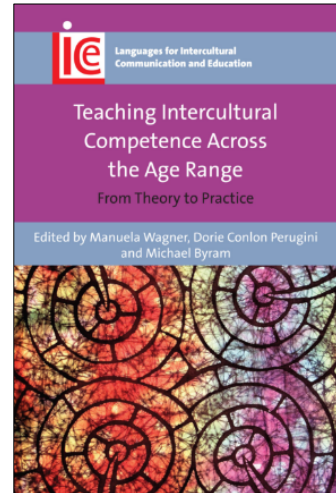


Manuela Wagner, Dorie Conlon Perugini, and Michael Byram (Eds.), **Teaching Intercultural Competence Across the Age Range: From Theory to Practice**, Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2018, 184 pp., \$139.95 (hardcover).

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The need to develop intercultural competence (ICC) in language education is growing, and ICC is recognized as an important dimension of foreign language teaching (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Although many language teachers are highly aware of the importance of ICC in language education, they fail in effectively incorporating ICC into language curriculum (Young & Sachdev, 2011). The volume **Teaching Intercultural Competence Across the Age Range**, edited by Manuela Wagner, Dorie Conlon Perugini, and Michael Byram, offers a critical synthesis of action research and project-based teaching practice in exploring how to integrate ICC in foreign language curriculum at varied levels ranging from primary and secondary education to postsecondary education. It makes an essential contribution to the field of ICC and language education by systematically applying the theory of ICC to foreign language pedagogy and promotes a greater understanding of the concerns, strategies, and challenges associated with designing and implementing ICC lessons by examining teachers' perspectives as they teach ICC in their language classrooms. The volume provides readers with new insights into ICC pedagogical practice across the age range and serves as a guide for incorporating an intercultural approach into foreign language curriculum.



The introduction illuminates at great length how the project for this book gets started and emphasizes the importance of cooperation for project development, which empowers readers to realize its crucial role in project-based methods. Moreover, depicting thoroughly Byram's ICC model identifying five components of ICC (knowledge, attitudes, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, as well as critical cultural awareness) and teaching objectives under each component, this part provides theoretical foundations for the implementation of ICC units in subsequent projects.

Comprised of six projects implemented at a primary and secondary levels and one project at a university level in an online course, this volume offers readers powerful evidences for developing ICC in students from different age groups. The first two chapters focus on ICC development of language learners in primary school. Chapter 1 gives a detailed report on a project by Patty Silvey and Silke Gräfnitz, who implemented a modified unit on "The House" in fourth-grade Spanish curriculum. By engaging students in a series of activities, such as identifying the location of a house shown in a photo, completing an essay

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reflection, and creating a “family tree house,” the chapter enlightens language teachers on how to inspire students to figure out similarities and differences regarding housing in one’s own culture and other cultures, understand the multifacetedness of their own culture, and deconstruct stereotypes. In chapter 2, Dorie Conlon Perugini highlights the importance of creating opportunities for fourth-grade language students “to discover and interact with the target culture” instead of presenting “undisputed facts” in the modified unit entitled “Modes of Transportation” (p. 46). Through exposing students to various authentic resources (e.g., videos, photos) and engaging them in planning a virtual field trip, this project implies the necessity of creating authentic learning context for students and immersing them in experiential learning, which is beneficial to their ICC development.

