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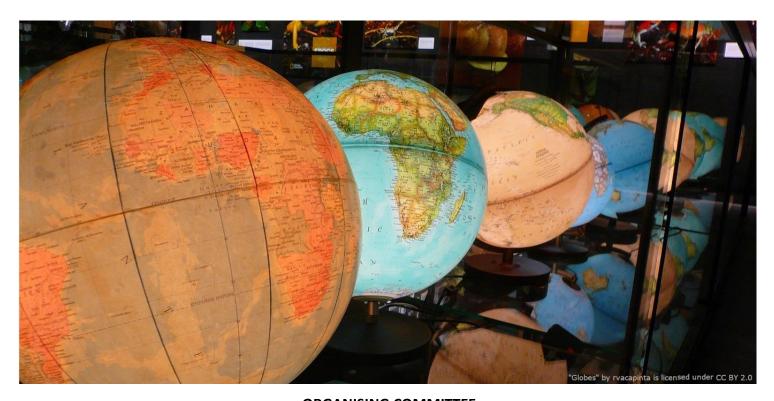# Intercultural Competence and Foreign Language Learning in Higher Education: Present and Future Directions

**Online Conference
1 and 2 July 2021**

University of Exeter

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- **All hours in British Summer Time**

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Prof Fiona Cox (Head of Department Modern Languages and Cultures – University of Exeter)
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15.30	*Student-Teacher Allyship: Supporting LGBTQI+ Voices in the Modern Language Classroom* Dr Alejandro Bolaños García-Escribano (University College London) Dr Soledad Díaz Alarcón (Univesidad de Córdoba) Dr Marga Navarrete (University College London) Dr Mazal Oaknín (University College London) Dr Azahara Veroz González Alarcón (Univesidad de Córdoba)	*Effective, Affective and Critical Intercultural Interaction in the Virtual Language Classroom* Eva Seidl (University of Graz)
16:00	**Coffee Break**	
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	WORKSHOP: *Decolonising Language Teaching: AULC Manifesto* Dr Leticia Yulita (University of East-Anglia)	*Teaching Language to Go Glocal: Black Lives Matter in Italy* Dr Valentina Abbatelli (University of Warwick)
17:00		*Creative and Decolonising Mindsets in Language Teaching for Sustainable Intercultural Learning* Marian Arribas-Tomé (University of East-Anglia)
17:30	**End of Day**	

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	Intercultural Competence as a Space in between and across Disciplines: Two Case Studies Donata Puntil (King's College of London) Dr Elena Borelli (King's College of London)	***Mediating Intercultural Differences in University Education: Learning through Translation*** Prof Gardenia Alonso (AKAD University) Prof Verena Jung (AKAD University)
11:00	***Intercultural Communication, Language and Inclusivity*** Ella Tennant (Keele University)	***Creating Stories to Rethink Culture: The Development of Intercultural and Plurilingual Competences in Teacher Training Programs*** Dr Caterina Sugranyes (University Ramón Llull)
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	Developing Pluricultural Competencies Within an Intercomprehension Setting. Evidence from Practice for Romance Cultures Dr Christoph Hülsmann (University of Salzburg)	***Fostering Intercultural Communicative Competence in Higher Education Modern Language Programmes: The Potential of Telecollaborative Translation Courses*** Dr. des. Raphaëlle Beecroft (Karlsruhe University of Education) Dr Petra Bauer (Durham University)
12:30	***Integrating Cultural Elements in the Proficiency (B2+/C1) Syllabus in French and Italian (2020-21)*** Christopher da Silva (University of Essex) Daniela Carboni (University of Essex)	***Transcultural Devon: Translating, Understanding and Archiving Migrants' Experiences*** Valentina Todino (University of Exeter) Dr Eliana Maestri (University of Exeter) Alice Farris (University of Exeter)
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	Intercultural Business English: Conceptual Reflections on Syllabi and Evaluation of Acquisition of Competencies Prof. Dr. Nicole Brandstetter (Hochschule München, University of Applied Sciences)	*Nonverbal Perceptual Awareness as Part of Language Teaching* Dr Yumi Nixon (University of York)
14:30	*The Awareness of UK Students in an Intercultural Communication Context: Identites, Cultures, Communication and Friendship Formations with International Students* Mona Helmi (University of Exeter)	*An International Project Week Goes Virtual* Prof. Dr Alexandra Angress (Aschaffenburg University of Applied Sciences) Prof. Dr Sylvana Krauße (Aschaffenburg University of Applied Sciences)
15:00	**Coffee Break**	
15:30	**Chair: Maria Guarnieri**	**Chair: Mark Critchley**
	Intercultural Critical Incidents in EFL-Textbooks for Secondary Schools in Germany – A Qualitative Content Analysis of Activities and Texts Bernd Frankemölle (University of Duisburg-Essen) Prof. Dr. Kerstin Göbel (University of Duisburg-Essen)	**WORKSHOP:** *Combining Signed and Spoken Language Studies: Exploring Ways of (Mis)Communication within the Deaf Community* Ugo Marsili (University of Reading)
16:30	**Closing** **Sonia Cunico and Mark Critchley** **>>> CLICK HERE TO ACCESS CLOSING <<<**	

Getting access to the conference

You can access the keynotes and parallel sessions by clicking on the corresponding link in the programme above. We have also pasted here the room ID numbers and passwords for convenience in case you are prompted to provide these details:

DAY ONE (July 1st):

Welcome, Keynotes and Parallel A sessions
- Link: https://universityofexeter.zoom.us/j/99923189867?pwd=Z0pVUmJlajlwamZRZWVvSERoSTFNZz09
- Room ID: 999 2318 9867
- Password: 418736

Parallel B sessions:
- Link: https://Universityofexeter.zoom.us/j/94207537603?pwd=UGZ5K0VTdzRVT0cxRlNBRzlLM2tOUT09
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- Link: https://Universityofexeter.zoom.us/j/91348097396?pwd=bnE3WWFyZnNOVkF5bUhpZFFLa2hXZz09
- Room ID: 913 4809 7396
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Please note that the Zoom info is the same for presenter and attendees; and also that keynotes are in the same Zoom meeting as Parallel A. Parallel B sessions have their own meeting link. If you have any queries, please email Isaac Kneller (I.Kneller@exeter.ac.uk) or Juan García-Precedo (J.M.Garcia-Precedo@exeter.ac.uk).

