Cultural identity and intercultural competence
A literature review
February 2016
Context

This literature review has been prepared by Vanessa Christoph, with contributions from Bruno della Chiesa, Georgette Small, Ben Hren and Latifa Hassanail.

Vanessa Christoph is a German Educational Sociologist and Independent Consultant, and an Associate Researcher with Research Schools International, a project of Harvard Graduate School of Education faculty members. Having grown up in Southern Africa and having lived and worked in several countries, she has had to learn new languages and to adapt to diverse cultural contexts more than once. This experience has led her to develop her particular research interests in non-native language learning, the development of global awareness and intercultural competences, as well as the education of migrants and their integration into host societies.

Through its Centre for Inspiring Minds, ACS Doha International School, in Qatar, has initiated work on a new practitioner-led action research project. The project will investigate how building a working understanding of the academic language and concepts associated with cultural identity and intercultural empathy can enhance 15-year-olds skills and dispositions for exploring individual identity and intercultural empathy, and their role in nurturing respectful intercultural relationships.

In order to contribute to the study design, the purpose of this literature review is to:

- Define cultural identity and intercultural competence in the context of secondary education
- Identify relevant frameworks or models for addressing cultural identity and intercultural competence in secondary schools
- Describe interventions that have been used in secondary schools
- Identify methods for assessing students' understanding and abilities associated with cultural identity, and intercultural competence and empathy
- List key resources for ongoing self-study

Benedict Hren
Head of the Centre for Inspiring Minds
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1 Please note that no recommendations will be made in terms of “best practices”; as this notion is problematic in (almost) any domain, even more so when talking about international/intercultural matters.
Definitions

The world’s greatest problems [...] result from people in the world - from different cultures, races, religions, and nations- being unable to get along and to work together to solve the world’s intractable problems. (Banks, 2004)

In a globalizing world, it has become indispensable to educate students to develop intercultural competencies and global awareness that will enable them to become open-minded, tolerant and welcoming towards people of other cultural backgrounds, putting aside prejudice and stereotypes, and enabling them to cooperate by respecting each other’s views. Furthermore, according to (J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004), as cited by (Janet M. Bennett, 2009), the development of intercultural competence may also be a prerequisite for addressing issues of race, class and gender. On another note, (Pederson, 1997) found that students’ level of empathy was related to their level of intercultural sensitivity.

We must however be aware that it is impossible to convey intercultural competence for every specific culture. Rather, general frameworks allow for a general understanding and consciousness of cultural differences that enable us to become alert to recognizing cultural specificities that we need to take into consideration in any given intercultural situation.

Cultural Identity
A first step in achieving this is certainly for students to learn to identify their own cultural identities. della Chiesa (della Chiesa, 2012a) argues that, for any given individual, there cannot be a real global awareness without self-awareness, and no real self-awareness arises without global awareness: the construction of identity depends on the perceptions and representations of alterity or "otherness"; hence, depending on what sort of (sub-, supra- or trans-) cultural sets the individual primarily identifies with (i.e., feels a sense of belonging to), he will see himself first of all as a human being or, conversely, as a member of smaller, narrower groups (della Chiesa, 2012a.b).

In order for education systems to support their students in identifying their own cultural identities, we first need to define the “sets” or categories that comprise this identity. For (Hofstede, 2009) “culture is about mutual expectations of morally acceptable behavior”, making it essential for everyone to be aware of their own cultural biases and values. In 1871, Edward Burnett Tylor defined culture as “that complex whole
which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other
capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor,
1920 [1871]: 1). According to (Erikson, 1950), the development of one’s
identity includes both the personal identity and that of the social group(s)
one belongs to. Definitions of cultural identity may vary, but generally it is
seen as “the definition of groups or individuals (by themselves or others)
in terms of cultural or subcultural categories, including ethnicity,
nationality, language, religion, and gender (Chandler & Munday, 2011),
social class or economic status, education and profession, generation or
age, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, locality, “or any other
kind of social group that has its own distinct culture” (Ennaji, 2005) and
that “generates identifiable patterns” (J.M. Bennett & Bennett, 2003),
which are so to speak the factors that underlie the development of the
components of this “complex whole” in Tylor’s definition of culture.

Experts on interculturality have defined specific cultural values and beliefs
that influence our individual and collective identities. How these values (if
at all) are perceived by and incorporated in each society or culture varies
greatly, and their presentation also depends on the biases and
experiences of the authors (see also (Schwartz, Zamboanga, & Weisskirch,
2008).

Hofstede (2009), from a rather Western point of view for instance, defines
five dimensions that describe basic value orientations and mindsets of
societies that we need to be aware of in intercultural situations; these
should always be seen in combination to each other instead of just
individually:

Identity: the levels of interdependency and of individualism vs.
collectivism explain issues such as strong family or social bonds, and is an
indication of a general level of trust within groups.

Hierarchy: power relations (professional or social) associated with the
rather hierarchical or egalitarian structure of a culture influence behaviors
between actors.

Gender: gender roles not only define the relationships between genders,
but more generally influence whether the focus is put on trustworthiness
and stratification (masculine societies) or rather on morality (feminine
cultures).

Anxiety: levels of welcoming uncertainty and unexpected events,
emotional displays and handling basic stress levels, or engaging in
situations without clearly defined rules, or the confrontation with taboos
differ depending on the culture.
Gratification: expressing, seeking and fulfilling desires and needs may be morally good or inacceptable depending on the cultural context, with consequences for short or long-term commitments or opportunities.

Non-Western scholars stress and add the following values to be essential in certain societies. For Africa, (Nwosu, 2009) generalizes the following: in African societies, there is a strong consensus and common framework-seeking principle (Ubuntu). Social relations, hospitality and friendly dispositions are highly valued and identity is largely defined by who one is in relationship to others, as expressed in the proverb “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am” (Obeng-Quaido, 1986), as cited by Nwosu, 2009). Patience and tolerance, as well as mutual sympathy and acceptance are important, and the relationships to the spiritual and/or metaphysical worlds needs to be acknowledged in many situations. Also verbal and non-verbal communication forms and styles vary greatly between cultures, the latter of which is often not sufficiently taken into account. The relationships to time and to work are other aspects that are not to be taken lightly – especially by Westerns for whom generally “time is money”.

