EDUCATION FOR INTERCULTURAL CITIZENSHIP: Breaking Boundaries and Building Bridges with other Cultures

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“If we are committed to the dream of world peace we must first educate our children and teach them understanding and compassion for other people and cultures”

Liam Neeson
Actor, National Spokesperson
Theoretical Foundations

1) Michael Byram’s (2008) theory of “Intercultural citizenship”: in a world where states are economically and politically interdependent, education for citizenship has to take a wider perspective, involving engagement with people of other forms of life or cultures, and with their language and language games.
2) Geof Alred, Mike Byram, and Mike Fleming (2006): point to the need for an intercultural education that involves questioning the taken-for-granted conventions within which one lives, seeking to empathize with the experience of others, reflecting on the impact of this upon oneself and one’s own identities, allegiances to and experiences of one’s various groups.
3) NBLT (network-based language teaching)

Such technology facilitates the development of real-life conversations, in which learners find themselves as if in a face-to-face interaction with native speakers.

- support learner autonomy (Schwienhorst, 2000)
- foster language awareness (Appel, 1999),
- improve grammatical correctness (Brammerts, 1996)
- develop higher order thinking skills (Lee, 1998)
Citizenship education is about enabling learners to make their own decisions and to take responsibility for their own lives and their communities so that when they leave school or college, they will have full understanding of the political, legal and economic functions of adult society, and with the social and moral awareness to succeed in it.

Ted Huddleston and David Kerr (2006)
Intercultural citizenship education

Geof Alred, Mike Byram, and Mike Fleming (2006) and Byram (2008)

intercultural citizenship = learning democracy (citizenship education) as promoted by Himmelmann (2006) + intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997)
Intercultural Communication

It is a field of study that looks at how people from different cultural backgrounds communicate, in similar and different ways among themselves, and how they endeavor to communicate across cultures

(House-Edmondson, 1986)
Cultural Profiling

1) high context vs. low context;
2) monochronic vs. polychromic;
3) future vs. present vs. past orientation;
4) power distance;
5) Individualism vs. collectivism.

(Hall 1990; Hofstede 1991; Lessem and Neubauer 1994; Lewis 1992; and Trompenaars 1993)
Our purpose through this article is to consider how integrating an intercultural communicative perspective may be complementary to education for citizenship and therefore to suggest that:

‘intercultural citizenship’ is a useful concept for relating national and international citizenship.
Learning Goals

- Attitudes
- Knowledge.
- Skills
Attitudes

1) be interested in the other's experience of daily life and not only what is presented through the media

2) question the values and presuppositions in cultural practices and products in one's own environment

3) experience the different stages of adaptation to and interaction with another culture

4) conform with the conventions and rites of verbal and non-verbal communication and interaction.
Knowledge

1)- learn how to use technology and telecommunications that facilitate interpersonal and cultural partnerships across frontiers.

2)- learn about the causes and process of misunderstanding between interlocutors of different cultural origins.

3)- the processes and institutions of socialization in one's own and one's interlocutor's country.

4)- learn about public or private institutions (health, recreation, financial situation, access to information in the media, access to education) which affect the living conditions of the individual in the two countries.
Skills

1)- identify ethnocentric perspectives in an event and explain their origins.

2)- identify areas of misunderstanding and dysfunction in an interaction and explain them in terms of each of the cultural systems present

3)- grasp and take seriously the opinions and arguments of others, recognize those who have other opinions as people, be able to put oneself in the position of others, accept criticism and listen;

4)- make one’s own opinions (needs, interests, feelings, values) clear, speak coherently, explain clearly;
Learning Activities

-synchronous (real-time videoconferencing, chat) and asynchronous (emails and social networks) communication.
-Interactions (in video or chat) are about:
  - family
  - college and education
  - cultural traditions
  - meaning of life
  - stereotypes and prejudices
-Emails are used to discuss their joint paper about the topic the partner students choose.

Read from the course reader, and make research on the net.
It is an engaged learning and

"By engaged learning, we mean that all student activities involve active cognitive processes such as creating, problem-solving, reasoning, decision-making, and evaluation. In addition, students are intrinsically motivated to learn due to the meaningful nature of the learning environment and activities."

(Kearsley & Shneiderman, 1999: 1).
Evaluation and assessment

- Formative evaluation

  Students are being watched for the duration of the link, both in video or chat connections.

- Summative evaluation

  - Online pre-course survey and a post-survey
  - Joint paper
THANK YOU