The following four chapters address the pedagogical practice on how to integrate ICC into secondary foreign language curriculum. In chapter 3, Philip Rohrer and Lauren Kagan’s implementation of a revised unit entitled “Exploring Mexico” in sixth-grade Spanish curriculum enriches and expands the content of the existing unit by exploring many other cities in addition to Mexico so as to enhance students’ knowledge and suspend their preconceived beliefs or attitudes about different cities in their own country and other countries. The project in chapter 4, designed by Jean Despoteris and Komo Ananda, intends to develop students’ ICC in the eighth-grade Spanish classroom by implementing a modified unit entitled “Daily Routine.” Some activities are well planned, offering students opportunities to compare their daily routines with those of students in Peru and to think critically, such as responding to critical thinking cards and reflecting on ICC questions after viewing a video clip. By assigning students a scenario of an immigrant family and having them serve as an interpreter/mediator who assists the family to settle down in the United States, Deanne Wallace and Jocelyn Tamborello-Noble in chapter 5 create a meaningful and contextualized learning environment in 10th- and 11th-grade Spanish curriculum for enhancing students’ cultural awareness and critical reflection, as well as deepening their understanding of the immigrant experience in America. Furthermore, the diverse assessment methods employed by the language teachers in this chapter—who combined direct and indirect assessment, including performance assessment, video blog entry, autobiographic writing, and questionnaire—can help to measure ICC in a more systematic and accurate way, ensuring “a stronger measurement and more vigorous assessment” (Deardorff, 2015, p. 77). Chelsea Connery and Sarah Lindstrom in chapter 6 attempt to promote ICC growth for 11th- and 12th-grade students in advanced placement (AP) Spanish classes by using the unit titled “Beauty and Aestheticism.” The student projects used in this unit are rather illuminating in widening students’ perception of diverse pictures of beauty across the world, in which students collaborate with group members to explore the topic of beauty and aestheticism in their own and other cultures, such as body modification, beauty and gender, skin color, and so on.

Chapter 7 aims to integrate ICC into an online German course at a public university through synchronous instruction and asynchronous interaction. Manuela Wagner and Niko Tracksdorf put emphasis on the importance of high frequency of synchronous instruction on how students apply prior knowledge to solve problems by discussing, interacting, and practicing instead of tackling vocabulary and grammar that are expected to be learned by students before online instruction. In addition, it is notable that interactive talks and conversations on ICC-related issues at the end of each synchronous online meeting are meaningful activities that can elicit students’ deep reflection and critical thinking.

Different from the earlier chapters that focus on students, chapter 8, by Lauren Rommal and Michael Byram, shifts attention to the ICC growth of teachers who “need more than knowledge and skills in and about language” (p. 155). In response to the issues on how study abroad increases language teachers’ ICC and assists them in teaching ICC, this chapter underlines the importance of teachers’ preparation before study abroad and follow-up activities after returning to their home countries.

Overall, some major findings in this collection need to be emphasized. First, for language educators, identifying the desired objectives is considered the first task for designing ICC lessons. Meanwhile, it is crucial for them to bear it in mind that clearly defined objectives can guide subsequent teaching procedures, such as determining what activities to undertake, what evidence to collect, and what assessment methods to adopt. Second, most of the chapters mention the importance of reflection activities in the teaching practice. Some authors claim that instructions on reflection activities should be provided by integrating ICC elements into statements or questions. This is a very useful view in navigating language educators to collect more evidence for evaluating students’ ICC development from their reflections. Third, it is most noteworthy that group collaboration is favored by all the language educators in their foreign language curriculum activities, such as identifying the locations of houses in chapter 1, researching specific topics on an assigned city in chapter 3, creating presentations of beauty topics in chapter 6, and so on. Additionally, groupwork plays an important role in fostering students’ ICC because it provides students with an opportunity to “develop ICC through working collaboratively and learning to tolerate ambiguity” (p. 118). Therefore, through groupwork, language educators can encourage students to tolerate ambiguity and learn to interpret events from very different perspectives when negotiating meaning with group members.

On the topics of ICC research and language teaching, this volume is worth recommending to intercultural researchers and language educators who seek to combine foreign language curriculum with teaching ICC. On the one hand, it expands and deepens readers’ understanding of ICC pedagogical practice in language curriculum at a variety of levels. On the other hand, it offers language teachers enormous pedagogical implications for intercultural language teaching by presenting various meaningful and authentic interactive activities to enhance students’ ICC as well as their enthusiasm for language learning.

### References

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