Indians may add other values still that are particular to their cultural context and that influence society (Manian & Naidu, 2009), such as the caste system, belief in supernatural principles (such as good or bad times to do something specific), and the belief in fatalism and destiny, leading the majority of Indians “to change what can be changed, accept what cannot, and have the wisdom to know the difference”. The matter of “face” is not only essential in India, but also in Japan for instance, where attention needs to be paid particularly on protecting people’s reputation and how to treat people in public. One’s attitude towards avoiding or seeking conflict is another point that is culturally biased.

The importance of relationships and that “significance, meaning and purpose of communication are derived from relationships” (Zaharna, 2009) is not only embedded in Arab, but in various other non-Western cultures (e.g., Chinese, Vietnamese).

Chen and An (2009) summarize different paradigmatic assumptions of Eastern (Asian) and Western competences, as described in the diagram at the top of page 6.
In terms of Arab culture and identity, it is extremely problematic to generalize these across the whole Arab World, due to the distinct nature of the states’ cultures and national identities, their histories and their role on the international stage. In the context of this study, it may therefore be more reasonable to focus on religion (even though not all Arabs are Muslim, of course) rather than more generally on Arab cultural systems. As “religious texts, especially in Islam, profoundly influence social and cultural life” (Abu Zeid, 1999), careful consideration of the role of religious beliefs and their associated values, ethics and social behaviours would be something to take into account in the international, multicultural classroom when it comes to discussing and developing intercultural awareness and competencies.

These few examples show how complex cultural differences in perception, values and beliefs can be and how difficult it is therefore to correctly interpret other people’s behavior or to behave adequately in different cultural settings. In order to be able to do so, or at least to avoid too many misunderstandings and mishaps, we need to develop intercultural competences.
Intercultural Competence

The definition of intercultural competence is more complex (just like defining “culture” and “competence” per se (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009), as there is hardly any agreement among experts on interculturality on how intercultural competence should be defined, “due presumably to the difficulty of identifying the specific components of this complex concept” (D. Deardorff, 2006). In order to move the discussion forward, (D. Deardorff, 2006) conducted a study to document consensus among top scholars in the field and academic administrators on what constitutes intercultural competence and the best ways to measure it.

The following definitions of intercultural competence received a (very) strong consensus:

- “Ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes
- Ability to shift frame of reference appropriately and adapt behavior to cultural context; adaptability, expandability, and flexibility of one’s frame of reference/filter
- Ability to identify behaviors guided by culture and engage in new behaviors in other cultures even when behaviors are unfamiliar given a person’s own socialization
- Behaving appropriately and effectively in intercultural situations based on one’s knowledge, skills, and motivation
- Ability to achieve one’s goals to some degree through constructive interaction in an intercultural context
- Good interpersonal skills exercised interculturally; the sending and receiving of messages that are accurate and appropriate
- Transformational process toward enlightened global citizenship that involves intercultural adroitness (behavioral aspect focusing on communication skills), intercultural awareness (cognitive aspect of understanding cultural differences), and intercultural sensitivity (focus on positive emotion toward cultural difference).

The study also identified specific components of intercultural competence:

- “Understanding others’ worldviews
- Cultural self-awareness and capacity for self-assessment
- Adaptability and adjustment to new cultural environment
- Skills to listen and observe
- General openness toward intercultural learning and to people from other cultures
- Ability to adapt to varying intercultural communication and learning styles
• Flexibility
• Skills to analyze, interpret, and relate
• Tolerating and engaging ambiguity [tolerance for ambiguity\(^2\) is “the ability to be in a situation that is unclear and not become overly anxious but to determine patiently what is appropriate as the dimensions of situations and conditions become apparent” (Pusch, 2009): 69]
• Deep knowledge and understanding of culture (one’s own and others’)
• Respect for other cultures
• Cross-cultural empathy
• Understanding the value of cultural diversity
• Understanding of role and impact of culture and the impact of situational, social, and historical contexts involved
• Cognitive flexibility [the ability to create new categories; to avoid stuffing new information into old, preset categories; being open to new information; being aware of more than one perspective, and becoming aware of how we interpret messages and situations differently than others (Pusch, 2009): 69]
• Sociolinguistic competence (awareness of relation between language and meaning in societal context) Mindfulness [being cognitively aware of our own communication and the process of interaction with others (Pusch, 2009): 69]
• Withholding judgment
• Curiosity and discovery
• Learning through interaction
• Ethnoretative\(^3\) view
• Culture-specific knowledge and understanding host culture’s traditions”.

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2 Even though a conventional term in the intercultural field, “ambiguity” is rather ambiguous.
3 As opposed to “ethnocentric”. - however, the term seems not well chosen, as relative is usually not the contrary to centric, and the concept of relativity is problematic as such (and culturally biased).
Developmental models of intercultural competence

Based on these definitions and components, (D. Deardorff, 2006) developed the following compositional Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence that includes motivation (requisite attitudes), cognition (knowledge and comprehension) and skills as well as context as a necessary basis to develop desired internal outcomes (in the form of adaptability, flexibility, an “ethnorelative” view and empathy), and external outcomes (in the form of adequate and effective communication and behavior in intercultural situations).

There are several frameworks and models that describe the development of intercultural competencies, but that often contain a (strong) Western bias and whose cross-cultural validity and generality have hardly been tested. These models, of which the most relevant for ACS’ current topic are briefly described below, can be categorized into i) developmental models, in which competence evolves over time through ongoing
interaction and relationships and that identify stages of progression (Deardorff’s model above is part of this category); ii) compositional models that describe components of competence without usually specifying their relationships; iii) co-orientational models that conceptualize interactional achievement of intercultural understanding; iv) adaptational models that are based on interaction between several actors and emphasize the interdependence of these actors through mutual adjustment; and v) causal-path models that reflect interrelationships among components and can easily be transformed into testable propositions (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). The following developmental models may guide curriculum development and training in the classroom.