KEYNOTE 1

Developing Intercultural Understanding in Teaching and Learning Pragmatics

Prof Troy McConachy
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Troy McConachy is Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics at University of Warwick. His research focuses on how the teaching and learning of L2 pragmatics can contribute to intercultural understanding. Relevant book publications include *Developing Intercultural Perspectives on Language Use: Exploring Pragmatics and Culture in Foreign Language Learning* **(Multilingual Matters) and** *Teaching and Learning Second Language Pragmatics for Intercultural Understanding* **(co-edited with Tony Liddicoat, Forthcoming from Routledge). He is Editor-in-Chief of the international journal** *Intercultural Communication Education* **(Castledown).**

In this talk, I will consider the role that the teaching and learning of pragmatics can play in the development of intercultural understanding in modern language education. Approaches to pragmatics within language education have tended to place emphasis on the development of functional abilities and adherence to the communicative norms of native speakers. I will argue that such an emphasis has constrained the ways we have tended to conceptualise the 'intercultural' within the teaching and learning of pragmatics and suggest a perspective on 'intercultural understanding' that draws attention to issues of learner subjectivity, judgment, and agency. Central to this perspective is the idea the learning of pragmatics is not a psychologically neutral process – it is a process that deeply engages the whole person as a social and moral being. It involves dealing with the adaptive demands of needing to carry out social acts through language in ways which may conflict with one's existing identity or assumptions about social relationships. It also involves learning to manage potentially ethnocentric judgments towards new pragmatic behaviours and people. The talk will draw on examples from my experiences as a learner and user of Japanese, as well as data from published or forthcoming studies, to illustrate some of the identity tensions and emotional challenges that surface in the process of learning pragmatics. I will also offer pedagogical suggestions for helping learners explore such issues and manage their own ethnocentric judgments.

Fostering Intercultural Competence with Interactive Interviews. The *Newcastle Calls* Project as a Case Study.

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First piloted in the academic year 2019/20, the *Newcastle Calls* project sees students of Italian at undergraduate level interact with Italian experts all over the world – from the Italian researchers at the Antarctic base Mario Zucchelli, to an Italian actor living in the North of Italy during the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, and an Italian chef now settled in the North East of England – via live Skype/Zoom interviews which are being edited into documentaries with bilingual (Italian and English) subtitles thanks to the work of MA Film and Translation students. As part of this innovative project, technology is used in the classroom to foster real-life (virtual) conversation by engaging students to co-shape the learning material. Not only are students confronted with today's hottest topics (from climate change to the post-crisis job market, from the pandemic to Brexit), but are also challenged to ask the interviewed experts their own questions according to their interests. They are thus guided to practice how to interact with 'others' and confront themselves with different perspectives. In this presentation, we will discuss, based on students' formal as well as informal feedback, the impact of this project on the students' learning experience. We argue that technology as a tool to promote real-life interaction can help us break not only language but also cultural barriers, that it can be used to boost students' understanding of culture as a broader whole and cultural differences – a competence necessarily interwoven with the language learning process.

Facilitating Intercultural Dialogue across Borders; the Case of Co-created Student Podcasts

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With the ongoing challenges presented by the global pandemic in tandem with an increasingly diverse student-mix it is more important than ever to ensure that international students are able to feel part of the student- community they are studying in that may be both physically and culturally distant due to increased remote learning. It is essential that universities are able to address this real challenge in providing structured co-creation opportunity for students to interact with peers in a safe- space to facilitate intercultural competence (ICC) development and nurture globally-minded citizens of the future.

This paper reports on a successful faculty- wide ICC co-created student-podcaster project at the University of Leeds, UK. 'Cultural Insight Wednesdays Student-Podcast Series' is project that foregrounds intercultural dialogue through student-voice and 'lived experience.' Students were able to share and broaden their perspectives on a range of themes, such as; perspectives on 'sustainability,' 'mental health challenges as a student', imagining the future through blockchain technology' and 'the role of geopolitics in understanding the world.' It is clear that co-created opportunity is valuable for students across disciplines, as it foregrounds a widened perspectives. This ongoing project has attracted student podcasters from both undergraduate and postgraduate levels of study from over 10 different countries. Furthermore, this weekly podcast has attracted listeners from over 12 different countries so far ranging from the North America to Taiwan. Feedback from students has highlighted the necessity to embed such opportunities in a platform that speaks to 'Generation Z' or digital natives. Intercultural student-led podcasting provides a sustainable and scalable way of building global student communities through foregrounding the lived experience of all students and thus increasing intercultural competence in Gen-Z graduates.

Implementing a Virtual Exchange Programme at the University of Bath

Isabella Stefanutti
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Virtual Exchange (VE) is defined as 'a form of computer-mediated learning whereby students from geographically remote classes work together online (in pairs or small groups) on learning tasks developed by teachers or educational facilitators' (Evolve, 2019). It has been a feature of foreign language classes for a number of years and is also known as telecollaboration or teletandem. In recent years, both in Europe and in the South Mediterranean region with Erasmus+, and in the US with the Stevens Initiative, VE has increased in its scope, has moved outside the language classroom and it is now seen as a tool for encouraging intercultural exchanges, with the aim of increasing citizens' intercultural knowledge, awareness and competence (O'Dowd et al., 2019).

