

Framework model for intercultural competences

A framework model proposal based on the field research done by the Intercultool partnership during the Work Package 2

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Adjustments made since the meeting

In our research based on the 135 interviews we identified 7 areas where respondents were likely to find difficulties. These *areas* are not areas of professional activities (e.g. management or administration), but different aspects of the day to day human experience, corresponding to a psychological vocabulary. The areas identified were: interaction, relatedness, emotions, identity, physical basics, cognition, knowledge (worldviews, context, social organisation).

The following adjustments have been made to the original model:

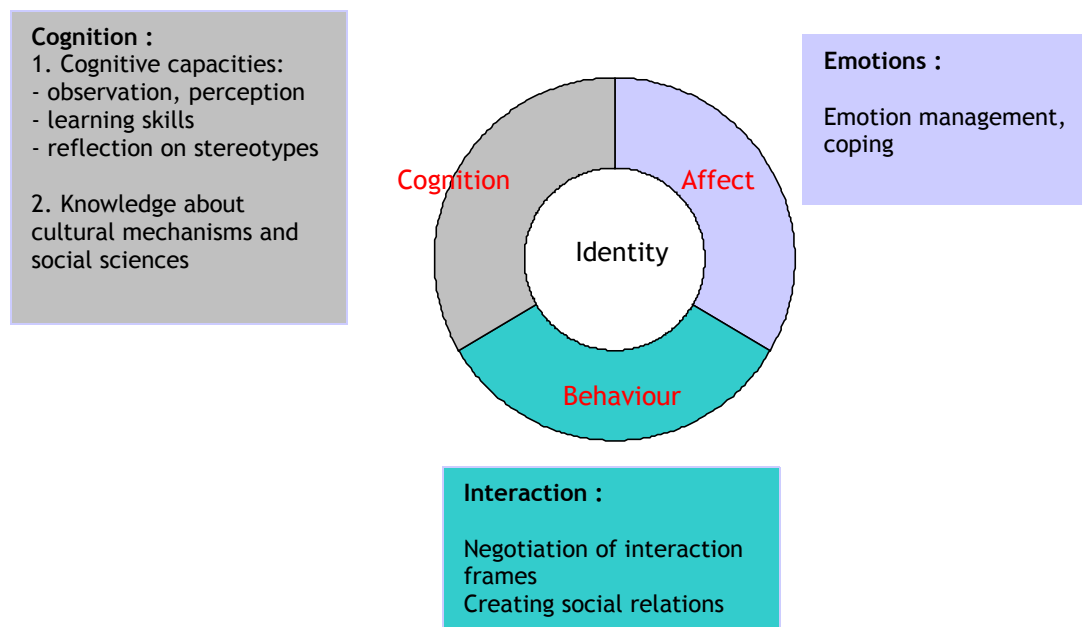
Relatedness - referring to creating relations with others was put under 'interaction'.

The category 'physical basics' was split between identity and worldviews as follows: what refers to own physical appearance is under identity. Questions of hygiene, food etc. are under worldviews.

Cognition and knowledge (the latter involving: worldviews, context, social organisation) are considered as united.

A model of the person - a model of intercultural competences

Many models of intercultural competences group the dimensions of competences into basic categories of psychosocial functioning. Such is the model proposed by the EC Working group on key competences creating a division into skills, knowledge, attitudes). Another widely used categorisation is about differentiating affective, behavioural and cognitive levels. We can harmonize our intercultural competence with such a model. Hence an ABC model of intercultural competences. However, instead of placing identity in the cognitive level, as some authors do (eg. Ward) we'd like to emphasise that identity - the processes and principles of identity - involve all three levels. More than that, identity is also the central element in all intercultural encounters.



Critical areas	Competence definition	Theoretical back-ups
A- affective level		
EMOTIONS (discomfort, confusion, loneliness, stress, frustration, fear etc)	Emotion management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - capacity to cope with stress, anxiety and other negative emotions - capacity to relativise from one's emotions to become able to observe, analyse, interact in a <i>more</i> emotionally neutral state (not acting on the impulse of emotions) 	Matsumoto: Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale Lazarus, Folkman 1984: Coping, Stress, anxiety Ward psychological adjustment Gudykunst Anxiety – uncertainty management theory
B – behavioural level		
INTERACTION – relatedness (comm. efficiency, Comm. Style Rituals, Body language, Creating new relations)	Being able to communicate in a situation where the expected styles of communication, codes / rules / rituals of communication may differ between interaction partners. Capacity to establish social relations with new people. Developing trust, creating a new social network in the new environment.	Rubens Communication competence 1976 Fogel Communication in creative / rigid frames
C – cognitive level		
COGNITION (making sense, Dissonance, Stereotypes)	Capacity to make sense of the situation with an awareness of the built-in psychological biases such as categorisation, stereotypes etc. Being able to build up alternative explanations to the first evaluation often based on attribution mistakes. Mobilising previous knowledge and relying on observation.	Kruglanski: need for cognitive closure Rokeach: open vs. dogmatic thinking Need for cognitive consistency Tolerance of ambiguity Kolb (1984) Learning style inventory
KNOWLEDGE About <i>worldviews</i> (values) <i>Context</i> (legal, technical, historical, econ, etc) <i>Social organisation</i> (gender, hierarchy, community, family)	Awareness of the manifestations, dynamics and varieties of “cultures”. Being prepared to observe and decode the new context, relying on previous knowledge and information on history, geography, politics, sociology, cultural anthropology etc.	Cultural anthropology introductory texts
Identity		
IDENTITY (threats to collective, personal id, self doubt;) (including PHYSICAL BASICS)	Negotiating between different needs attached to identity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognition of personal identity - recognition of group identity - handling threats to group identity (racism, discrimination) - relational function - ontological function Being able to handle unusual physical sensations, exposure to different foods, smells, climates. Handling differences in appearance (one's appearance not fitting to the others' etc)	Hermans - Theory of dialogical self, dialogicality Camilleri: identity strategies Cohen-Emerique: identity threats in intercultural interaction Breakwell 1988: identity threats Pyszczynski, T., Greenberg 2003 Terror management theory Zaharna (1988) self shock Ting-Toomey: facework in intercultural setting

References and further readings

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