

# Should we teach values in Intercultural Language Teaching?

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# Preface

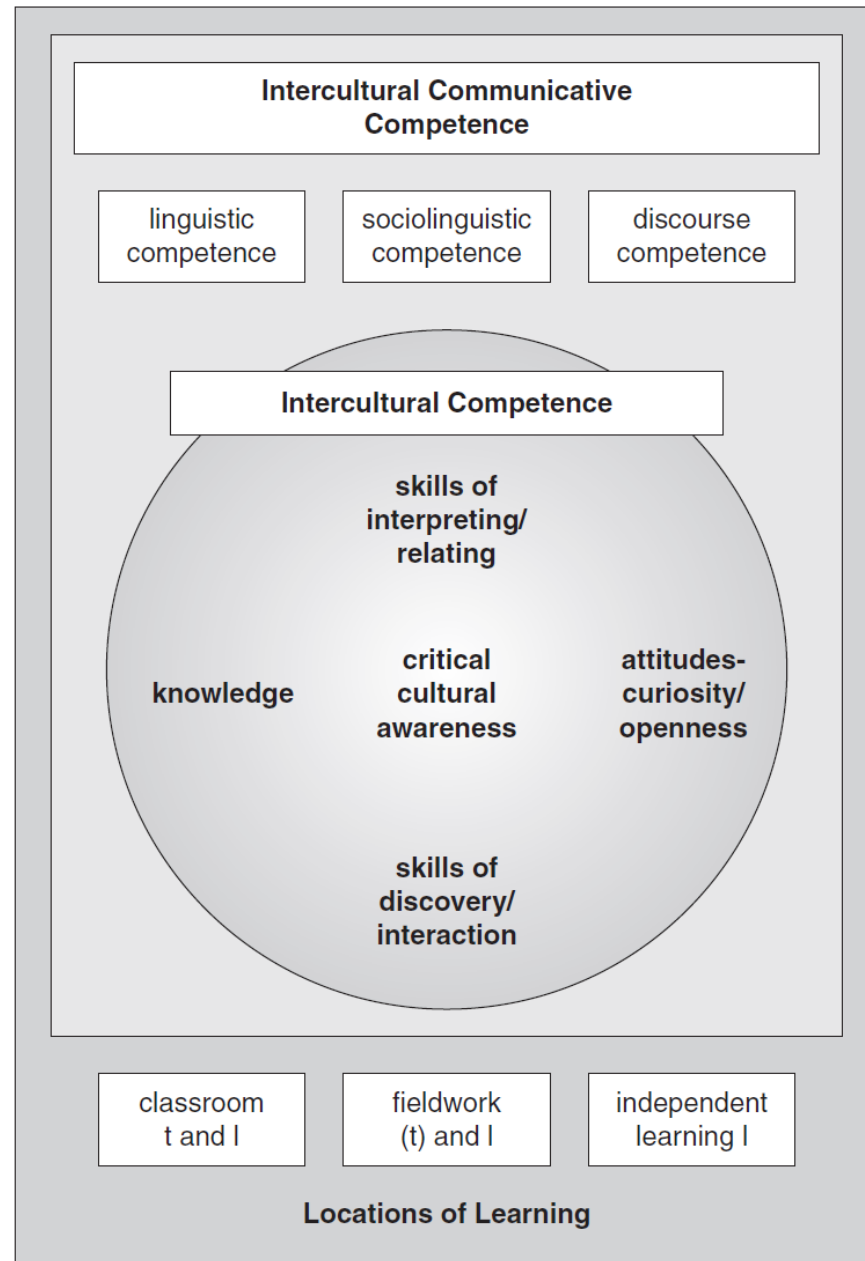
- Prepared for China but cancelled...
  - Change for Bremen?
  - Call for papers:
    - What geopolitical and educational policy factors play or have played a role in a sustainable adoption of the plurilingual approach?  
[ADD : and in teaching of values ...]
  - An 'intercultural' perspective : Bremen audience takes position of Chinese audience ...
- Decentre!!

# Overview

PURPOSE: to ask questions ...

- Start with my model and its focus on ‘critical cultural awareness’
  - A ‘neutral’ approach
- Example from Lamia’s (PhD) classroom research – student ‘locked’ in own values
- Education and socialisation into ‘our’ values – the role of education
- Introduction to ‘their’ values – the role of foreign language teaching?
- Universal values - do they exist? Can we use them?

CONCEPTS ....



# Concept 1 : Critical cultural awareness

an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of an explicit, systematic process of reasoning, values present in one's own and other cultures and countries.