This presentation will describe the experience of organising a VE programme. The exchanges were organised between students of the Foreign Languages Centre at the University of Bath and students in five other universities, located respectively in Brazil, Spain, France, Jordan and China. The exchanges were based on O'Dowd transnational model of virtual exchange for global citizenship education (O'Dowd, 2019), aiming therefore to develop not only the students' language skills, but also their intercultural knowledge and the ability to communicate cross-culturally. Furthermore, O'Dowd and Ware (2009) recommended sequence of tasks was adopted and adapted in order to ensure meaningful interactions amongst students.

The presentation will also evidence the positive impact of the programme on students, and it is hoped that other Language Centres will be inspired to develop their own programme too.

3D Vignettes: Supporting Intercultural Awareness for EFL Teachers

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The field of intercultural training today is vast and variant in its approaches. However, little attention is given to the importance of interculturality and the interactional aspect of the classroom culture. The paper at hand is part of a PhD research that focuses on designing an intervention for teacher training strategies that promotes reflective practice (RP) for EFL teachers. It discusses the design of 3D vignettes as an RP tool for enhancing teacher's awareness of the intercultural aspect of their language classrooms. Specifically, the presentation reports on the motivation and rationale for utilizing 3D vignettes for language teachers, their definition, and structure. It will also detail an example of a 3D vignette co-constructed by a language teacher and their reflections on their experience with this tool. 3D vignettes tap into theories of critical incident technique (CIT), learner autonomy and multiperspectivity. The aim is to provide teachers with a practical RP tool to support their CPD systematically; and, as used in the larger intervention, to create new approaches to interculturality in teacher training.

Fostering Intercultural Competence Hand in Hand with Foreign Language Skills within a Virtual Exchange Context

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It is undeniable today that the main aim of higher education (HE) is to promote and develop global competence in students to prepare them for the highly competitive and fast paced changing globalized labor market. The importance of learning languages is accentuated in this reality due to the importance of being able to communicate with a wide range of people from diverse cultural backgrounds. But being linguistically competent in a foreign language is not enough for these students to be successful, they must also develop intercultural communicative competence to allow them to understand, appreciate and sustain relationships working against misconceptions and generalizations. It is therefore crucial for language teachers in HE to incorporate intercultural awareness in their syllabi. Adopting an action research approach, this study focuses on how an interdisciplinary virtual exchange project about sustainable goals, practices and cultural diversity is incorporated into two undergraduate English for Specific courses: a Business English course in Germany and an English for Tourism course in Portugal. This international project (ProGlobe) aims to encourage communication among four countries (Germany, Portugal, the USA and Canada) to raise awareness on the impact of environmental and social issues. This project allows German and Portuguese students learning English as a foreign language to discuss, evaluate and reflect on sustainable practices with native English speakers, thus offering them an opportunity to work in a global context and understand global issues from different cultural perspectives. The results of the study indicate that this type of project not only improves English foreign language skills but also provides learners with the tools to improve their overall intercultural communication skills as well as develop their critical thinking skills and improve their digital media skills.

Exploring How Online Assessment Enhances Students' Intercultural Competence: Opportunities and Challenges

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The difference between languages are not those of sounds and signs but those of differing world views (Humboldt, 1836, translation in Humboldt, 1963). The language teachers who using their first language to teach abroad will need to develop a good understanding of themselves as languages teachers and of their students in new contexts. Apart from teaching and learning, assessment normally has a huge influence on students' learning. Students will be motived by playing a real role in the task and try to give higher and better performance by participating in the task.

So how to develop intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and communication skill more productively and efficiently during the Covid pandemic with all physical limitations to the way we used to teach, learn, and access? The students and staff at the higher education in the UK switched to the online platforms soon after last Easter, but it has been particularly challenging for courses in the language departments. The aim of this presentation focuses on describing how the assessment enhancing the students' learning, as well as their intercultural awareness and competence, and other academic skills during the pandemic at the Institution-Wide Language Programme (IWLP) at University of Leeds. I will use my examples to explore the opportunities and challenges through the practice of the online student-led task.

Enriching Intercultural Experience through Online Opportunities

Dr Zhiyan GUO
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Foreign language teaching has been changed drastically during the COVID-19 pandemic from physical classroom to fully online with the help of computer-mediated communicational tools such as Teams or Zoom. Not being able to meet up their language partners, these tools allow students to make virtual contacts with each other. The presentation focuses on the two projects running among students of Chinese in the Language Centre of University of Warwick, who were organised into a separate Teams outside their normal language classes to meet their language partners of similar age, who learn English as a foreign language from a China's university and from other departments of Warwick. In exchanging communication across cultures, students enriched their intercultural experience and developed their intercultural competence while improving linguistic skills fundamental to their language proficiency. As a timely support, the projects were beneficial to both their overall well-being during a challenging period, and to language learning as a significant complement.

Through questionnaires and interviews, it has been found that, the projects increased exposure to the target languages and cultures, and increased amount of knowledge and understanding of each other's countries and there were mixed feelings that can be taken as precious moments of their intercultural understanding. The current study will explore how students' virtual encounters can be transformed into real intercultural learning experiences. Issues and problems will be discussed for future similar projects especially how to integrate online opportunities and intercultural learning into language curriculum development at HE institutions.