One of the most prominent and influential models is certainly Milton Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (J.M. Bennett & Bennett, 2003), a framework to explain the sequence of development of cognitive structures (in terms of worldview) in becoming interculturally competent, depending on personal intercultural experiences. The “underlying assumption of the model is that as one’s experience of cultural difference becomes more sophisticated, one’s competence in intercultural relations increases”. The model is comprised of 6 stages, the first three being ethnocentric, the last three “ethnorelative”.

In the Denial stage, one’s own culture is experienced as the only “real” culture; cultural differences are not experienced or noticed at all, or are only very vague. In the Defense stage, people become aware of and experience cultural difference (mainly through stereotypes), but consider their own culture as superior to all others and divide the world into “us and them”, while perceiving other cultures as a threat. In Minimization, elements of one’s own cultural worldview are experienced as universal and cultural differences are neutralized by incorporating differences into
familiar categories. However tolerant people in this stage may be, they cannot appreciate other cultures because they are not aware enough of their own culture. In order to be able to move into the “ethnorelative” stages, people need to develop their cultural self-awareness and understand that cultural identity is also influenced by context. Without this understanding, it is impossible to consider alternatives to one’s original cultural beliefs.

In the first stage of “ethnorelativism“, Acceptance, one’s own culture is experienced as just one of many equally complex worldviews. Other people are experienced as different, but as equally human. Culture-general categories are constructed permitting people to identify how cultural differences operate in diverse interactions. In Adaptation, other cultural worldviews are integrated into one’s own following more intensive contact with a different culture. Feelings and behaviors can be expressed appropriately in different cultural contexts leading to the basis of bi- or multi-culturality. Once people reach the Integration stage, they are able to move in and out of different cultural situations, settings and worldviews without difficulty. Identities are construed at the margins of two or several cultures, thus loosening bonds with just one (original) culture. People in this stage are “intentionally flexible in their movements among cultural contexts” (J.M. Bennett & Bennett, 2003).

Another model, especially adapted to people living abroad, is the U-Curve Model of Intercultural Adjustment by (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1962) as cited by Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009) that describes different levels of satisfaction in response to acculturation to a different cultural context over time.
In the honeymoon stage, experiences are rather positive due to their novelty. This turns into hostility once people become aware of huge differences that are difficult to adapt to. People then usually recognize the humorous nature of the incompatibility between the cultures, before feeling in-sync with the new culture and its rules and rituals. When a move “back home” is scheduled, people may feel ambivalence as they will need to leave behind their (newly) acquired sense of comfort. Having to readapt to the norms of one’s home culture is usually associated with reentry culture shock and possibly resocialization (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009).

King and Baxter Magolda’s developmental Intercultural Maturity Model (King & Baxter Magolda, 2005) describes initial, intermediate and mature development levels of awareness of, sensitivity to and ability to adapt to cultural differences, based on cognitive, intrapersonal and interpersonal domains.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain of Development and Related Theories</th>
<th>Initial Level of Development</th>
<th>Intermediate Level of Development</th>
<th>Mature Level of Development</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive (Baxter Magolda, 1992, 2001; Belenky et al., 1986; M. Bennett, 1993; Fischer, 1990; Kegan, 1994; King &amp; Kitchener, 1994, 2004; Perry, 1968)</td>
<td>Assumes knowledge is certain and categorizes knowledge claims as right or wrong; is naive about different cultural practices and values; resists challenges to own's own beliefs and views differing cultural perspectives as wrong</td>
<td>Evolving awareness and acceptance of uncertainty and multiple perspectives; ability to shift from accepting authority's knowledge claims to personal processes for adopting knowledge claims</td>
<td>Ability to consciously shift perspectives and behaviors into an alternative cultural worldview and to use multiple cultural frames</td>
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<td>Intrapersonal (Cass, 1984; Chickering &amp; Reisser, 1993; Cross, 1991; D'Augelli, 1994; Helms, 1995; Josselson, 1987, 1996; Kegan, 1994; Marcia, 1980; Parks, 2000; Pinney 1990; Torres, 2003)</td>
<td>Lack of awareness of one's own values and intersection of social (racial, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation) identity; lack of understanding of other cultures; externally defined identity yields externally defined beliefs that regulate interpretation of experiences and guide choices; difference is viewed as a threat to identity</td>
<td>Evolving sense of identity as distinct from external others' perceptions; tension between external and internal definitions prompts self-exploration of values, racial identity, beliefs; immersion in own culture; recognizes legitimacy of other cultures</td>
<td>Capacity to create an internal self that openly engages challenges to one's views and beliefs and that considers social identities (race, class, gender, etc.) in a global and national context; integrates aspects of self into one's identity</td>
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<td>Interpersonal (M. Bennett, 1993; Chickering &amp; Reisser, 1993; Gilligan, 1982; Kegan, 1994; Kohliberg, 1964; Noddings, 1984)</td>
<td>Dependent relations with similar others is a primary source of identity and social affirmation; perspectives of different others are viewed as wrong; awareness of how social systems affect group norms and intergroup differences is lacking; view social problems egocentrically, no recognition of society as an organized entity</td>
<td>Willingness to interact with diverse others and refrain from judgment; relies on independent relations in which multiple perspectives exist (but are not coordinated); self is often overshadowed by need for others' approval. Begins to explore how social systems affect group norms and intergroup relations</td>
<td>Capacity to engage in meaningful, interdependent relationships with diverse others that are grounded in an understanding and appreciation for human differences; understanding of ways individual and community practices affect social systems; willing to work for the rights of others</td>
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In terms of intercultural communication competence, Zaharna (2009) summarizes (Howell, 1982) interpersonal model as follows: “The first stage of unconscious incompetence is when an individual misinterprets others’ behavior but is not aware of it. The second stage, conscious incompetence, is when an individual is aware that he misinterprets other’s behavior but does nothing about it. The third stage, conscious competence, is when the individual thinks about his or her communication behavior and consciously tries to modify it to increase effectiveness. The fourth stage, unconscious competence, is when the individual has practiced and internalized effective communication behaviors. The fifth stage, unconscious super-competence, represents the highest level of communication fluency”.

