

European best practices to support children with high potential and to access training for gifted children with disabilities – Gifted (for) you 2014 - I - RO01 - KA201-002957



Intercultural Communication Theoretical Aspects & Training For Gifted

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Aims

- ▶ To define the basic concepts and terms in intercultural communication
- ▶ To describe and interpret the cultural specifics of different kinds of behavior of gifted
- ▶ To demonstrate specific symbols and culture meanings in different lifestyles of gifted people

Expected Results

- ▶ To share experience of their own culture.
- ▶ To analyze the specific patterns of thoughts, behavior, different concepts of time and space, stereotypes and values of different ethnic groups.
- ▶ To encourage their knowledge of cultural differences and ways to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts in multicultural environment.
- ▶ To increase their cross-cultural awareness and intercultural competence by answering a sequence of questions about various aspects of other cultures.

Expected Results

- ▶ To capture the keys to understanding their own- and others'- ways of doing and saying things.
- ▶ To follow the principles that will expand the boundaries of their world view.
- ▶ To begin to comprehend their own and others' cultural ways in the process of intercultural interaction in today's world and thus to share intercultural wisdom that will be life-changing for all of us.

What is culture?

In reference to Intercultural Communication

- ▶ All characteristics common to a particular group of people, that are learned and not given by nature
- ▶ Culture is communication and communication is sharing of information in codes and symbols (Hall)
- ▶ If culture is learned, that means it can be taught
Cultural Grammar (Hall)
- ▶ "Culture" in the sense of "growth" (a human transformation of nature) gives us a basic understanding of the concept of culture

Cultural dimensions

- ▶ **Patterns of Thought** - common ways of thinking, where thinking includes factual beliefs, values, norms and emotional attitudes
- ▶ **Patterns of Behavior** - common ways of behaving, from ways of speaking to ways of conducting commerce and industry, where the behavior can be intentional/ unintentional, aware/ unaware or individual/ interactive
- ▶ **Patterns of Artifacts** - common ways of manufacturing and using material things, from pens to houses, where artifacts include dwellings, tools, machines or media (usually given special attention in museums)

Cultural Dimensions

- ▶ Imprints in nature - the long lasting imprints left by a group in the natural surroundings
- ▶ Patterns of thought and patterns of behavior are used in all human activities in everyday life
- ▶ Most of the activities also include patterns of artifacts
- ▶ Ecologically important activities also involve imprints in nature
- ▶ When a particular activity lastingly combines several of these traits, the activity is referred to as institutionalized and it is thus a **social institution**

Culture and Subculture

- ▶ One or more of the culture characteristics are lastingly connected with a certain group of people.
- ▶ The groups are often associated with national states - French culture, Bulgarian culture, etc.
- ▶ But it doesn't necessarily have to be a national group. It may be any group at all that is distinguishable over a longer period of time - teenage culture, working-class culture, the culture of the city of Sofia, etc.

IDENTITY

- ▶ Individual Identity - name, appearance, physical and mental abilities
- ▶ Social Identity - combines characteristics of the social group (family, profession, age etc.)
- ▶ Cultural Identity - a part of social identity, consists of **cognitive** (knowledge of own culture, history, traditions, rules and values) and **emotional** (emotional evaluation of belonging to the certain culture and its representatives)

Social Identity and Ethnicity

It is important to make difference between social/cultural identity and ethnic identity

- ▶ **Social Identity** - a number of properties and relations around which individual persons organize their lives. People construct their social identity by regarding a part of these properties and relations as decisive for who they are - age, sex, family position, profession, political ideology, religious belief, regional residence or national affiliation, etc.
- ▶ **Ethnic group** - certain of it's cultural characteristics are used to socially and politically organize it and this organization is allowed to continue for a relatively long period of time. The group's ethnicity is comprised of those traits which have politically cohesive power.

Stereotype and Generalization

- ▶ **Stereotype** - all members of culture or group share the same characteristics. It can be attached to any assumed indicator of a group membership - race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national culture.
- ▶ *Positive* stereotype - the shared characteristics are respected by the observer
- ▶ *Negative* stereotype - the shared characteristics are disrespected by the observer
- ▶ **Cultural Generalization** - avoidance of stereotypes by maintenance of the idea of preponderance of belief. Nearly all possible beliefs are represented in all cultures at all times, but each different culture has a preference for some beliefs over others

Stereotype and Generalization

Based on generalization two other stereotypes could be defined:

- ▶ Deductive stereotype - assumption that abstract cultural generalizations apply to every single individual in the culture.

U.S. Americans as a group are more individualistic than Japanese. But the person with whom you are communicating may be deviant.

- ▶ Inductive stereotype - generalizing from too small of a sample

We may inappropriately assume some general knowledge about Mexican culture based on having met one or a few Mexicans.