Best Practice for Language Teaching and Education – Media Application and Intercultural Competence as Critical Factors in Digital Vocational and University Language Teaching

Dr Michaela Rusch
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When teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in vocational training (nursing & medical sector), university seminars (B2 to C1 – engineering, automotive and biomedical sector) and cooperation projects on German as a Foreign Language, increasing significance concerning skill sets of media application and intercultural competencies can be recognised. Therefore, the presentation looks at the challenges created between media competence in the context of media education, on the one hand from teaching practice in subject-related German and English lessons in nursing classes at a vocational school and on the other hand related to the technical English lessons (B2 to C1) in the study field of automotive, electrical, and biomedical engineering at university. Especially in the current pandemic situation, the divergence between the expectations of the lecturers and the knowledge/skills of the students is becoming apparent (vocational training sector and universities), especially with a focus on intercultural competencies. How can the media competence of the students be evaluated and fundamentally improved? What should be the focus of media competence teaching and didactics? The talk takes a stand on these questions from a practical perspective. Some recommendations for education will be presented as best practice based on examples – including an overview of digital tools, hybrid teaching-learning scenarios, the use of learning management systems and video conferencing.

Beyond the Language Code – Explore the Self and the Other through Language Learning

Dr Fei Morgan
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This presentation focuses on the intersection between intercultural competence, counselling psychology and Chinese language pedagogy. It is an attempt to find ways to teach Chinese as well as using learning Chinese as an experience to explore differences. The aim is to support the learners to make sense of their language learning experience and achieve a better understanding of themselves and others.

By integrating theory and practice of the above three related areas, a dual-purpose curriculum was designed with the "ability to work with differences" as one of the explicitly stated learning outcomes, along with language competence.

In this curriculum we look at affect as well as function, at individuals as well as large groups, at the inner world as well as the outer world. Teaching becomes a dance and weave between these different elements and the languages we teach become access points where we learn about ourselves and others, thus raising cultural awareness. At the same time, language competence remains a key content of the curriculum.

This presentation comes in two parts. One is its theoretical foundation which is rooted in existential philosophy. Each person's perspective is respected. A space is held where learners can explore their emotional responses. Skills such as reflexivity, subjectivity and intersubjective awareness are developed.

The second part discusses the practical teaching methods of using experiential exercises and reflective journals in the learning and assessment process. This is based on a small sample of heritage learners at advanced level and non-heritage learners at beginner level.

Citizens of Nowhere: On Embracing the Discomfort of Difference

Prof Maria Scott
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Like language learning itself, an education in cultural difference can be both rewarding and discomfiting. The language student learns how to belong both everywhere and nowhere. In my work as a university teacher of French language and culture, the most uncomfortable literary text I teach is Amélie Nothomb's *Stupeur et tremblements* (1999). It tells the story of a Francophone Belgian who takes on a job as a translator in a Tokyo company. The protagonist, whose identity overlaps with that of both first-person narrator and author, feels at home in the culture and language of Japan, and initially charms many of her colleagues (and readers) with her warm-hearted wittiness. However, a number of her working relationships turn sour, as her cultural difference begins to be perceived as problematic by some colleagues. The authorial narrator, in turn, engages in certain negative generalisations about Japanese people. The novel ends in ambiguity, with the character's return to Europe associated with both the breakdown and the possibility of intercultural understanding. Some readers and critics (particularly in Japan) consider the novel racist, while others argue for its playful dismantling of Orientalism and related hierarchies. I believe that as a teacher of language and literature my job is to leave this question open: there must be no denial of the discomfort of cultural difference, to which those who work as mediators between cultures are likely to be more sensitive than most. The paper will refer to a range of reflections on cosmopolitanism, by Kristeva and others.

Student-Teacher Allyship: Supporting LGBTQI+ Voices in the Modern Language Classroom

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Universities should be welcoming havens for all students, and it is thus important that all students feel comfortable about their identities in order to maximise their learning potential and overall educational experience. Indeed, teachers can and should play a key role as advocates for LGBTQI+ students, as well as creators of a safe classroom space. This is especially important for language tutors given that the language we teach our students will shape them and the way they experience the world.

As part of our e-Expert Seminar on "LGBTQI+ Issues in Modern Foreign Languages and Translation Education", our round table strived to build bridges between students and teachers with the purpose of establishing a long-lasting allyship that would ensure LGBTQI+ inclusion, recognition and awareness in the modern language classroom.

The panel of experts included academics and activists, who suggested effective, practical avenues and plans of action for tutors to make LGBTQI+ groups visible and represented by considering recognition and inclusion in language teaching. These included the use of personal pronouns, the introduction of a more diverse range of gender and sexuality in grammar exercises, and the development of teaching materials that reflect intersecting social identities, among others.

Effective Affective and Critical Intercultural Interaction in the Virtual Language Classroom

Eva Seidl
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Today's students must deal with the multifaceted complexities of an increasingly uncertain and turbulent world (Barnett, 2012). Burgeoning crises of public health, climate, culture, economics, and politics, together with unjust power relations across these domains, call for graduates with "life sustain-abilities", i.e. citizen capacities to interact and collaborate in various ways for the caring of local and planetary futures (Peters et al., 2020). But how do language didactics in higher education react to these new realities, especially within the so-called international classroom?

I will address this topic by looking back at 20 years of German as a foreign language teaching experience at the Centre for Language, Plurilingualism and Didactics at the University of Graz, Austria (Seidl, 2021; Seidl, forthc.).

In the summer term 2021, a small-scale study was conducted with 30 international students from diverse academic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, who attended an online-German FL course (CEFR level B2). Classroom interaction took place in real time, i.e. synchronically, but virtually. Considering language education in higher education as an ideal site of affective and effective critical intercultural interaction (Wagner et al., 2020; Gregersen-Hermans & Lauridsen, 2021), I adopted Holliday's (2018) four theoretical principles of intercultural education based on constructivist and post-modern perspectives on culture. In order to explore the contribution of foreign language learning in higher education in helping students to become interculturally competent and responsible graduates, students' perspectives on global citizenship and socio-ethical competences were explored, by addressing "mattering problems in life-world spaces of their emerging futures-with-others" (Peters et al., 2020).