According to (Gudykunst, 1993) Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) Model, adjusting to new cultural situations requires one to “successfully manage their anxiety in new cultural environments” (Gudykunst, 1998): 232). When this anxiety is too high, visitors are less likely to interpret the hosts’ responses appropriately. When anxiety is too low, however, “visitors engage in conversations believing that they completely understand everything about the foreign culture, and therefore do not remain open to belief changes as a result of what is learned during cross-cultural interactions” (Moeller & Nugent, 2014), thus unconsciously moving through a “cultural minefield”, as Bruno della Chiesa would express it.

(M. Byram, 1997) Multidimensional Model of Intercultural Competence (as cited by (Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2007) comprises attitude, knowledge and skills:

1. The attitude factor refers to the ability to relativize one’s self and value others, and includes “curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one’s own”. “An individual must remain open to learning about new beliefs, values, and worldviews in order to participate in relationships of equality” (Moeller & Nugent, 2014).

2. Knowledge of one’s self and others means knowledge of the rules for individual and social interaction and consists of knowing social groups and their practices, both in one’s own culture and in the other culture.

3. The first skill set, the skills of interpreting and relating, describes an individual’s ability to interpret, explain, and relate events and documents from another culture to one’s own culture.
4. The second skill set, the *skills of discovery and interaction*, allows the individual to acquire “new knowledge of culture and cultural practices,” including the ability to use existing knowledge, attitudes, and skills in cross-cultural interactions. [This] includes a range of communication forms, including verbal and non-verbal modes and the development of linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competencies.

5. The last factor, *critical cultural awareness*, describes the ability to use perspectives, practices, and products in one’s own culture and in other cultures to make evaluations”.

Deardorff reminds us that the development of intercultural competence is an ongoing process, and that “ultimate intercultural competence” may never be achieved (D. Deardorff, 2006). As such, intercultural competence is not achievable by just being taught about and becoming aware of cultural differences. Without direct contact and experience and without “building authentic relationships” the cultural learning process seems impossible (D. K. Deardorff, 2009): Preface, xiii). According to (Kim, 2009), our level of identity security, our “ego-strength” (Lazarus, 1966), as cited by Kim, 2009), *i.e.* positive self-identity, self-efficacy, self-confidence, self-esteem, hardiness and risk taking, allow us to think clearly and rationally in stressful situations, and as such enable us “to engage in associative behaviors and activities involving culturally dissimilar others”, thanks to flexible behavior and the ability to “empathize with others without losing the ability to maintain one’s integrity”. 
Frameworks and models for addressing cultural identity and intercultural competence in secondary schools

As one experiences strangers and "strange" places, it becomes evident that they are not so different after all. This learning has potential for helping students lessen their "congenital blindness toward the feelings of people and creatures different from ourselves" (Seigfried, 1989: 80), and therefore, can work towards enabling people to be more caring towards self and proximate others as well as distant others and the non-human world (McKenzie & Blenkinsop, 2006).

Closely associated with intercultural competence, (Mansilla & Gardner, 2007) Mansilla and Gardner (2007) discuss three components of global competence that today’s students need in order to be part of a global society: global sensitivity is the awareness that local and global issues are interconnected; global understanding is our capacity to reflect about international developments in diverse domains; global self is the ability to see ourselves as an active part of humanity and as actors influencing all aspects of the planet.

Many educators stress the importance of developing empathy for students to better understand the lives and living conditions in other countries (Case, 1993). Simply learning facts about other people and cultures (what Bruno della Chiesa would call “academic tourism”) may not be enough to allow a change in perception and perspective taking. Education needs to prepare students to truly become caring global citizens (Hinton, 2012; Reimers, 2010), which implies, in order to develop such a cross-cultural empathy (della Chiesa, 2012a; Hinton, 2012), to be given the opportunity (Clapp, 2012) to not only learn about or even be confronted with other cultures, but to also deeply experience these.

For Banks (2004), the development of “multicultural literacy” is essential to enable students to engage in ethnic and cultural perspective taking, and to translate knowledge into meaningful action that will create a more humane, democratic and just world by – amongst other things – identifying “the creators of knowledge and their interests” (Banks, 1996) as cited by Banks, 2004). Education should therefore also teach students to critically examine what they believe to “know” about the world.

In order to help students develop these skills, characteristics and values, educators can integrate various strategies and topics into the classroom (Hayden & Thompson, 2010). Furthermore, extra-academic activities, such
as service learning and outdoor education, can foster the acquisition of these capacities. Service learning, for instance, can help to develop a sense of how to create a caring, compassionate, and respectful environment (Freeman & King, 2001), and a sense of emotional connectedness (Masterson & Kersey, 2013). Some of the main learning outcomes can include: tolerance for diversity, reducing negative stereotypes, self-esteem, communication and interpersonal skills, and many more (see also (Einfeld & Collins, 2008; Freeman & King, 2001; Simons & Cleary, 2006).

**Examples of interventions in secondary schools**

First and foremost, it is necessary to understand that “our way is not the only way and may not merit primacy”, and that it is therefore essential to “suspend[…] assumptions and judgments, leaving our minds open to multiple perspectives. By asking, “What do I see here? What might it mean? What else might it mean? And yet again, what might others think it means?” we enhance our own perceptions and practice cultural humility” (Guskin, 1991), as cited by Bennett, 2009: 128).

In order for effective interventions to occur, educators of intercultural competence need to fulfill some requirements; to be “credible”, they themselves need to have acquired a strong cultural-awareness (Paige & Goode, 2009) and an international worldview, which goes hand-in-hand with having lived abroad and speaking at least one other language (Cushner & Mahon, 2009).

