

Intercultural communicative competence

Underlying communicative competence - to be transferred from existing to new languages (Breen & Candlin 1980)

The existing heuristics of the language learner (Kumaravadivelu 1993)

Communicative = communicating with what our students bring with them

But culture is not like language

About **carrying experience** from one place to another

Excerpts from Holliday (2016) - 'revisiting intercultural competence'

Not the difference between big cultures

The intercultural is whenever and wherever we encounter practices and values that make us position and reposition ourselves

Small culture formation on the go

I talked to the taxi driver who took me to the station. He had a nearly new large black Mercedes; and we talked about why it was a good car to have because of the inexpensive parts and durability, and also because he could make money by doing high-class chauffeuring and get work that other taxi drivers didn't think of. (p.6)

I sensed that he was not like me - accent, English, appearance

Important knowledge regarding potential blocks

Even within a supposed liberal, secular, democratic Britain, one can never be sure what the other party endures within an increasing régime of everyday surveillance regarding migration and citizenship status. (p.7) (citing Nava 2015)

'Where are you (really) from?'

Imagining and mimicking the 'culture' of a foreign Other is bound to reduce them to less than who they are and to be highly patronising. (p.7)

So where is the thread?

The difficulty of getting to other threads - Armenian singer, Armenian bridesmaid, knowing some history

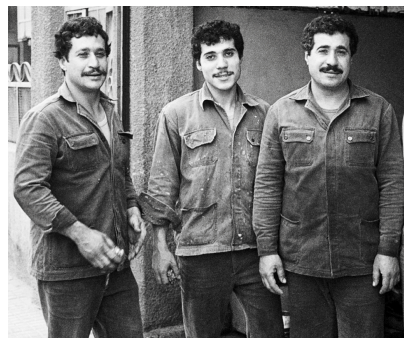
Time travel (pp.7-8)

The experience with the taxi driver now helps me make sense of interacting with three Syrian car mechanics in the early 80s

Limited Arabic, experience of getting an old car repaired in Iran with more Farsi in 1970s.
Experience of the small culture of 'staying with the car' and 'buying parts'

Working as a hospital porter in Britain while a 'middle class student'. Meeting my cousins

Successfully interacting with a car mechanic in Canterbury last week



Successfully working with 'public school' British Council colleagues and managers in 1980s

So where are the threads and potential blocks?

Understanding the workings of **the West as steward discourse**

The woman on the train (Holliday & Amadasi 2020: 22-24)

Matt is annoyed by perhaps 'foreign' passengers with over-large suitcases going to catch the train

Then annoyed by a perhaps 'foreign' woman in his carriage speaking loudly 'in her language' for a long time on her phone, with the speaker on

'In her culture they don't respect personal space like "we do"; and she doesn't know how to turn off the speaker'

Chats with his course-mate Kati, who reminds him of the postcolonial and anti-essentialist literature he has read. She accuses him of having a 'Western patronising' attitude as well as a gender problem

He recalls being bullied at school because he refused to use particular language

He is impressed by how sensitively another ('white' woman) passenger helps her when she has difficulty explaining about her ticket to the inspector

Kati convinces him that she is just 'an annoying person' - nothing to do with her 'being foreign' or 'a woman'

Not normative?

What are the sources of this competence?

Ethnographic disciplines - making the familiar strange, thick description

Choices, taking action, seeking out prejudice

Understanding language and discourse

Grand and personal narratives

Pragmatics

In what sense communicative?

'Intercultural' or 'transcultural learning'?

The culture we meet or the intercultural we bring?

Bibliography

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