- Evaluate ... values = make judgements about ...
- on the basis of ... reasoning = judgements must be coherent/logical
- in own and others' ... = take **neutral perspective** ('3<sup>rd</sup>place' position?)
- cultures and countries = NOT ONLY 'foreign' ALSO own-country cultures

## Concept 2 : Meaning of 'neutral'

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

[includes ...]

- willingness to seek out or take up opportunities **to engage with otherness** in a relationship of **equality** (...)
- willingness to **question** the values and **presuppositions** in cultural practices and products in **one's own environment** [= **question 'the normal'**]

# Concept 3 : Judge and Evaluate

**To judge** (Oxford English Dictionary):

to form an opinion or **conclusion** about (a person or thing), especially following **careful consideration** or deliberation; to assess, **evaluate**, or appraise.

**To evaluate** (Oxford English Dictionary):

to express in terms of **something already known**. (= compare/juxtapose)

THEREFORE :

**In CCA** = to **juxtapose**/compare [known with unknown] and draw a **conclusion** [about both]



# Objectives of Critical Cultural Awareness

The ability to:

- **identify and interpret** explicit or implicit **values** in documents and events in one's own and other cultures
- make an **evaluative analysis** of the documents and events based on a conscious process of **reasoning**

AND IN ADDITION

- **interact** and **mediate** in intercultural exchanges on the basis of a reasoned analysis, **negotiating where necessary a degree of acceptance** of them by drawing upon one's knowledge, skills and attitudes

→ OR “CHALLENGE” / “REJECT” ???!! ..... [see below]

- QUESTION - is this ‘neutral’ position good enough/need re-thinking?

# AN EXAMPLE FROM :

## Lamia Nemouchi PhD

**Title:** Investigating the use of literary texts in a pedagogy to develop ICC IN an EFL master course in two universities in Algeria.

**Research question:** How can literary texts be used in EFL classrooms to teach ICC?

**Method:** Action research – course taught 6 weeks and evaluated  
- 22 interviews with students, observations, students' worksheets, interviews with teachers

**Teaching materials:** included **literary texts on a refugee's experience** and a **literary text on principles of Sufism**, photographs and drawings

# Classroom vignette

Before beginning to read the literary texts ...

- Student: I think we always think of a foreigner as something bad I mean it doesn't have to be a bad thing [silence] I have many friends from the internet yes yes they are foreigners from different countries and have different religions but they are good people and very nice to me [silence] they are foreigners but I accept and respect them
- Teacher: what if they were Algerians I mean born and grew up here and were not Muslim?
- Student: no no [silence] **this I will never tolerate** [silence] it is impossible
- Teacher: why? [silence] do you have any reasons why you cannot accept this?
- Student: I just can't [silence] I know what I'm talking about

# Interview feedback - after AR course

sometimes I find it difficult that the others can convince me and if you want me to be honest I **just don't understand why now teachers want us to be open-minded I mean why now** [nervous laugh] **this is not what we were taught our whole life** I'm not a child anymore I know what I want so **it's not now that you can change my mind**

[NB - not 'typical' – not all students like this ...]

→ **Socialisation** (especially by schools etc)

# Socialisation through education

## Algerian values: Loi d'orientation sur l'éducation nationale (2008)

- L'école algérienne doit assurer la **promotion** et la **préservation des valeurs en rapport avec l'Islamité, l'Arabité et l'Amazighité** en tant que trame historique de l'évolution démographique, culturelle, religieuse et linguistique de notre société. (p. 9)
- **Promotion and preservation of values** (linked to Islam, Arabness and Amazighitess) ....

### NOT NEUTRAL - « promote »

- développer le sens civique des élèves et les éduquer aux valeurs de la citoyenneté en leur faisant acquérir les principes de **justice, d'équité, d'égalité des citoyens en droits et en devoirs, de tolérance, de respect d'autrui et de solidarité entre les citoyens** ; (p.38)
- Educate in the values of citizenship ... justice, equality in rights and duties, tolerance and respect ('others') , solidarity among citizens ('us')

- (L'école doit) dispenser une éducation en harmonie avec les droits de l'enfant et les **droits de l'homme** et développer une **culture démocratique** en faisant acquérir aux élèves les principes du débat, et du dialogue, de l'acceptation de l'avis de la majorité et en les amenant à **rejeter la discrimination et la violence et à privilégier le dialogue** (p.38)
- School must provide an education in harmony with the **rights of the child** and **human rights**, and develop a **democratic culture** by making pupils acquire the principles of debate, and dialogue, of acceptance of the opinion of the majority, and by ensuring that they **reject discrimination and violence, and prioritise dialogue.**

NOT NEUTRAL - "reject ..."

# Socialisation through education

- British values

- Schools should **promote** the fundamental **British values** of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and **tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs**.(...)