Students need to develop their cultural identity, which includes identifying and questioning their doxas (see (Bourdieu, 1984[1979]), i.e. “everything (facts, rules, etc.), that in any given society is culturally determined but appears “natural” to the individual not aware of its contingent nature” (della Chiesa, Scott, & Hinton, 2012): 20). In order to develop cultural identity, which is important to “create and affirm “interpersonal and intergroup relationships”” (Witteborn, 2007), as cited in Al-Hazza, 2009) and to strengthen their self-concept, students need to have a sense of belonging to their cultural group (Al-Hazza, 2009). Identifying one’s sense of belonging and one’s own doxas or cultural biases can be achieved through the development of intercultural competence, as through exploring other cultures, their values and beliefs, one has to reflect on one’s own.

In order to foster multicultural / intercultural competence, understanding and awareness, it is essential that teachers value and integrate student’s diverse backgrounds, worldviews, knowledge and experiences in the
classroom (Cushner & Mahon, 2009). Particularly in the culturally diverse environment of international schools, it should come naturally to include different points of view or understandings into the curriculum – including those of the students. This is not only true when discussing historical, political or religious issues, but can be integrated into pretty much any subject matter and topic; for example, gestures play an important role in non-verbal communication, so why not exemplify how the same hand-sign or gesture may mean two completely different things in distinct cultures and may even be offensive in one of those cultures, while it is considered positive or neutral in the other, thus creating delicate situations; in math class you may discuss how people of different cultures count with their fingers (and toes); when discussing color spectrums in arts class, why not mention that some languages have more words to distinguish colors (in terms of lightness or darkness) or that the colors of the rainbow can be separated differently (e.g. the line between blue and green, or red and orange); similarly in Japanese the sea is green and the apple blue. The Eskimos have many different precise expressions for snow, in order to distinguish its “behavior” and composition, which can be extremely important in their environment. Music lessons may include instruments and songs from diverse cultures. Examples are endless and students of different cultures may be best to supply them.

Classrooms can also be decorated with posters, pictures and maps of different peoples, cultural events or parts of the world, particularly related to the students’ origins (Morris & Mims, 1999), thus transmitting a sense of valuing others. Morris and Mims moreover recommends interventions such as encouraging work groups to be mixed to be as diverse as possible (1999) in terms of culture, socio-economic status and origin. In order to explore their own cultural identities, Morris also suggests inviting students’ parents to talk to classes about their home culture and history.

Reading and discussing multicultural literature in the classroom can help to reduce stereotypes and prejudices, because it helps children understand and appreciate other cultures; it also helps students develop their cultural identity, because they identify with the characters in the stories (Al-Hazza & Bucher, 2008). It is important however, that this literature is “well-respected and well-written […] and] accurately reflects [the other] culture, respects [the cultural] heritage, creates positive images of [the people] in readers’ minds, and features storylines that credibly represent [the people]” (T.C. Al-Hazza, 2006): 11-12, as cited by (Tami Craft Al-Hazza & Bucher, 2008)⁴. Reading multicultural literature together can be very enlightening, and it is important to include literature from

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different cultures that describe their own culture as well as other cultures in order to understand stereotyping and how cultures perceive each other (Morris & Mims, 1999). In a multicultural classroom this can lead to interesting discussions.

Especially in international schools, educators should also acknowledge different styles of student participation in class that are extremely culturally biased and go from talking and questioning the teacher all the time, to never hearing somebody’s voice, let alone talking back at the teacher. This may also include the awareness that students communicate their wish to express themselves differently (“raising one’s hand”) (Newman, 2012). Communication with the parents is also likely to vary and the educators should take this into consideration (Morris & Mims, 1999).

Although this was not one of the points of consensus in Deardorff’s (2006) study, to many it is absolutely obvious that “language and culture are inextricably linked”, as “an interculturally competent speaker of a foreign language possesses both communicative competence in that language as well as particular skills, attitudes, values and knowledge about a culture” (Moeller & Nugent, 2014). Language teaching should therefore always go hand-in-hand with teaching about its culture(s) and its people(s), including social norms and values, as well as about its history(ies)5 (Michael Byram, 2009). In the foreign language classroom, activities can enable students to question their preconceived ideas before starting to learn about a different culture, in order to become more motivated to engage with otherness and “experience relationships of reciprocity”, by identifying similarities and differences (Byram, 1997, as summarized by Moeller & Nugent, 2014). To facilitate this, Byram, Gribkova & Starkey (2002) suggest that students record their preconceived ideas in relation to the culture they are about to learn about before the study begins, in order for them to become aware of their own perceptions. One way of doing this is for students to collectively note words or ideas that spontaneously come to mind. These can then be discussed and compared to revised perceptions after studying the culture. Since culture changes constantly, teachers should create an “environment of curiosity and inquiry in order to guide learners toward intercultural competence”. An activity could be to compare travel guides between the native culture and the target culture, to help students to become aware of differing worldviews based on common text. Actively gathering knowledge and information may minimize judgment about the culture (Moeller & Nugent, 2014).

5 Depending on the language taught, distinctions need to be made in terms of which culture may be associated to that language, especially when this language is spoken in different countries.
Another exercise is to study proverbs in order to identify cultural values expressed in them through language (Hiller, 2010). This can be done not only in foreign languages, but also in one’s own, to help students understand what underlying values of their culture led to the creation of proverbs in the first place. As Hiller (2010) points out, learning about proverbs of different cultures and in different languages helps to identify “values shared by both cultures as well as how the specific vocabulary and language used in the proverbs demonstrate different perspectives and viewpoints” (Moeller & Nugent, 2014).

