

**Intercultural Competence Past, Present and Future:  
Respecting the Past, Problems in the Present and Forging  
the Future by María Dolores López-Jiménez & Jorge  
Sánchez-Torres (Eds.)**

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## **Intercultural Competence Past, Present and Future: Respecting the Past, Problems in the Present and Forging the Future**

María Dolores López-Jiménez & Jorge Sánchez-Torres (Eds.)

Singapore, Springer, 2021, 280 pp., ISBN: 978981158245-5 (93,08 €, eBook)

Cultural globalization and mobility have created interculturality (interpersonal relationships between groups of people of various nationalities and cultures) where individuals from different cultural canons interact with one another. This intercultural encounter inevitably requires intercultural competence (IC) in which temporal discourses, such as the past, the present, and the future socio-historically reconstruct what interculturality means and how IC should be harnessed to fruitfully engage in productive intercultural encounters. Given the growing importance of IC, it is critical to incorporate the cultural dimension in second language (L2) teaching and learning to support students' intercultural competence development. This book titled "Intercultural Competence Past, Present and Future: Respecting the Past, Problems in the Presence, and Forging the Future" offers new insight into the intertwined relationship between culture, interculturality, and intercultural competence in L2 education.

This volume consists of 12 chapters, arranged into an introductory section followed by two interconnected parts: "Respecting the Past and Problems in the Present" and "Forging the Future" and closes with an epilogue. In Chapter 1, "Introduction and Overview," López-Jiménez and Sánchez-Torres try to help readers understand IC by defining the terms "culture" and "interculturality" and showing how they relate to each other.

The first part, "Respecting the Past and Problems in the Present" addressing contentious issues such as the evolution of intercultural competence practices and different approaches from the past to the present is begun with chapter 2, "Language Learning Motivation and Interculturality of Australian Community/Heritage Language (CHL) Learners." In this chapter, Stracke examines how heritage language (HL) learning occurs within the context of interculturality. Since research on HL learning shows that the way a community passes on a language to future generations is critical to its survival, he explicates how the L2 motivational self-system can be used as a guide for young and adolescent Australian CHL learners. Chapter 3, "Intermittent Second-Language Intensification in the Host Culture: An Ethnographic Case Study of a Heritage Speaker in a Study-Abroad Program," by Abello-Contesse evaluates how a full-year American sojourner can interact with the host community to improve his second language and culture abilities. This study shows adapting to the language and cultural dynamics of living

abroad is individual, complex, multidimensional, and time-consuming. Furthermore, it reveals how complete sociolinguistic immersion may be the exception rather than the rule.

In chapter 4, “Problems for Teachers of Culturally Diverse Classes: Investigating Strategies and Activities to Embed Intercultural Metalanguage in an Australian 'Internationalized' University Context,” Lubbers is particularly interested in the issues of marginalization and alienation faced by international students, the majority of whom are from Asian countries. Aiming to investigate how critical intercultural awareness integration and communicative competence development affect students in Australian tertiary institutions, this study shows the strikingly individual, complex, multidimensional, and time-consuming nature of adapting to the language and cultural dynamics of life abroad, which combines factors in the student's background—particularly emotional ones—with unique aspects of the experience in the location abroad. Chapter 5, “Exploring the Relationship Between Teacher Confirmation and Student Motivation: The United States and Finland”, by Croucher, Rahmani, Galy-Badenas, Zeng, Albuquerque, Attarieh, and Nshom reports how teachers communicate to students that they are endorsed, recognized, and acknowledged as valuable individuals and how this relates to students’ motivation and state receiver apprehension (apprehension associated with the reception of messages). They also look at the adverse and demotivating effects of school exclusion and low self-esteem.

In chapter 6, “Intercultural Barriers to Feedback in Study Abroad Settings”, Boyd and Donnarumma analyse how feedback is perceived and managed based on students' cultural background, norms and teachers' views and understanding of feedback. They also examine whether cultural variations affect the effectiveness of feedback and how much input improves international students' academic learning. Finally, generated through mixed methods research, Oranje in chapter 7, “Intercultural Language Teaching: On Reflection” delves into the cognition and practices of New Zealand school language teachers concerning teaching culture. Her study reveals that modelling and reflecting on one's own culture is a critical component of an intercultural language teaching (ILT) approach, essential for intercultural communicative competence (ICC).

