

EDEF 3200 Intercultural Competence Presentation

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Perry, L. & Southwell, L. (2011) Developing intercultural understanding and skills: Models and approaches, *Intercultural Education*, 22:6, 453-466, DOI: 10.1080/14675986.2011.644948.

Summarizer/Visualizer- Keenen

This article is focused on intercultural interactions and competency. The authors Perry and Southwell state that because our world is becoming increasingly globalized interactions among cultures are frequently increasing and becoming interculturally competent will become essential. The article seeks to analyze three main questions: “Firstly, what are the attributes and skills that make a person successful in intercultural interactions and how can they be conceptualized? Secondly, how can they be developed or learned? Thirdly, how can they be measured?” (Perry & Southwell, 2011).

In the first portion of the article, the authors explain intercultural competence as being sectioned into intercultural understanding and intercultural competence. The article then moves on to developing intercultural competencies. The main point here is that cultural knowledge does not mean one has cultural competency. Instead, students must be pushing themselves to look at culture through a critical lens and exam what they think they know about culture/cultures. They give ideas to develop intercultural competencies such as international blogs, travel, special schooling, and studying abroad. The final portion of the article focuses on how intercultural competence can be measured. The authors suggest that it should be measured both qualitatively and quantitatively and that it is important so people can develop certain areas they are lacking.

As a summarizing statement, the authors suggest three areas that they think need further research. They believe that there needs to be a better understanding of how intercultural competency can be developed and come up with more accessible ways to grow and learn. They think that more work needs to be done on assessing the effectiveness of intercultural developing approaches. Lastly, they suggest that there needs to be more work on ways to develop intercultural competency in school-aged children.



Webber/Questioner: Kaylea

Intercultural Understanding:

- The 2 main domains: are cognitive and affective as Keenen mentioned. Cognitive is understanding that there are other cultures and respecting those and showing empathy. Respect and empathy are shown in the other domains and are one of the pieces that tie together all of the different facets of Intercultural Competence.
- Affective: Focuses on the individual's desire and active inquiry of understanding and knowledge. This desire and active learning is another key component that ties together the understanding of the different components of Intercultural Competence.
- Combining the two domains allows for individuals to create intercultural sensitivity, where individuals understand and acknowledge different cultures but are also actively pursuing acceptance and enjoyment of other cultures.

Intercultural Competence:

- Although Intercultural competence is widely used in literature, there is no single definition of what it means. Although, theorists can agree that it encompasses four dimensions: knowledge, attitude, skills, and behaviors. While Intercultural Competence includes these four dimensions, it isn't held back to only four. This topic has been studied by many different theorists who all use their own methods or diagrams but all include the four domains.

Intercultural Communication:

- Once again empathy is highlighted as one of the main words within this section as without empathy to those who are communicating with you an individual cannot start to develop knowledge or understanding. Communication is one of the main forms of sharing and understanding so without patience and the ability to listen one cannot start the process of understanding. In this section, the author also highlights that communication is a team effort rather than an individual skill. This relates to the two quotes selected as they highlight the importance of both roles in conversation.

Intercultural Training:

- “Training of adults” is brought forward which is an interesting talking point for us working our way to becoming teachers as if these individuals need to be trained as adults, what weren't they taught as children? Other points that connect to the other domains are that learning about culture is not enough, individuals need to be interacting and creating a deeper understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of that culture. As well as looking at one's self and self-reflecting and seeing what the prejudices are prevalent.

Learning Intercultural Competence at School:

- So this section of the article connected most to us as future teachers as it labels what needs to happen within the classroom. Most important is that learning cannot be a one-time event, students need to experience the culture as best as possible. Make sure the learning process is through inquiry and experiential learning. As already mentioned, learning about cultures must be a deeper level process of accepting and enjoying rather than a one-off lesson. Orientation of the curriculum and how teachers with the current curriculum have the freedom to incorporate more diversity of cultures and learning for their students. The article connects the learning of intercultural competence with blogs for teachers. Teachers were using blogs to connect students with other students that have different cultures, so learning could take place. Another way to immerse students in culture is through visits abroad where individuals get to not only learn about culture but be immersed in it.

2 Questions:

1. In the conclusion to the article, the author decided that much of the questions posed in the article cannot be answered as further research is needed. If more research is needed in the future what can teachers do in the now?

Although the author doesn't fully give an answer to how to teach Intercultural Competence in classrooms some ideas were presented. Teachers need to be authentic and bring more cultures into the classroom. Allowing students to interact with different ideas, ways of knowing, and languages while giving them enough time to fully explore. As the article showed, just glancing over a culture does not allow for a student to create acceptance or understanding. One idea would be allowing students to explore one culture and become an expert on that culture and do a brief presentation.

2. As classrooms continue to become more diverse in terms of culture, should teachers focus on intercultural training for future workplaces or create more accepting and well-rounded citizens?

Teachers should be focusing on creating more accepting and well-rounded citizens as the knowledge that will be created in the classroom will be transferred into their future workplaces. With students learning early about empathy, awareness of self-identity, and the active desire to understand others' cultures these skills will not have to be trained later on as adults. Therefore making them better employees and better co-workers.