The same opportunity to learn more about cultural beliefs, and practices on top of that, is given through the exploration of cultural artifacts (M. Byram, et al., 2002). This could include ads, which are extremely (albeit implicitly) culture-loaded artifacts... With this, students could also start to “protect themselves” against the influence/propaganda of ads, by distancing themselves from the prescriptive messages they receive through them (and other media products – as, for instance, TV series, soap operas, and the like, which school students seem to be very sensitive to) (B. della Chiesa, personal communication). Again, this also helps students identify their preconceptions about an artifact that are the result of their own cultural bias. The exercise “creates an opportunity for learners to practice skills in comparing and contrasting so that connections are made between the target culture and home culture” (Moeller & Nugent, 2014). If students can include artifacts from their own culture, this can enhance their self-esteem and make them proud of their history (Morris, 1999).
Methods for measuring and assessing intercultural competence

(Fantini, 2009) stresses that intercultural competence is difficult to assess, as it necessarily takes into account not only knowledge and skills, but also attitudes and awareness, which are more difficult to measure. On top of that, there are frequently concerns over the potential short-comings of self-report formats that characterize most of the indirect assessment instruments (see (Sinicrope, et al., 2007).

According to a consensus among scholars of interculturality, the best way to assess intercultural competence is through a mixed methods approach, including quantitative and qualitative methods. Case studies and interviews received the strongest agreement, followed by analysis of narrative diaries, self-report instruments, observation by others/host culture, and judgment by self and others. Scholars did however also express words of caution and factors to take into account before assessing intercultural competence. Only after all these points have been clarified should assessment take place (Deardorff, 2006; 2009: 489):

- “Intercultural competence assessment involves more than just observable performance
- It is important to consider the cultural and social implications of assessing intercultural competence
- When assessing intercultural competence, it is important to analyze the impact of situational, social, and historical contexts involved
- It is important to determine who will develop the assessment tools and methods and who measures intercultural competence (and what may be their cultural biases), who is the locus of evaluation, in what context, for what purpose, to what benefit, the time frame involved, the level of cooperation, and the level of abstraction
- It is important to measure the degrees of intercultural competence
- Has the term intercultural competence been defined using existing definitions in the literature? From whose cultural perspective?
- Do the assessment methods match the working definition and stated objectives of intercultural competence?
- How do the assessment methods affect the measurement outcomes? Have the limits and cultural biases of the instruments/measures been accounted for?
- Is more than one method being used to assess? Do the methods involve more than one evaluator’s perspective?
- Have participant goals been considered when assessing intercultural competence?
• Intercultural competence is a complex construct that involves more than one component. For example, knowledge or language does not guarantee intercultural competence. Thus, internationalization strategies need to address the development of the components of intercultural competence in a variety of ways (i.e., course work, study abroad, on-campus interaction with students from different cultural backgrounds, etc.) as well as the actual process for acquiring intercultural competence, including necessary cognitive skills

In order to record the process of becoming interculturally competent, Scarino (2010) and Schulz (2007) suggest “an open assessment process that allows student and teacher to work together in documenting learning growth. Portfolios work as effective forms of process-oriented assessments by affording each student the opportunity to interpret meaning, consider judgments, and defend language/culture choices on an individual basis (Moeller & Nugent, 2014).

There are several assessment instruments available for measuring intercultural competence, most of which are however designed either for the (mainly US American) national market (e.g. for pre-assessment of professionals leaving abroad, or students participating in study abroad programs), for expat adults working abroad, and most of the analysis is very complex and scientific. Many also require users to purchase the assessment instrument and/or pay for its analysis by a commercial institution. Apart from the models described above, below are some assessment tools that can be used in the classroom as is, or that can be adapted or used to inspire the development and evaluation of one’s own questionnaires.

**OSEE tool**
The OSEE Tool (Observe – State – Explore – Evaluate) (D. K. Deardorff & Deardorff, 2000) enables students to “understand the process for moving beyond assumptions and use the tools to reflect more objectively on a cross-cultural situation”. In this process, students are presented with situational film clips, photos, critical incidents or examples/stories (e.g. slurping while eating) to:

- **O**—Observe what is happening (to become aware of the situation),
- **S**—State objectively what is happening (however difficult this may be),
- **E**—Explore different explanations for what is happening (by trying to see the situation from other persons’ perspectives), and
- **E**—Evaluate which explanation is the most likely one (eventually through researching further information),
in order to identify and verify their assumptions, and view behaviors in
intercultural situations more objectively (Darla K. Deardorff, 2012).
Although intended for the work with adults, this tool should be adaptable
to the high school context.

**DAE exercise**
A similar method is the DAE exercise (Describe – Analyze – Evaluate)
(Nama & Condon, 2010). The goal is to stimulate discussion by
introducing something new (objects, pictures, stories, words), to provoke
curiosity and challenge reactions. It “serves to sharpen the perception,
clarify possible explanations for what one sees in the photo, and
courage the suspension of judgments”, using the following questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is going on?</td>
<td>Why is it happening?</td>
<td>How do I feel about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(General agreement)</td>
<td>(Alternative explanations possible)</td>
<td>(No one else has to agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I think the person in the picture feels?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students may contribute to the choice of objects etc. to be discussed, if
they would like their culture to be better understood or appreciated. After
the actual exercise, students can express their feelings, memories and tell
stories that they connect with what was discussed. The exercise was
developed for the higher education setting, but like the OSEE Tool, can
certainly also be used in the high school classroom.

**Global Literacy Survey**
The Global Literacy Survey⁶ by the National Geographic Survey was
designed for young US Americans⁷ to self-test their knowledge about the
world. 20 questions can be accessed freely through an online survey and
may inspire the development of other questions (not necessarily including
multiple choice answers) to assess students’ intercultural/international
awareness.

**Hidden Bias Test**
Project Implicit⁸ offers freely accessible (however rather US-centric)
*Hidden Bias Tests* that measure unconscious biases in different domains
(e.g. race, religion, gender, disability, weight). Tests are taken online and
the participant is presented with an automatic analysis on completion.

