MODULE 5

Topic 3

Competences and values needed to communicate with different social agents
I. Introduction

II. Intercultural Communicative Competence Model

III. Dimensions

IV. Training of the communicative competences

MODULE 5. Communication and interpreting in contexts of cultural mediation. Topic 3: Competences and values needed to communicate with different social agents.
Introduction

COMMUNICATION is the activity of:

1) Transferring information, interacting with other people and influencing others [Exchange of information (message) from the sender to the receiver through a channel]
2) Co-building meanings through signs.

• There are different WAYS of communication that include:
  – Linguistic or Verbal communication: Words are the signs that represent things.
  – Nonverbal communication: it uses nonverbal signs. It includes the use of sounds, movements, space and time, and even aspects of the materialistic culture (like food, clothes, objects, visual design, architecture)
How do we learn to communicate interculturally?

Even though initially the focus was more on informative perspectives, Michael Byram (1991) created the concept of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) highlighting the importance of training abilities.

The intercultural Communicative Competences are defined as:

«The ability to negotiate cultural meanings and adopt efficient communicative conducts (in contexts of contact between different cultures)»
ICC Models: Byram’s model

Byram’s Intercultural Communicative Competences (1997)

Knowledge (knowing)
- Knowing the practices and beliefs of the own social group and the one of the speaker
- Knowing the group and individual interaction processes

Attitudes (Knowing how)
- Relativising our perspective and value others
- Keeping and open mind and curiosity
- Questioning the mistrust of other cultures and our faith in our own culture.

Interpretation skill (Knowing how to understand)
- Interpreting symbols and events of other cultures.
- Knowing how to explain them and relate them to the ones of the own culture.

Interaction skill (Knowing how to act)
- Skills to acquire knowledge about cultural practices
- Applying the knowledge in a real communication context

Critical cultural thought (Knowing how to get involved)
- Assessing the practices and products of our own culture from different perspectives.
- Identifying evaluation criteria

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### ICC Models: Other models

#### Classification of other models of the Intercultural Communication Spitzberg & Changnon (2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compositional Models</th>
<th>Co-orientational Models</th>
<th>Developmental Models</th>
<th>Adaptational Models</th>
<th>Causal Path Models</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identifying the relevant features of the skills involved in the interaction between different cultural contexts.</strong></td>
<td><strong>It includes concepts related to the communication process. It helps to understand diversity.</strong></td>
<td><strong>It specifies the progression stages (of time) or maturity stages of the ICC. It helps to understand the process till its acquisition.</strong></td>
<td><strong>It shows the interactions in communication. It focuses on the adaptation relations and mutual adjustment.</strong></td>
<td><strong>It shows the relations between the components of the intercultural competence. It expresses related variables.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - Howard Hamilton, Richardson & Shuford (1998)  
- Ting-Toomey & Kurogi Model (1998)  
- Kupka (2008)  
- Meyer (1991)  
- King & Baxter Magolda (2005)  
- Berry, Kim, Power, Young & Bujaki (1989),  
- Ting-Toomey (1999)  
- Imahori & Lanigan (1989)  
- Arasaratnam (2008) |
ICC Models: Other models

INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY MODEL (BENNET, 1986)

This model describes the reactions of individuals when facing cultural differences. And the evolution when cultural sensitivity increases.

DENIAL. Non conscious stage of the cultural differences.

DEFENSE. Being conscious of some cultural differences but feeling intimidated by them and showing rejection.

MINIMISATION. It considers that we are all human beings, and so, we are equals.

ACCEPTANCE. Acknowledgement and tolerance of the differences but insecurity to face them.

ADAPTATION. Competence and experience to face cultural differences.

INTEGRATION. Cultural Identity, being able to understand two or more cultural groups.

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Acquisition process of the intercultural communicative competence.

Meyer (1991). The learner of a foreign language goes through the following stages in intercultural communicative competence:

1. **Monocultural level**: your own culture is seen from the interpretative limits of that same culture.

2. **Intercultural level**: intermediate position between your own culture and the other, which allows to establish the first comparisons between the two.

3. **Transcultural level**: the distance between the cultures in contact is reached in order to mediate between them.
Dimensions of the ICC

The ICC imply the acquisition of knowledge and the development of attitudes and skills in different contexts. Its acquisition entails the transformation of the practices, conducts and the way we establish relations.

- **Cognitive Dimension**
- **Affective-behavioural Dimension**
- **Skills and abilities Dimension**
- **Situational Dimension (contextual-relational)**
People perceived as **culturally informed**: 

1. **Understanding** the values, beliefs, norms, rules and behaviours of other cultures (i.e.: Schwartz Model*)

2. **Knowing and recognising cultural dimensions** that influence the behaviour of different cultural groups to improve intercultural communication (i.e.: Hoefstde and Hall **).

3. **Having mental scripts** to guide intercultural meetings

4. **Owning an open cognitive system**, that is not limited by intercultural communicative barriers (stereotypes, prejudices)
SCHWARTZ’S CULTURAL VALUES AND CULTURAL DISTANCE MODEL

It elaborates a classification of 7 cultural values based on 3 basic matters that define a society. This theory allows to distinguish priority values of individuals of different cultures and their effects on attitudes and conducts.