Teaching Language to Go Glocal: Black Lives Matter in Italy

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Aim of this contribution is to demonstrate how cultural diversity can be successfully embedded in the language curriculum in order to improve linguistic and intercultural competences while engaging students in the Italian language classroom with global issues. The contribution will draw on a number of resources and strategies used in reconfiguring part of the syllabus of an Italian language module for finalist students (level C1-C2) in a British university with a specific focus on the writing skills.

Integrating language pedagogy with a transnational (Bond 2014) and a glocal approach (Ritzer and Dean 2015; Selvi, Rudolph 2017), this contribution will specifically focus on three language sessions built around the topic of the Black Lives Matter movement in Italy. Through written and visual material, students were gradually introduced to the elements playing and important role in this movement in Italy: immigration, second generation of Italians and the acquisition of the Italian citizenship, the Italian colonial past and the protests against monuments celebrating the colonial adventure. Students worked on material created by the digital platform *Afroitalian Souls* and were also able to reflect on the British colonial past.

Analysing a few examples of resources used, activities planned and extracts from students' written production, this presentation will show how incorporating this cultural element in the language class raised students' intercultural awareness and managed to foster critical thinking to engage with global phenomena starting from the Italian case.

Creative and Decolonising Mindsets in Language Teaching for Sustainable Intercultural Learning

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I contend that teaching Spanish and indeed other modern languages can and should rely far less on textbooks and more on educators creating and sharing their fit-to-purpose and tailored resources. This is one of the premises that has shaped the existence of Spanish Bytes, an open digital platform with a flexible and inclusive agenda. This tool facilitates a better representation of less-visible communities, people and issues and rapid educational responses in the form of relevant content development. Teaching language can go consistently hand in hand with teaching about issues that matter to students and society. Teachers can be vectors of change, transformation and connection beyond classrooms' four walls.

Anti-racist and diversity-supportive pedagogies require an inclusive, creative and adaptive approach and a wide-ranging collection of regularly updated material. Language teaching contexts should be able to capture day-to-day social, political, scientific and environmental rapid-changing discussions and events, and go beyond conventional boundaries.

I will be presenting examples of syllabus re-design, where resources are created to develop intercultural competence with decolonising as an important dimension of the work. I also will discuss the collaborative element in writing new materials where, as an example, students' reflective engagement can enrich existing resources, or indeed be the base for new ones.

This presentation will be addressing also the intersection of pedagogy and activism.

Decolonising Language Teaching: AULC Manifesto

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The workshop will introduce participants to the AULC manifesto for decolonising language teaching. It will present the rationale behind the initiative and the discussions that the AULC group have had for the past year which led to the writing of the manifesto. The document covers key areas often ignored or not given yet full attention in the current conversations, and the workshop aims to generate ideas leading to future micro and macro changes moving from personal reflection and actions as professional language practitioners to institutional transformations in the University communities to which we belong.

KEYNOTE 3

Developing Global Citizens through Critical Intercultural Pedagogies

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Prue Holmes is Professor in the School of Education, Durham University, United Kingdom. She researches and publishes in intercultural and international education; and language and intercultural communication. Prue has led and collaborated on several international projects. She chairs the *International Association for Languages and Intercultural Communication* (IALIC), and is lead editor of the Multilingual Matters book series *Researching Multilingually*.

Preparing young people for encounters with social, ethnic, and economic diversity, and other forms of precarity and unpredictability is a necessary part of their education. Global issues such as the Covid-19 pandemic, forced and economic migration, and climate change require young people to be open to new ways of confronting and resolving societal problems. Technicist and neoliberal approaches to education—focused on employability and economic advancement, and condoned by parents and employers alike—are insufficient in preparing graduates for the challenges of the workplace and community. Furthermore, higher education institutions now face public calls to decentre and decolonise curricula that have typically furthered the aims and values of the privileged groups in society.

In response to these conditions, I show how two projects, embedded in the Arts and Humanities, can provide opportunities for intercultural learning in higher education. I illustrate how decentring education from its formal classroom roots into nonformal settings, e.g., in the community or via online exchanges, provides students with opportunities to engage in intercultural learning, thereby enhancing critical, participatory, and responsible citizenship in young people.

In the first project I discuss five case studies, grounded in critical intercultural pedagogy (Freire, 1970). The case studies involve collaboration among faculty and students, and in some cases, refugees or young people who face conditions of conflict, forced migration, and precarity (BIPHEC).[1] The project included multinational, multidisciplinary, multilingual researchers/teachers and students in seven universities in four countries (Brazil, Colombia, Gaza, Turkey, and the UK). The project offers inspiration to researchers, teachers of languages and intercultural education, policy makers, and others interested in internationalisation in universities on the value of the Arts and Humanities, alongside nonformal education, in promoting local/global cooperation and dialogue.

The second project, RICH-Ed,[2] supports the development of interculturality (drawing on a non-essentialist, social constructionist framework) through internationalisation at home. I discuss a Sino-European collaboration among five Chinese and three European (Belgium, Italy, United Kingdom) universities which developed intercultural resources for students in higher education in China. Together, the two projects show how intercultural communication is crucial in negotiating language and other barriers and boundaries, and the value and importance of formal and nonformal education in preparing young people as interculturally competent global citizens who can participate in and respond to local and global challenges in their future lives.