Communication

- Sharing of information between people on different levels of awareness and control.
- **Monocultural communication** is similarity based (common language, behavior patterns, values, etc.). It allows people to predict the responses of others to certain and of messages and take for granted some basic shared assumptions about the nature of reality.



Intercultural communication

Intercultural communication –
(difference based) (*different languages,
behavior patterns, values, etc.*).

Communication **between people of
different cultures.**

The assumption of similarity is
inappropriate and the consideration of
difference is encouraged.



Intercultural communication

Sharing of information on different levels of awareness and control between people with different cultural backgrounds, which include both national cultural differences and differences which are connected with participation in different activities that exist within a national unit.

Communication behavior

The communication behavior could be divided into:

- Individual - behavior produced by a single individual
- Interactive - behavior that requires the interaction and/ or cooperation of several individuals

Intercultural communication on individual level

The individual level consists in the following 4 aspects:

- Body movements
- Sound and Writing
- Vocabulary and Phraseology
- Grammar

Body movements

- There are great differences in how people in different cultures communicate with their bodies.
- The largest differences concern the use of hands to convey different meanings

For example, the gestures for money, great, come here, etc.

Sound and Writing

- ***sound units or phones*** - the store of least meaning
- ***intonation or melody*** - indicates biological, social and regional identity; indicates rhythm and tone; indicates what units belong together in meaning; indicates feelings and attitudes. For most people they are on the low level of awareness and are a great risk for incorrect interpretations

Writing

- *ideographic* - each written unit in principle expresses a morpheme
- *sound based* - phonemic (based on phonemes) and syllabic (based on syllables).



Vocabulary and phraseology

Grammar

- Vocabulary - the words and phrases of everyday life mirror the needs, values and attitudes
- Phraseology - standardized phrases and metaphors that express wisdom about life
- Grammar - the inflection, derivation and syntactic patterns that exist in the language.
- A way to classify language is based on the basic word order in statements between subject, verb and object.

Communication partners

In order to establish the differences between communication partners of gifted we need to:

- Take into account different communication behaviors of gifted
- Take into account what can influence these types of behavior
- Try to analyze the differences between linguistic and cultural communities

Intercultural communication on individual level

All four aspects of the linguistic behavior can be viewed from two main perspectives:

- the perspective of the ***sender and***
- the perspective of the ***receiver***

Sender

- **The sender or speaker** must produce a message that the receiver or listener can perceive and understand.
- In order to express the message, the sender must simultaneously plan, maintain control of and produce the message at all 4 dimensions
- The control cannot be at high level of awareness for all dimensions, so pre-existing "programmed, automatic subroutines" are used.
- Among these routines there are pronunciation, body movements and grammar, while the choice of words has the lowest level of authenticity.

Receiver

The receiver's inner activity is at least as **great** as **the speaker's and includes:**

- *Influence* - processing of the information **without a high** degree of awareness and control
- *Perception* - apprehension of information, e.i. that information is also consciously registered by the receiver through their 5 senses
- *Understanding* - some of the information. In order to put the information into a meaningful context, a person must have already stored a certain amount of information - understanding requires pre- understanding
- *Other reactions* - emotional and attitudinal reactions, that are result of norms and values

Intercultural Communication

on interactive level

The following characteristics should be taken into consideration:

- *Interaction sequences*
- *Turn-taking*
- *Feedback*
- *Spatial configurations*

Interaction sequences

- **Specific type** of communication can often go through a number of distinct stages - you begin, continue and complete a communicative interaction in a certain way

but

- The patterns by all means are different from one culture to another.

Turn-taking

- How the right to speak is distributed - who speaks with whom, for how long, about what, when and in which way
- Speed of talk and tolerance of silence
- Rights and obligations concerning turn-taking - determined to a great extent by a person's social role

Feedback

- The processes through which the speaker receives information from the listener about the way which the listener has perceived, understood and reacted to what the speaker has said.
- All languages have both verbal and non-verbal (body movement) ways to develop and give feedback.

Spatial configurations

- Closeness and physical contact between persons in a conversation
- Generally, they depend on the sex/gender and type of situation, but in all cultures the physical space is a basic consideration.



Influencing factors in Intercultural communication

Individuals

- Their sex/gender, age and possible disabilities
- Their focus of identity - determines to a great extent their attitudes, norms and values and also color their behavior in different activities
- The information about the surrounding world

Influencing factors in Intercultural communication Activity

- *Purpose* - the goal the activity is meant to achieve. It could be more or less specified
- *Roles* - associated with the participants in the activity. Each role has its own rights and obligation during the activity.
- *Artifacts* - communication aids and media
- *Physical circumstances* - noise level, light level, space, temperature, furniture, distance between sender and receiver

Problems and consequences

- Lack of understanding - failure to interpret parts of or all of what the other person is saying or doing. It may be conscious or unconscious
- Misunderstanding - one actually makes an interpretation but this interpretation is inadequate or incorrect
- Emotional reactions and actions

Cultural adaptation

The development of intercultural sensitivity includes the following 6 stages:

- Denial - the person is unable to construe cultural differences in complex ways and he/she lives in relative isolation, either by happenstance or by choice
- Defense - the people have more ability to construe cultural difference, but they attach negative evaluations to it. They combat the threat of change by attaching negative* stereotypes to other and positive to themselves.