Main topics related to social problems

Conservation vs Autonomy
Hierarchy vs Equality
Competence vs Harmony
## ICC Dimensions: COGNITIVE

### HOFSTEDE’S 6 DIMENSIONS MODEL

It is used to understand different cultural patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power Distance</td>
<td>Grade of acceptance of the power of institutions. If decentralised power is accepted, there is less distance to power; if there is a great acceptance of a centralised power, then the distance is very long.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism - Colectivism</td>
<td>Grade of expectation that people have in taking care of themselves or, by the contrary, acting as the main member of a group or organisation that takes care of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity - Feminity</td>
<td>Social functioning and masculine values (competition, heroism, rigidity, worrying about materialistic things,...) or feminine values (cooperation, modesty, worrying about life...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty avoidance</td>
<td>Grade of acceptance of a society of uncertainty and risks. Japan is a good example of high avoidance of uncertainty, they take few risks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time perspective</td>
<td>The grade of importance of time; whether worrying about life is something that is important in the long-term, or by the contrary, people prioritise what is urgent. It reflects the conception of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indulgence - Restraint</td>
<td>Grade in which a society controls the wishes and impulses of its citizens. More indulgent societies are less controlling and vice versa.</td>
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## ICC Dimensions: COGNITIVE

### HALL’S CONTEXTUAL MODEL

It addresses the influence of contexts, time management and space in cultures. It distinguishes between cultures that are highly influenced by the context and the ones that are less influenced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultures highly influenced by context</th>
<th>The environment and nonverbal messages are important. The status is more important. Emotion and tradition. Indirect communicative style. Orality. More collaborative and collective perspective. Use of polychromatic time. <em>i.e. Asia, Africa</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultures less influenced by context</td>
<td>Communication focused on verbal language, logic and reasoning. More distance topic-person. More explanations are needed. Use of the monochromatic time. <em>i.e. USA, Europe</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activities to know and assess cultural differences

1. Analysing the differences between CULTURAL VALUES AND PATTERNS of the Spanish and Japanese cultures according to the models of Schwartz, Hofstede and Hall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Spain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural values of Schwartz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimensions of Hoefstde</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Elaborating a COMMUNICATIVE PLAN that adjusts to the identified differences
   - Think to whom is intended (culture, economic and education level...), what are the communicative and cultural particularities
   - Take into account the linguistic and non linguistic differences
   - What are you trying to communicate (objectives) and the type of message (formal and informal, courtesy...)
   - Think about the communicative barriers that you will have to face
ICC Dimensions: AFFECTIVE-BEHAVIOURAL

People perceived as *culturally affective* (motivated and ready to communicate interculturally) present:

1. A tendency to get closer to people of different cultures, also known as cultural proximity. This aspect includes behavioural, affective and motivational aspects. It suggests that if a person has to choose, he/she will be more willing to communicate interculturally. These people express:

   ✓ A wish of knowing.
   ✓ A wish of learning about the other.
   ✓ A wish of breaking cultural barriers.
   ✓ Building their identity according to the other

2. Low anxiety and Intercultural Communication Aprehension (ICA)
Skills are part of the “ACTION” which combines cognitive and affective aspects. They can be classified as:

- **Verbal**: Getting to know the language of a different culture and using it.
- **Nonverbal**: Understanding the kinesic, haptic, paralinguistic, smelling and proxemic codes of a culture.
- **Adoption of roles**: Knowing how to act verbally and non verbally according to roles: teacher-student, employee-employer, man-woman, etc.
Interpreting skills

- Playing with words with different meanings
- Guessing popular sayings from other countries
- Recognising basic gestures of different cultures: greeting, affection, farewell...

Interaction skills (Knowing how)

- Imagining conversations about a topic (i.e. food) inside the same cultural group between different profiles (i.e. mother and son, two women)
- Thinking of nonverbal interaction in different cultural groups, through mimic and gestures

Critical cultural conscious skills (knowing how to get involved)

- Knowing and appreciating musical and artistic representations of different cultures (i.e. musics of the world, architecture of other countries, etc.)
- Telling stories lived in trips
- Valuing different ways of understanding humour in different countries through jokes

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ICC Dimensions: SITUATIONAL-RELATIONAL

Intercultural communication happens in real contexts, and can be affected by factors such as:

1. The environment
2. Previous contact (more contact with people from other cultures will bring more knowledge, comfort and experience)
3. Differences of status (communication methods may need to be modified according to the low, even or high status of the person)
4. Intervention of third parts (all the environment and mood may change if the other person participates in the conversation)
Bibliography and references

References


Bibliography


Stephen M. Croucher, Mélodine Sommier & Diyako Rahmani (2015) Intercultural communication: Where we’ve been, where we’re going, issues we face, Communication Research and Practice, 1:1, 71-87, DOI: 10.1080/22041451.2015.1042422