[1] Building Intercultural Pedagogies in Higher Education in Contexts of Conflict. https://biphec.wordpress.com/
[2] Resources for Interculturality in Chinese Higher Education, www.rich-ed.com

Mediating Intercultural Differences in University Education: Learning through Translation

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Language skills are not sufficient to be a competent translator, mediators must also have a deep knowledge of both the culture of the source text and the culture of the target text. This also means that translators must have key intercultural competences (Alonso 2009, Bolten 2007) and have the necessary research skills to determine the correct intercultural transfer. This is why teaching translation either in translation seminars or in language classes must be accompanied by an awareness for the necessity of intercultural transfer. (Jung 2002, Leppihalme 1997)

In the new European Framework of Reference for language competence (CEFR2018), mediation is specifically mentioned as one key aspect of language competence. This means that the classroom must ensure this competence is taught and learned. A particularly fruitful basis for teaching intercultural competence via mediation or translation are bicultural or multicultural groups, where members of the source culture can help explain cultural aspects to members of the target culture and members of the target culture can help non-native speakers of the target language in formulating the transfer adequately.

Our presentation will introduce and discuss methods for teaching translation as intercultural mediation and will furthermore give examples of how intercultural competence can be integrated into translation training and how mediation can be practised in language or intercultural awareness classes.

Intercultural Competence as a Space in-between and across Disciplines: Two Case Studies.

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In our talk we present two projects which we, as members of King's College Modern Language Centre, ran in two different departments outside of our own, with a view to foster and promote intercultural competence.

The first project, "Self-Identity: Intergenerational and Intercultural Module" is hosted at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience and is part of King's College Curriculum Innovation and of King's Service Learning. The module aims to link PG students in Mental Health Studies with a community of older adults in South London. It introduces students to ways to apply positive psychology and intercultural awareness to their own lives beyond their university experience by putting them into practice through engaging with older adults in the community. A key educational aim of this module is the intercultural component supported by a guided and gradual awareness and reflectivity of students' own perception of what it means to be "other" in terms of age, cultural and social differences.

The second project is called "Intercultural Awareness and Ethnographic Research" and is a research module offered to students of King's College Medical School. In this course, students are introduced to the main concepts of intercultural studies and are asked to investigate how cultural differences play a role not only in the daily practice of medicine, but also in shaping the very notion of health. In their final essays, students apply a qualitative methodology to a case study of their choice and reflect interculturally on their role as healthcare practitioners in a multicultural environment such as London.

Intercultural Communication, Language and Inclusivity

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Internationalisation of the curriculum has, for many years, been a key component in Higher Education and syllabus design, with a focus on global citizenship and opportunities for development of an international perspective. However, recent, unprecedented change in the social, political and Higher Education landscape has brought renewed emphasis to the urgent need to include development of language and cultural competence in learning and teaching.

Intercultural Communication at Keele is a free-standing module which aims to provide students with an introduction to the basic principles and issues related to communication within and across different cultural contexts. Lectures and seminars focus on the perception of culture and our ability to understand and function in an unfamiliar environment. The module content addresses the skills, attitudes and behaviours which students preparing to study abroad, regardless of their specific destination, will find useful and help them to adapt to, analyse and understand their overseas experience.

Communication within and across cultures is inseparable from language, which has the power to create and enforce a sense of exclusion and the marginalization (Curzan, 2003). However, it can also be used in inclusive ways to promote equality, enhance social justice and development of a "global mind". This presentation will explore the power of language and cultural communication in the context of mid-20th century feminist discussion. Through exploration of social and cultural identities and stereotypes, and Orientalism and "Othering", students on this module are able to develop an awareness of the link between language, culture and communication.

Creating Stories to Rethink Culture: The Development of Intercultural and Plurilingual Competences in Teacher Training Programs.

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This presentation describes the development of intercultural and plurilingual competences in teacher training environments. It discusses the need for intercultural competences to be included within all educational settings and analyses ways in which these competences can be developed in class. More specifically, it will point to how intercultural and plurilingual competence need to be addressed by focusing on the need to rethink learning and teaching strategies regarding language learning within an intercultural lens. Within this perspective, the use of participants' own languages and TOLC - Translation for other learning contexts-, will be discussed as useful pedagogical translanguaging tools for learning languages.

During the three month period covered by the study developed in the course "Children's literature, plurilingualism and intercultural competence" as part a Degree in Teacher Training for Primary Education, students created stories in English for recently arrived newcomers. Students were challenged to translate selected cultural referents, while reflecting on their own cultural and plurilingual identity in relation to others. Data analysis reflects a significant increase in plurilingual and intercultural competences among participants and positive effects on their attitudes towards learning languages.

Developing Pluricultural Competencies within an Intercomprehension Setting. Evidence from Practice for Romance Cultures

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Despite the existing research and frameworks arguing for the systematic integration of pluralistic approaches in foreign language learning (cf. Candelier et al. 2012; Council of Europe 2018, 157pp.), plurilingual and pluricultural resources of adult learners still remain largely disregarded in higher education.

Referring to findings from a course for Romance intercomprehension offered by the speaker at the University of Salzburg (Austria) since 2018, the presentation aims to illustrate that intercomprehension settings can be considered as particularly appropriate for the development of the learners' inter- and pluricultural competencies.

The course, which focuses on receptive language competencies and requires (at least) a B1-level in (at least) one Romance language, covers the five most spoken Romance languages, i.e. Spanish, Portuguese, French, Italian and Romanian. From the very beginning, students work with authentic (online) texts of various types. In the selection of texts, particular attention is paid to topics dealing with cultural characteristics of the Romance-speaking areas. In this context, the work of decoding these texts not only aims at the development of the participants' plurilingual repertoire but also of their pluricultural competencies and attitudes including awareness raising of cultural diversity, and curiosity and openness towards cultural alterity.

In order to illustrate the approach, concrete text examples and tasks will be presented. Besides, the results of the course evaluations from the students who participated in the course at the University of Salzburg since 2018 will be considered.

Fostering Intercultural Communicative Competence in Higher Education Modern Language Programmes: The Potential of Telecollaborative Translation Courses

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The current pandemic and Brexit pose a challenge for face-to-face exchange as a vehicle for fostering intercultural communicative competence in the teaching and learning of foreign languages in Higher Education. This creates the need for the development of digital alternatives which do not have to be seen as a secondary option but which can be equally integrated into institutional internationalisation strategies. We will present such an endeavour combining translation and telecollaboration as a virtual exchange format.

