice instructors)
- Set developmental goals for deepening the facilitation skills of experienced instructors
- Use as framework for research on how intercultural teaching competence develops over time
- Give students language to celebrate faculty excellence in teaching and mentorship across cultures

How ITC differs from previous models

- 1) Identifies specific teacher skills, behaviours, and teaching approaches – i.e. not just ability to interact effectively
- 2) ITC is applicable across all disciplines
 - Existing literature has focused primarily on social science classrooms (Deardorff, 2009) where instructors facilitate discussions about identity involving topics

INTERCULTURAL TEACHING COMPETENCE IN THE DISCIPLINES

Research Questions

- How do instructors use intercultural teaching competence in their home disciplines?
- What are the challenges that instructors encounter when they navigate diverse classrooms, difficult content, identity involving issues, or global learning goals in their disciplines?
- How have faculty developed their intercultural teaching competence? What types of learning and teaching experiences allowed them to enrich their skills?

Method

- Theme analysis of focus group data (audio recorded and partially transcribed)

Participants:

- **21 faculty** (8M, 13F; mean age 40-49)
- **9 Faculties** [Arts and Humanities (3), Science (5), Social Science (2), Health Sciences (3), Education (4), Business (2), Information and Media Studies (1), and Engineering (1)]

Sample

- 66% of identified English as their L1
- 47% speak two or more languages
- **61% have lived outside their culture or country of birth for more than six months**
- **38% of participants spent 1-10 years in a culture outside their culture of birth**
- 57% of the participants have taught for over ten years
- 33% have taught for 3-10 years

Findings

Overall trends:

- All 20 competencies represented in data
- Facilitation competencies discussed most frequently

Facilitation Competencies

Most frequently used:

1. facilitating discussion among students with diverse communication styles (#6)
2. encouraging interaction with and among diverse audiences (#11)

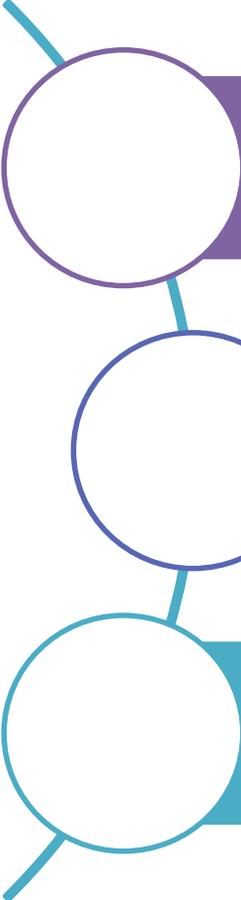
Foundational Competencies

- **Most frequently used:**
 1. being aware of one's own cultural identity/positionality (#1)
 2. accepting and anticipating differences among learners (#2)
- **Not seen as part of teaching role by all:**
 1. modelling non-judgmental approaches to exploring difference (#4)
 2. modelling perspective-taking (#3)

Curriculum Design Competencies

- **Most frequently used:**
 1. facilitating learning activities that promote perspective-taking (#18)
 2. including content representing diverse perspectives in the curriculum (#17)
- **Most challenging to incorporate into their practice:**
 1. designing assessments that validate cultural differences in writing and communication styles (#19)

Major Themes



Positionality

Perspective-taking

Student reflection on their own positionalities

Theme 1: Positionality

- *In my department, the faculty complement is not reflective of the diversity in the classroom. So I have to think of ways to insert diversity in the kinds of readings that I use or the examples I select. But one of the challenges is when I try to infuse learning around working with Indigenous populations and cultural safety: I am not an Indigenous scholar, so I have limits to my own knowledge and understanding.*

(Health Science)

Theme 2: Perspective Taking

- *A lot of my students in Health Science have adopted a very strongly **Western-informed model of individual health**, (“if you exercise and you eat right, then you can be independent and healthy.”) So there is a very individual level of analysis that tends to happen, such as if this person is not feeling well then we need to do this intervention so they can get better.*
- ***What I try to do is problematize ideas of independence.** For example, “Why is independence important? What if there are people for whom this is not a priority? What if they are happy to have their spouse cook all their meals for them and drive them where they need to go?”*

Theme 2: Perspective Taking

- *I help students understand that **these concepts are not neutral: they are culturally informed** and that **they need to situate themselves in relation to those concepts to understand why they believe what they believe**, where those assumptions come from, and what forms those assumptions.*
- *I point out that when you work as a health professional, **you cannot assume that others will share the same values**. When clients are non-compliant, it is not necessarily because they don't want to comply, but because what you are suggesting does not necessarily fit how they want to live their lives.*

(Health Science)

Caveats about Perspective Taking

- *I would be very nervous to encourage my students (my Euro-Canadian students) to occupy an Indigenous perspective. There is a privilege in mobility for Western subjects that enables them to imagine that they could insert themselves into different positions. People from other cultures that have been shaped by legacies of colonialism don't feel that privilege of being able to escape the physical identification as opposed to a universal mobile whiteness and universal mobile English. So for perspective-taking, it would be more, as I understand it, taking into account your cultural perspective and coming to terms with it rather than encouraging an easy kind of mobility of stepping into someone else's perspective. It's more about positionality than perspective-taking.*

(Humanities)

Theme 4: Challenges

1) Individual

- instructor knowledge, comfort

2) Institutional

- disciplinary expectations, structure of programs (graduate level)

3) Ideological

- how to decentre Western epistemologies?
- Unlearning systemic privilege

Strategies

- *For me the big thing is taking the fear out of it. It's not that we are saying you need to teach different content – I know that is scary – adding one more thing to an already full curriculum.*
- *We are asking you to consider different ways of knowing, different ways of participating, different ways of contributing.*
- *I think the work is going to be in trying to identify “simple” tools that don't require knowledge of individual cultures, but are dialogue openers, are questions that allow people to be more inclusive in their classrooms without that deep knowledge of another culture.*

(Education)

Discussion

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Selected References

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