- Actively promoting the values means **challenging opinions or behaviours** in school that are **contrary** to fundamental British values. (...)

NOT NEUTRAL! Promote “British” and “challenge” others

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-fundamental-british-values-through-sm-sc>

# Socialisation through education

## CHINA

- ——推进习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想进教材进课堂进头脑。坚持不懈用习近平新时代中国特色社会主义思想铸魂育人，引导学生了解世情国情党情民情，增强对党的创新理论的政治认同、思想认同、情感认同，坚定中国特色社会主义道路自信、理论自信、制度自信、文化自信。
- **Promote** Xi Jinping *Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era* into textbooks, into the classroom and into the mind. Unremittingly use Xi Jinping *Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era* to shape and cultivate the mind, to **guide students** to have knowledge of the state of the world, of the country, the Party and the people;
- to **enhance one's identity** in politics, ideology and affect, with the Party's innovative theories, and strengthen our confidence in the path of **socialism with Chinese characteristics**, in Chinese theory, in Chinese system, and in Chinese culture.

NOT NEUTRAL - Promote Xi Jinping/CCP and 'Chinese' (synonyms?)...

[http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/zhengceku/2020-06/06/content\\_5517606.htm](http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/zhengceku/2020-06/06/content_5517606.htm)

Thanks to Anwei Feng and Lihong Wang



# Role of foreign language teaching?

EITHER

1 'promote' values – whose? **universal values?**

OR

2 teach 'open-minded' attitude AND critical cultural awareness -  
evaluate and judge against **'universal values' ?**

OR BOTH!

## OPTION 1 Promote ...

Universal/Common values - an approximate comparison...

- Algeria: child and human rights; **democracy**, dialogue (reject discrimination); **equality**; **respect/tolerance**; **solidarity of citizens**
- Britain: **democracy**; **rule of law**; **individual liberty**; **respect/tolerance** (especially religious)
- China: prosperity, **democracy**, civility, harmony, **freedom**, **equality**, **justice**, **the rule of law**, **patriotism**, **dedication**, **integrity** and **friendliness**

ARE THESE 'UNIVERSAL'?

# Universal values - Schwartz

<https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/orpc/vol2/iss1/11/>

- Universal values
- Prioritised differently by groups  
[and individuals]

“the theory was found to be applicable to Chinese context though deviations from the ideal map exist” (Li Jiajun)



# Problems ...

- In documents: Mix of values (eg 'equality') and attitudes (eg 'tolerance')
- What relationship between policy doc 'values' and Schwartz 'values' (for example)  
Democracy = self-direction ??  
Solidarity = universalism ??
- Should teachers try to change students' values ? FOR EXAMPLE :
- make students who value  
security / conformity/ tradition/ = CONSERVATION (Schwartz)  
change to  
self-direction / stimulation = OPENNESS TO CHANGE (Schwartz)

## OPTION 2

Teach ‘open attitude’ and ‘criticality’ (critical cultural awareness)

- (In TEFL in China) Analyse and evaluate similarity and difference between ‘British’ [or other anglophone] and ‘Chinese’ values.... (compare/juxtapose)
- Against universal values
- What priority is given to which?

WHAT DO WE DO IF ‘THEIR’ PRIORITIES ARE DIFFERENT FROM ‘OURS’?

HOW DO WE “negotiate ... a degree of acceptance”?

Values **relativism**...

**accept** every group decides **own emphasis** on values

OR use **universal values** to **judge our priorities** and **others’ priorities**

OR value **pluralism** - accept that **common** values are **prioritised differently**

# Back to Lamia's classroom vignette

Teacher: what if they were Algerians I mean born and grew up here and were not Muslim?

Student: no no [silence] **this I will never tolerate** [silence] it is impossible

Interview:

I just don't understand why now **teachers want us to be open-minded** I mean why now [nervous laugh] this is **not what we were taught** our whole life

How to respond...??

1. [A] Do we accept her refusal to be open? OR : [B] How do we plan our teaching to encourage her to be 'open'?
2. If [B] what are the ethical issues of "promoting" / "encouraging" change ?
3. Do we need to take any initiative in teacher training in this regard? What initiatives and how?

# The final question:

## Is there a Chinese perspective on this?

- to **enhance one's identity** in politics, ideology and affect, with the Party's innovative theories, and strengthen our confidence in the path of **socialism with Chinese characteristics**, in Chinese theory, in Chinese system, and in Chinese culture.
- In practice : The “three-pronged approach”:
  - promote Xi Jinping *Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era* into **teaching textbooks**, into the **classroom** and into the **mind**.

# The final, final question ....

- Is there a German, Spanish perspective - in policy documents?
- Is there a TEACUP perspective?
- And your questions ....

THANK YOU



# Bibliography

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