Both telecollaboration and translation have, in language teaching and learning, often been victims of their inherent binary characteristics, rendering their implementation in the language classroom rare. The presentation will demonstrate how both can, however, be combined to foster intercultural communicative competence.

Connecting approaches from Translation Studies and Foreign Language Pedagogy, we will propose that virtual exchange opens up a plurilingual and pluricultural space within which participants from varying languacultural backgrounds may collaborate on a common product - a translation. The translation process itself requires intercultural exchange both on an affective and linguistic level, in which participants engage in an immediate manner through online interaction in order to carry out the translation.

Based on these theoretical foundations, we will present preliminary results from a mixed-methods study focusing on a telecollaborative translation course carried out with Durham University German students and prospective English teachers from Karlsruhe University of Education, Germany, providing insights from student interviews, reflection portfolios, think-aloud-protocols as well as the translated products themselves with a view to the students' acquisition of intercultural communicative competence.

Integrating Cultural Elements in the Proficiency (B2+/C1) Syllabus in French and Italian (2020-21)

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Over the last decades, there has been an increasing stress in European educational policies for practitioners to develop curricula supportive of intercultural understanding. The drive to promote openness to and acceptance of other cultures has become a focus of language modules across HE institutions in this country.

In reaction to this, students' response varies a lot, in our experience: some do not understand the purpose of tackling cultural aspects to communicate successfully with people of the target language/ culture; others appreciate it more. Even when students are interested in discovering other cultures, they do not necessarily link the content to the communicative goals of language learning and that takes its toll on engagement and motivation.

Exploring cultural elements in the classroom can be crucial in changing individual attitudes: firstly, by triggering an awareness of others' cultures and practices, and secondly, by starting a process of self-discovery. All in all, our aim is to train global citizens. The problem educators face is: how do we persuade students that this process is necessary and relevant to them?

In 2020-21 the timing to tackle this question was right: the virtual classes in French and Italian have given us some insights about the characteristics of the successful teaching content for the cultural classes.

In our presentation we will share our experience of integration of cultural elements in our classes to support the argument that such content should always be meaningful, current and relatable.

We will show the audience what materials we have used in French and Italian, how the students have responded to that and how it has led to the discovery of ways for successfully bridging the gap between communicative goals and intercultural understanding in the language classroom.

Transcultural Devon: Translating, Understanding and Archiving Migrants' Experiences

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This paper will propose a model for language students to engage with the community and better understand migrants' experience while improving their language skills. This model is based on a module requiring students to interview, in various languages, members of the Exeter community who migrated to Devon, subtitle the interview into English and reflect on the aspects students find more stimulating in the interview. This module and model contribute to providing intercultural competences, demonstrating the need to teach and learn languages through ethnographic action, cultural cohesion with the local community and exploration of its cultural diversity.

This model and module also offer valuable input to the development of the decolonization of the curriculum in Modern Languages and Cultures at Exeter, through enhancing the advancement of the social justice agenda. The module explores the theory and practice of ethnography, translational acts and cross-cultural negotiations, allowing students to access such ethnographic resources as dialogues/interviews in the first language of their interviewees. It also enhances co-creation of knowledge and language learning skills proposing a learning experience based on real cultural and linguistic competence of the interviewees. Students also develop employability skills as they subtitle the interviews, thus reflecting on translation strategies and learning how to use subtitling software.

This presentation will outline how the module is achieving its outcome of creating integration between the community and the university and how it will contribute to research based on key concepts in Intercultural Communication, Migration, Translation, Etnography and Cultural Identity Studies by means of creation of a web-based living archive.

Intercultural Critical Incidents in EFL-Textbooks for Secondary Schools in Germany – A Qualitative Content Analysis of Activities and Texts

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Theoretical papers (Snow, 2015) as well as empirical studies indicate that critical incidents (CIs) are promising for intercultural learning in higher and lower FL-education contexts: School interventions such as the DESI study (Göbel & Helmke, 2010), related studies by Busse and Krause (2016) or studies on the effect of open ended CI-activities on English-major students´ (Tran, Admiraal & Saab, 2020) indicate intercultural learning via CIs in classroom settings. The question, however, to what extent CIs are used for the composition of EFL-textbooks has so far only sporadically been addressed (Sobkowiak, 2016). The presented study is part of a dissertation and analyses the frequency of CIs, their integration in teaching tasks (Ellis, 2003) and their possible use for intercultural competence development (Stahlberg, 2016) in 30 EFL-textbooks for German secondary schools via employing categories serving a qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz, 2018). Initial findings reveal that CIs are rarely dealt with in the examined corpus. Still, activities referring to CIs mostly address all three dimensions of intercultural competence (cognitve, pragmatic and affective). The underpinned understanding of culture in the CI-activities though often reflects culture as national and static. Most of the activities are openended and bear aspects of TBLL. However, certain aspects as textual authenticity or principles of learner autonomy are only considered seldomly. In the presentation central findings will be depicted with regard to further perspectives for EFL-textbook development.

Nonverbal Perceptual Awareness as Part of Language Teaching

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One of the key elements of communication competence is nonverbal decoding skill as much of nonverbal communication defines the social context in which messages are transmitted and received, making their interpretation possible. Nonverbal expression and perception are also heavily embedded in cultural norms and expectations and therefore their awareness and understanding are essential in intercultural communication. However, apart from cultural meanings or cross-cultural comparisons of nonverbal expressions such as gestures, facial expressions and interpersonal distance being explained as part of communication training or language teaching, individuals' nonverbal perceptual processes in natural interactions have not received much attention.