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⁷ Young adults from other countries have also taken the survey, and a comparative chart presents how the partcipating nations scored on each question.
⁸ Available on [https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html](https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html)
Cultural Intelligence Scale
The Cultural Intelligence Scale (Van Dyne, Ang, & Livermore, 2010) measures four factors of “Cultural intelligence”: CQ-Strategy (how a person makes sense of inter-cultural experiences), CQ-Knowledge (a person’s understanding of how cultures are similar and how cultures are different), CQ-Motivation (a person’s interest in experiencing other cultures and interacting with people from different cultures) and CQ-Behavior (a person’s capability to adapt verbal and nonverbal behavior so it is appropriate for different cultures). The 20 items of the questionnaire are freely accessible, and the degree of cultural intelligence can be calculated by summing up the responses to all items on the 7-point scale (1 strongly disagree – 7 strongly agree): the higher the score, the higher the degree of cultural intelligence. The questionnaire can be used to measure intercultural competence in the classroom to some degree, and can certainly be adapted to age and context (see Annex).

Multicultural Experiences Questionnaire
The Multicultural Experiences Questionnaire (MEQ), originally designed for college students and adults, is a 15-item self-report scale to measure multicultural experience and attitudes (see Annex). The MEQ consists of two main subscales: the Multicultural Experience subscale that represents the number of multicultural experiences a person has had, and the Multicultural Desire subscale that represents the person’s effort or desire to increase their multicultural experiences. As for the Cultural Intelligence Scale, the questionnaire items and scale are provided, so that users can calculate the scoring by themselves as described in the indications of use. It can certainly also be used or adapted for the current context.

Multicultural Experience Inventory
An adapted version of the Multicultural Experience Inventory (Chaichanasakul, 2011) can be used to measure the degree of multicultural experiences students have made so far due to their historical development pattern and to current multicultural interactions. The inventory includes 17 items that are rated on a 5-point scale. A total multicultural experience is obtained by summing all scores. High scores indicate a greater level of multicultural experiences in an individual’s past and present relationships.

Universality-Diversity Scale
The Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale-Short (M-GUDS-S) (Chaichanasakul, 2011 and see Annex) can be used to measure universal-diverse orientation (UDO), which reflects an attitude of awareness and

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9 Available on [http://www.linnvandyne.com/shortmeasure.html](http://www.linnvandyne.com/shortmeasure.html) and see Annex
10 Available on [http://www3.nd.edu/~dnarvaez/Scales.htm](http://www3.nd.edu/~dnarvaez/Scales.htm), and see Annex
acceptance of both the similarities and differences among people and consists of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional components. A total score of the 6-point scale is obtained by summing the responses to the 15 items, high scores indicating high levels of UDO.

**Global Awareness Profile**
The Global Awareness Profile (GAP)\(^{11}\) measures one’s awareness and knowledge of the world. It creates a critical awareness of one’s gaps in knowledge, and stimulates one to engage in a life-long learning process toward navigating cultural worlds. The GAP test consists of 126 multiple choice questions based on common knowledge in six geographic regions (Asia, Africa, North America, South America, the Middle East and Europe) and six subject areas (environment, politics, geography, religion, socio-economics and culture). The test is administered online against a fee.

**Intercultural Development Inventory**
The Intercultural Development Inventory\(^{12}\) (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003) is a 50-item questionnaire translated into various languages and applicable to people from different cultural backgrounds. It measures the orientations toward cultural differences as defined in the DMIS described above. It includes questions that allow respondents to describe their intercultural experiences in terms of (a) their cross-cultural goals, (b) the challenges they face navigating cultural differences, (c) critical (intercultural) incidents they encounter around cultural differences, and (d) ways they navigate those cultural differences. Users need to take a qualifying seminar to use the instrument.

\(^{11}\) Available on [https://globalawarenessprofile.wordpress.com/](https://globalawarenessprofile.wordpress.com/) for a reasonable price. Discounts offered for educational institutions.

\(^{12}\) Available on [https://idiinventory.com/](https://idiinventory.com/)
Key resources for self-study


Practical resources for teaching

Education World: Teaching Tolerance
Online at: www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson294.shtml

One World, One Heart Beating: Teaching Tolerance
Online at: www.oneworldoneheartbeating.com/for_teachers/teaching-tolerance/

Teaching Tolerance: a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center
Online at: www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources
Annex

Cultural Intelligence Sale
The 20-item, Four Factor Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)

Instructions: Select the response that best describes your capabilities. Select the answer that BEST describes you AS YOU REALLY ARE (1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree).

CQ-Strategy:
MC1 1. I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds.
MC2 2. I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me.
MC3 3. I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.
MC4 4. I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures.

CQ-Knowledge:
COG1 5. I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.
COG2 6. I know the rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) of other languages.
COG3 7. I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.
COG4 8. I know the marriage systems of other cultures.
COG5 9. I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.
COG6 10. I know the rules for expressing non-verbal behaviors in other cultures.

CQ-Motivation:
MOT1 11. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
MOT2 12. I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.
MOT3 13. I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.
MOT4 14. I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.
MOT5 15. I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.

CQ-Behavior:
BEH1 16. I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.
BEH2 17. I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.
BEH3 18. I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.
BEH4 19. I change my non-verbal behavior when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.
BEH5 20. I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.

Source: Cultural Intelligence Center (http://www.linnvandyne.com/shortmeasure.html)
Multicultural Experiences Questionnaire
Please answer these questions according to your experience.

