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**Is there really a need for assessing
intercultural competence?
Some ethical issues**

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Outline

- The concept of Intercultural Competence
 1. A definition
 2. A conceptualisation: Byram's model of IC
- Why to assess intercultural competence?
- Review of critical issues concerning the assessment of IC
 - Critical ethical issues
- Conclusions

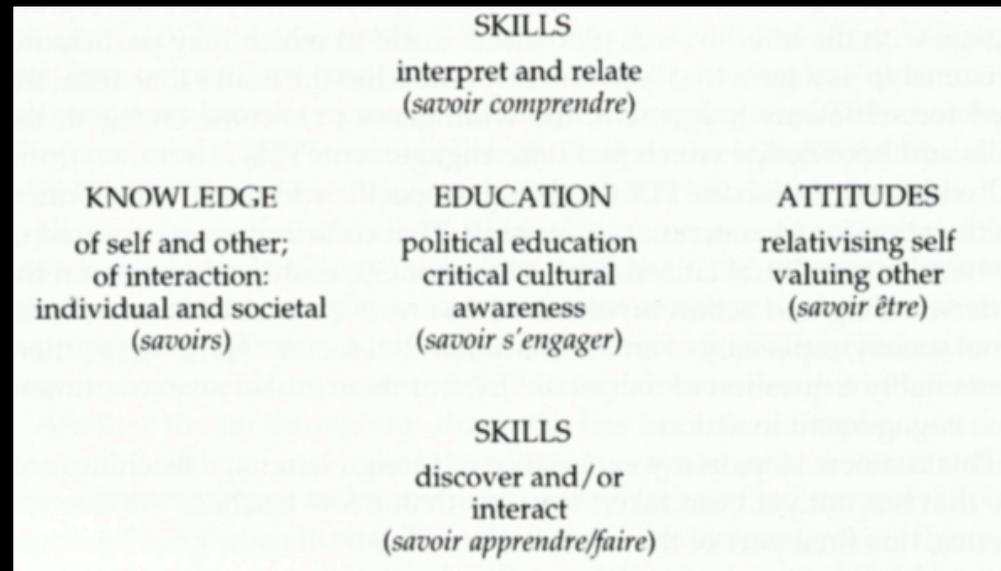
Intercultural competence: a definition

Intercultural competence: A whole of cognitive, affective and behavioural factors that influence the understanding of and interaction with diversity in a broad sense, and that can be developed through education and/or experience

Intercultural competence: a model (Byram, 1997)

Skills of interpreting and relating: ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one's own.

Knowledge: of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.



Attitudes: curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own.

Skills of discovery and interaction: ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction.

Critical cultural awareness/political education: an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

Why to assess intercultural competence?

- IC is one of the educational aims of foreign language education
- There is a general interest in evidences of progress in IC acquisition
- Assessment has positive washback effects on teaching and students' motivation

Assessing intercultural competence:

Conceptual and methodological issues

- A reference model of IC is missing (Fantini, 2009)
Which guarantee about validity and reliability?
- Elicit desirable outcomes (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010)
- External and/or internal outcomes (Deardorff, 2006)
Who establishes what is desirable and appropriate?
- Assessment methods and strategies
- Assessing IC holistically or on the basis of its components
Assess the affective dimension of IC?

A shift from possibility to ethics: Is assessing IC fair?

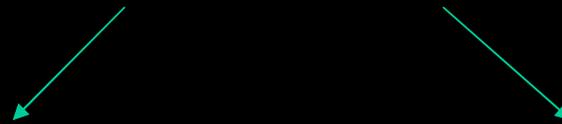
- Identity-related nature of intercultural competence
- Evidence of learning in personal accounts
- Responsibility for consequences on students
- The educational role of foreign language classes
- Intercultural competence is a value

Assessing IC is not fair

Conclusions

what to do then with intercultural competence?

Creating occasions
for students' development of their own
intercultural competence



theoretical informed
methodological
choices

aware use of the
hidden curriculum

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