The second part (Forging the Future) is mainly concerned with prominent IC-related aspects that will emerge in the future. To begin with, chapter 8, “Attitudes Toward English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) among Prospective EFL Teachers in Spain” by Chacón-Beltrán reveals that English teachers’ awareness and positive attitude toward ELF are due to their assumption that they will predominantly communicate with non-native speakers throughout their careers. They

recognize the value of teaching ELF for instrumental purposes without a strong cultural connection and see the benefits of learning English for intercultural communication only when interacting with non-native speakers of the language who use ELF. In chapter 9, "How Critical Has Intercultural Learning and Teaching Become? A Diachronic and Synchronic View of "Critical Cultural Awareness" in Language Education), Guilherme and Sawyer introduce the readers to new debates on "critical cultural awareness" in intercultural learning and teaching as an attempt to make language education professionals aware of the current trajectory of dominant language education policies, research, and teaching/learning. They argue that those teachers are given insufficient time to think, let alone deepen and mature their ideas, because they are enticed by the surface of things, by the brightness of the new, and they abandon important ideals that they have not sufficiently explored but could prove indispensable.

Chapter 10, "Building an Online Community to Contest Stereotyping and Otherization During Study Abroad" presents Jackson's report on participants' evolving awareness of stereotyping and the negative implications of social categorization through a case study of the online course intercultural communication and involvement abroad. Chapter 11, "Promoting Intercultural and Visual Media Competence in the Foreign Language Classroom with the Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media" by Méndez-García and Lindner explains the rationale for using the autobiography of intercultural encounters through visual media (AIEVM) in the foreign language education classroom and language teacher training and describes how it is used in the aforementioned online exchange. Finally, in chapter 12, "Intercultural Competence and Parsnip: Voices from Australian English Teachers," Dinh and Siregar investigate teachers' perspectives on Pork, Alcohol, Religion, Sex, Narcotics, Isms, and Politics (PARSNIP) and intercultural competence within their existing curriculum. More specifically, they explore the responses of English teachers in Australia to PARSNIP and the extent to which PARSNIP has been and should be incorporated into their teaching to develop intercultural competence.

Written by a team of 21 authors from 12 countries, this volume offers a truly global viewpoint on various aspects of intercultural dialogue outside the classroom in real-world contexts, employing diverse language codes such as World Englishes and ELF. This book's strengths include the combination of rigorous and engaging theories and their classroom applications and implications through a plethora of practical examples; the investigation of the relationship between language and culture through a complex array of analytical frameworks ranging from applied linguistics to psychology and sociology, and the use of innovative tools and

methodologies such as feedback as a pedagogical tool, online community for pedagogical interventions, and visual media as a teaching resource; and the inclusion of new topics in the field of IC in L2 teaching that were previously either absent or simplified in academic and professional discussions, such as heritage languages and motivation, intercultural metalanguage and metaunderstandings, 'third culture'/'third place' and cultural hybridity, stereotyping and otherization.

Despite the diversity of debatable intercultural issues, this book does not come without limitations. As a textbook claimed to be "... resources and guidance [for language teachers] to teach IC concerning the existing research and frameworks of reference, while respecting the complex nature and role of IC in language teaching" (p. 16), it seems to neglect one crucial aspect of language learning, namely assessment. Since the goal of IC pedagogy is to prepare our students to be global citizens, this volume should not leave assessment behind for at least two reasons: *first*, to predict whether they have the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in intercultural interactions; and *second*, to provide us, as educators, feedback on whether our intercultural instruction is meeting the educational goals outlined in the curricula.

As Deardorff (2016) contends that "language fluency is necessary but in itself insufficient to represent intercultural competence" (p.86), this book may serve as a tremendous teaching resource for language teachers who wish to train their students to become global citizens and function more successfully in today's integrated world system by providing them with the necessary intercultural communicative competence. In addition, this book brings new insights and knowledge to all readers, professors, teachers, students, and researchers concerned with the study of interculturality.

## References

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