1. I travel out of the country
   - □ Never
   - □ 1-2 times in my life
   - □ 3 or more times
   - □ Regularly

2. I want to travel outside of my country.
   1. Not true at all
   2. 3 or more times
   3. Regularly

3. I speak well
   - □ 1 language
   - □ 2 languages
   - □ 3 languages
   - □ more than 3 languages

4. I correspond currently with people from other countries
   - □ Never
   - □ 1 country
   - □ 2-3 countries
   - □ more than 3 countries

5. I have friends from cultural-racial-ethnic backgrounds different than my own
   - □ 0 friends
   - □ 1 friend
   - □ 2 friends
   - □ 3 friends
   - □ 4 friends
   - □ 5 or more friends

5b. How close are they?
   - □ Very close
   - □ Moderately close
   - □ Not very close

6. I want to have friends from different cultural-racial-ethnic backgrounds.
   1. Not true at all
   2. Very true

7. I work with people with cultural-racial-ethnic backgrounds different from my own.
   1. Never
   2. Always

8. I go out of my way to hear/read/understand viewpoints other than my own
   1. Never
   2. Always

9. I try to get to know people who are different from me.
   1. Never
   2. Always

10. I push myself to explore my prejudices and biases.
    1. Never
    2. Always

11. Discussing issues of discrimination, racism and oppression makes me uncomfortable.
    1. Never
    2. Always

12. I have had courses in intercultural communication
    0. 0 course
    1. 1 course
    2. 2 courses
    3. 3 or more courses

13. I have lived in a contrasting community (with a very different culture from my own)
    - □ 0 months
    - □ 1-2 months
    - □ 3-6 months
    - □ 6-9 months
    - □ over 9 months
13a. How many times?

13b. How many different countries?

14. I pay attention to news about the world beyond the U.S.A.
   □ Never    □ Rarely    □ Sometimes    □ Frequently    □ Always

15. I enjoy media and art from different cultures
   □ Never    □ Rarely    □ Sometimes    □ Frequently    □ Always

*questions are optional and not part of MEQ scores

Scoring

Main Subscales:
The Multicultural Experience score is a sum of items 1, 3-5, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15 (n=9; range is 13-38)
   • Add items 1, 3, 4, 12, (item range: 1-4); 5 (item range: 1-6); 7, 13, 14, 15 (item range: 1-5)
   • The Multicultural Desire score is a sum of items 2, 6, 8-11 (n=6; range is 6-32)
   • Add items 2, 6, 8-11 (item range: 1-5)
   • MEQ TOTAL (both subscales added together; n=15; range is 19-70)

Note: Sub-questions in italics are not included in the MEQ indices at the present time (5a, 13a, 13b).

Source: Darcia Narvaez (http://www3.nd.edu/~dnarvaez/Scales.htm)
Multicultural Experience Inventory (MEI; adapted)

Instructions: Please choose the number of the response that best describe your past and present behaviors:

1= All members of my ethnic/racial group
2= Mostly of my own ethnic/racial group
3= Half of my own and half of other groups
4= Mostly members of other ethnic/racial groups than mine
5= All members of other ethnic/racial groups than mine

1. The ethnic composition of the neighborhoods in which I lived
   (a) before I started attending school...
   (b) while I attended elementary school...
   (c) while I attended middle school...
   (d) while I attended high school...

2. My childhood friends who visited my home and related well to my parents were...

3. The teachers and counselors with whom I have had the closest relationships have been...

4. The people who have most influenced me in my education have been...

5. In high school, my close friends were...

6. The ethnic backgrounds of the people I have dated have been...

7. In the job(s) I have had, my close friends have been...

8. The people with whom I have established close, meaningful relationships have been...

9. At present, my close friends are...

10. My close friends at work are (were)...

11. I enjoy going to gathering at which the people are...

12. When I study or work on a project with others, I am usually with persons who are...

13. When I am involved in group discussions where I am expected to participate, I prefer a group of people who are...

14. I am active in organizations or social groups in which the majority of the members are...

15. When I am with my friends, I usually attend functions where the people are...

16. When I discuss personal problems or issues, I discuss them with people who are...

17. I most often spend time with people who are...

**Scoring:**
Responses of “All members of my ethnic/racial group” (1) or “All member of other ethnic/racial groups than mine” (5) receives one point; responses of either “Mostly of my own ethnic/racial group” (2) or “Mostly members of other ethnic/racial groups than mine” (4) receive two points; and responses of “Half of my own group and half of other groups)” (3) receive three points. A total multicultural experience is obtained by summing all scores. High scores indicate a greater level of multicultural experiences in an individual’s past and present relationships.
Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale-Short (M-GUDS-S)

The following items are made up of statements using several terms, which are defined below for you. Please refer to them throughout the rest of the questionnaire.

Culture refers to the beliefs, values, traditions, ways of behaving, and language of any social group. A social group may be racial, ethnic, religious, etc.

Race or racial background refers to specific social groups sharing possessing common physical or genetic characteristics. Examples include White, Black, and American Indian.

Ethnicity or ethnic group refers to specific social groups sharing a unique cultural heritage (i.e., customs, beliefs, language, etc.). Two people can be of the same race (e.g., White), but be from different ethnic groups (e.g., Irish-American, Italian American).

Country refers to groups that have been politically defined; people from these groups belong to the same government (e.g., France, Ethiopia, United States). People of different races (White, Black, Asian) or ethnicities (Italian, Japanese) can be from the same country (United States).

Instructions: Please indicate how descriptive each statement is of you by selecting a number corresponding to your response. This is not a test, so there are no right or wrong, good or bad answers.

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Disagree a little bit
4 = Agree a little bit
5 = Agree
6 = Strongly agree

1. I would like to join an organization that emphasizes getting to know people from different countries.
2. Persons with disabilities can teach me things I could not learn elsewhere.
3. Getting to know someone of another race is generally an uncomfortable experience for me.
4. I would like to go to dances that feature music from other countries.
5. I can best understand someone after I get to know how he/she is both similar and different from me.
6. I am only at ease with people of my race.
7. I often listen to music of other cultures.
8. Knowing how a person differs from me greatly enhances our friendship.
9. It’s really hard for me to feel close to a person from another race.
10. I am interested in learning about the many cultures that have existed in this world.
11. In getting to know someone, I like knowing both how he/she differs from me and is similar to me.
12. It is very important that a friend agrees with me on most issues.
13. I attend events where I might get to know people from different racial backgrounds.
14. Knowing about the different experiences of other people helps me understand my own problems better.
15. I often feel irritated by persons of a different race.
Bibliography


Deardorff (Ed.), The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence (pp. 196-208): SAGE.