Cultural adaptation

- Minimization - people try to bury cultural differences within already familiar categories of physical and philosophical similarity. They recognize and accept superficial cultural differences such as eating customs, but they assume that deep down all people are essentially the same - just human.
- Acceptance - people enjoy recognizing and exploring cultural differences. They are aware that they themselves are cultural beings. They are fairly tolerant to ambiguity and are comfortable knowing there is no one right answer.

Cultural adaptation

Adaptation - people use knowledge about their own and others' cultures to intentionally shift into a different cultural frame or reference. They can empathize or take another person's perspective in order to understand and be understood across cultural boundaries. They can modify their behavior in ways that make it more appropriate to cultures other than their own. Advanced forms of adaptation are bicultural or multicultural, wherein people have internalized one or more cultural frames in addition to that in which they were originally socialized. They can completely shift their cultural frame of reference without much conscious effort.



Cultural adaptation

Integration - people are attempting to reconcile the sometimes conflicting cultural frames that they have internalized. In the transition to this stage some people become overwhelmed by the cultures they know and are disturbed that they can no longer identify with any one of them.


Interculturality and Signusage

- Signs are very important elements of intercultural communication. They are indicators of similarity of cultures and subcultures, but also express significant differences in them. The science which studies signs is called Semiotics.
- The basic types of signs are as follows:

Signs...

- **Icons, Indexes and Symbols**

- **Icon** - An Icon sign is a sign that resembles something, such as photographs of people. An icon can also be illustrative or diagrammatic, for example a 'no-smoking' sign.

- **Index**  Index signs is a sign where there is a direct link between the sign and the object. The majority of traffic signs are Index signs as they represent information which relates to a location (eg, a 'slippery road surface' sign placed on a road which is prone to flooding)



Signs...

- **Symbol** - A symbol has no logical meaning between it and the object. Unfortunately the web is littered with bad examples of this type of sign, but there are good one's - a homepage icon which is a house for example. Other off screen symbols which may help explain the difference are flags. Flags are symbols which represent countries or organizations. Again, the crossover to design and branding is very evident in these signs.



Nn

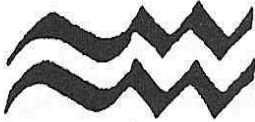


B

Signs...

- Signage systems are as important as the individual signs. Collective meaning and overall association are the elements that make signage systems work (next time you're in an airport, have a look at the signage system!)



They are...

	SIMILARITY	CONTIGUITY
FACTUAL	 ICON	 INDEX
IMPUTED	 SYMBOL (Motif)	<i>['wɔtə]</i> SYMBOL (Artifice)



This sign might mean

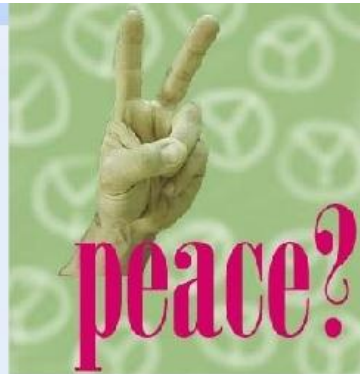
- **"OK" in the United States**
- **"money" in Japan**
- **"sex" in Mexico**
- **"homosexual" in Ethiopia**
- **an obscenity in Brazil**
- **"Zero" in Southern France**



V for Victory



Winston Churchill
gives the victory sign
at a political rally,
Liverpool, 1951



The "V" for victory that Winston Churchill used (with the palm facing outward, same as the American sign for "peace"), when the palm is reversed, it means something else...

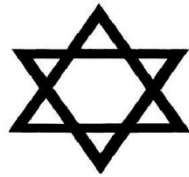
If a person used two fingers to order two beers in a British pub.. it has insulting connotations...

2

the two fingers in a 1st grade math class may refer to the number "two"



Signs are sometimes ambivalent and combinative...



SYMBOL



SYMBOL/INDEX



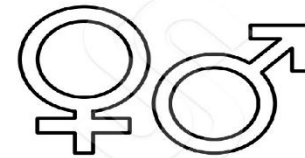
ICON



ICON/INDEX/SYMBOL



INDEX/SYMBOL



SYMBOL



ICON



INDEX



SYMBOL/INDEX

Conclusion

- Intercultural perspective offers more than an effective way to analyze interaction and facilitate adaptation.
- Intercultural communication envisions a reality which will support the simultaneous existence of unity and diversity and of consensus and creative conflict in multicultural societies.