Nonverbal perceptual awareness training is useful: (1) to increase awareness of one's own perceptual style, (2) to inform how one's cultural norms and expectations are reflected in the expression and interpretation of nonverbal cues, (3) to help people become mindful in their intercultural encounters. The British and Japanese cross-cultural study conducted by the author (2006) reported improvements in participants' cross-cultural perceptual accuracy after a nonverbal and cultural awareness session using video clips of spontaneous interactions in four actual interpersonal contexts: competition, intimacy, kinship, and status.

Suggestions are made to incorporate nonverbal perceptual awareness training as part of language teaching. Video clips which contain natural interactions will be filmed and compiled, accompanied by cultural explanations to be used as supplementary materials for language teaching and for learners' self-study.

The Awareness of UK Students in an Intercultural Communication Context: Identities, Cultures, Communication and Friendship Formations with International Students

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A large body of intercultural communication literature demonstrates the challenges of international students abroad and the obstacles they face when they communicate with host students in intercultural communication context. Relatively, little research were found probing the status of host students, especially the British students who were born and raised in the UK. The sparse research on the UK British students' awareness of identities, cultural diversity and their willingness to communicate and form friendship with international students have left a substantial gap on how British students assess and face those challenges whilst dealing with international students on campus.

In order to examine the challenges faced by British host students in intercultural communication context in Higher Education, the study, an ethnicity and cultural discipline, adopted a mixed methods approach relying on the Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS) created by Earley and Ang (2006), Intercultural Willingness to Communicate (IWTC) scale created by Kassing (1997) and Semi-Structured Interviews (Schmidt, 2004).

The data collected examined 184 British students in the questionnaires and explored 10 British students in the Semi-Structured Interviews. Looking through the lenses of The Social Identity Theory and the four items adopted from the CQS scale; metacognitive, cognitive, behavioural and motivational items, resulted in the following six major influences that needed further discussion: The British identity, black British history, Brexit, British students' impression of international students' language competency, friendship formation between white British and international students and the role of the University in resolving intercultural communication challenges. Resolving these current issues may result in well-rounded academic and social experiences for both host and international students.

An International Project Week Goes Virtual

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The COVID-19 pandemic has put us all on a fast track to acquiring new digital skills in an increasingly interconnected world. As a matter of fact, virtual or hybrid formats or forms of communication and collaboration are here to stay and will even grow in importance when the pandemic is over.

Pre 2020, the International Project Week at Aschaffenburg University of Applied Sciences used to be an internationalisation-at-home event with guest lecturers from abroad, inbound and Aschaffenburg University students, who cooperated in multicultural teams and pursued a common project aim on site. At a time when travelling and meeting people is almost impossible, such a concept needed to be changed radically.

In our presentation, we will address the concept of our virtually transformed version of this event based on the following three principles:

1. Creating an international learning experience by maximising student contacts supported by a 3D environment where student were able to walk around and attend student contributions in an interactive way

2. Reflecting on our personal digital learning experience and challenges encountered during the pandemic

3. Developing a professional approach for future forms and formats of online encounters

An integral part of this virtual event was the integration of international stakeholders from the world of business, partner universities and researchers. The experience-learning-based and communicative approach, which extended our view as language lecturers by a more interdisciplinary perspective, was complemented by digital learning units on how to successfully engage and work in virtual collaborative environments.

In our talk, we aim to share lessons learned from the digital environment and didactic approach adopted as framework for successful student interaction including first results from our accompanying student survey.

Intercultural Business English: Conceptual Reflections on Syllabi and Evaluation of Acquisition of Competencies

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In our globalised world shaped by mobility, interconnection, and digitalisation, teaching language and communication for specific and specialised purposes in HE cannot be considered detached from intercultural learning.

A new concept of "contextualisation" needs to be applied in language teaching, thereby explaining the facets of competencies as the ability to act due to knowledge, the possibility or permission to act due to responsibility, the desire to act due to individual value concepts, and the demand to act due to appropriateness and social norms.

When considering the professional, appropriate use of Business English in diverse contexts as the final learning objective, the competencies should be addressed within the various levels of complexity in a comprehensive language programme. This includes aspects of foreign language skills, communication skills, self-management, and intercultural understanding, which are methodologically and didactically integrated within a matrix that categorises the learning objectives into the facets of competencies within six levels of complexity ranging from understanding to applying, analysing, evaluating, deciding, and finally justifying, thus highlighting and illustrating the holistic nature and the learner perspective of this approach.

The acquisition of these competencies has been assessed by a study over 5 semesters comprising 173 questionnaires, in which students were asked to evaluate the importance of competencies for the professional life as well as their own competencies, their individual learning progress, and their view on different didactical methods. The results of that study show the importance attributed to intercultural learning and how an integrated approach fosters learning processes in that field.

Combining Signed and Spoken Language Studies: Exploring Ways of (Mis)Communication within the Deaf Community

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The workshop is divided in two parts:

In the first one we will explore what is called "invisible disability" when referring to Deafness and its perception among different cultures through the four A's: 1) assumption 2) awareness 3) acceptance 4) adaptation. Participants will reflect on their level of awareness and gain an understanding and an appreciation of Deaf culture: their language, communication methods and social rules. We will debunk common myths and misconceptions when interacting with members of the Deaf community and learn to use an inclusive and empathetic language. We will talk about Deaf people's literacy and describe the role of the sign language interpreter looking at some cases of social injustice and discrimination in the workplace/society.

In the second part we will learn specific signs in BSL and analyse some practical examples comparing visual and spoken languages, their vocabulary and syntax. I will share my experience as a language teacher and how embodying visual language reinforces vocabulary retention and improves my students' speaking skills.

We will reflect together on the strong connection between words, signs and culture (comparing established signs and Italian gestures) and their power to create miscommunication and cultural faux pas if people are not aware of their use.