Internationalization of Higher Education: Teacher's Handbook

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FOREWORD

Increasing the internationalization of the university is currently an existential prerequisite for the further sustainability and competitiveness of any university. However, this does not only mean drawing up strategic documents and declarations on the importance of the university internationalization. The research shows that the advanced universities of the world strive for consistent implementation of their internationalization strategies in all processes of daily functioning and management of the university to increase the quality of learning and achieve the targeted students' competencies (Soliman et al., 2018).

The degree of internationalization of the university is reflected not only in the top-down emphasis on well-thought-out strategies for recruiting international students, for promoting international learning and research mobility, and for internationalizing the curriculum, but also in concrete steps to encourage "integration of multicultural, multilingual, and global dimensions within the education system, with the aim of instilling in learners a sense of global citizenship" (Yemini, 2014, 21). Equally, the bottom-up activation of individual teachers and teams from different departments of the university should be highlighted to prepare a culturally relevant learning environment at the university, realistically respecting the needs of a culturally diverse student and teacher community. This also implies the necessity to support this process by developing competencies for teaching culturally mixed groups of students. So far, this area appears to be underdeveloped. Our publication tries to bridge this gap.

This handbook is intended for teachers involved in the teaching of courses in foreign languages or in the teaching of culturally or ethnically mixed groups of students. This handbook could help teachers increase their professional competencies by focusing on the salient issues of the international teaching environment. In other words, it has an ambition to help university teachers to incorporate an intercultural dimension into their teaching. The book is based on many years of experience of both authors with educational activities in the university environment and active support for increasing the internationalization of the university.

The book consists of ten chapters. An integral part of each of them is the discussion points.

The first chapter is a brief introduction to the issue of internationalization of the university, an answer to the question: What makes a university international? We focus on the challenges that internationalization poses to university teachers.

The second chapter characterizes the typical features of an internationally oriented educational environment. It starts from the need to implement global issues, topics, and competencies across university curricula. It is essential that the university pays strategic attention to the related professional competencies of teachers.

The third chapter deals with differences in education across cultures. The need to be aware of these differences is emphasized. As an example, the culturally determined roles of university teacher and student in the Asian and Western European model of education are compared.

The fourth chapter focuses on the issue of diversity in university classrooms, especially the cultural diversity, but also the diversity in students' abilities and learning preferences or learning styles.

The fifth chapter draws attention to the need of applying a learner-centred approach, specifically the correct determination of learning outcomes. Bloom's taxonomy is presented as a very useful tool in the process of producing good learning outcomes.

The sixth chapter explains the experience of culture shock that may occur after students enter the new university environment and lose the familiar signs of their home university. The description of its stages is intended to help teachers recognize the impact of the culture shock on students´ performance.

The seventh chapter presents a list of various teaching/learning methods and techniques that teachers can use in order to cover the needs of diverse groups of international students and enable their learning, such as interactive lectures, group projects, brainstorming, flip teaching, student's diary, simulations, peer learning, discussion and service training. Teachers' competencies for culturally relevant teaching are also summarized in this chapter.

The eighth chapter offers some advice on how to conduct a lesson in English or other foreign language to overcome various linguistic barriers and problems in understanding the content of their study, and conversely, develop the linguistic skills of the students. It also clarifies the role that body language (non-verbal communication) plays in international university education.

The ninth chapter introduces a few case studies. They should encourage teachers to reflect on specific critical situations in the international educational environment and empower teachers to deal

with and avoid possible misunderstandings, false expectations, or judgements.

The last chapter is a glossary of key terms followed by a bibliography of references used. The Appendices include additional materials, especially an overview of classroom language in pedagogical communication.

We hope that this handbook will fulfil its purpose of empowering teachers to create relevant international learning environment. We wrote it in English so that in this way we can contribute to raising the English language proficiency of its users. We also hope that the book will enable teachers to develop their personal professional competencies, knowledge, attitudes, skills, abilities, and motivation to teach culturally mixed groups of students in university classrooms.

Acknowledgements

UNIT 1 INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS CHALLENGES

Since the Bologna declaration (1999), the internationalization of higher education has gradually become a widespread phenomenon in Slovakia. The common goal, clearly defined in the Declaration, was the creation of a European space for Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to enhance the employability and mobility of citizens and to increase the international competitiveness of European Higher Education. Competition can be conceived firstly in a very narrow sense – as attracting foreign students. Secondly, it can be understood as a mechanism to attract foreign teachers and staff. It can also mean that a university strives to prepare its domestic students for an international world and, in order to do this, the very nature of a university located in a single geographical space begins to be challenged (Dearden, 2014, 29-31).

Observing successful universities in Europe, we can say without exaggeration that the currently increasing level of internationalization of the university is a prerequisite for its further sustainability and competitiveness. The evidence of their internationalization should be sought in 'the integration of multicultural, multilingual and global dimensions within the education system, with the aim of instilling in learners a sense of global citizenship (Yemini, 2014). In fact, we can say that increasing the level of internationalization of the HEI is now an essential prerequisite for the further sustainability and competitiveness of each HEI.

How do universities implement the international dimension of education? Two ways can be observed. The top universities im-

plement their strategies by taking deliberate (intentional) steps as well as using various emergent opportunities for internationalization. They consider that the internationalization is an essential step in the process of turning a nationally important educational institution into an international one.

On the other hand, there are universities which started to internationalize their curriculum spontaneously, ad hoc – without any specific objectives in mind – just taking advantage of the European higher education policies that established legal framework for the process (Bologna Declaration, 1999). The spontaneity of the whole process enhanced the development of international contacts and the expansion of courses or study programmes in foreign languages, mainly English (English-medium programmes). However, it also indicated that there was weak preparedness and little expertise within those institutions (Gopal, 2011; Dearden, 2014; Zelenková & Hanesová, 2019). Little attention has been paid to the role and quality of English language proficiency in the teaching process and academic research, or to the preparation of teachers to teach in these programmes. Even if, through almost two decades of the internationalization processes, HEIs in Central Europe have learned a lot and worked on improvements, we believe that this handbook will clarify some salient issues, explain the key points and provide some examples to allow teachers to better understand the context they have been drawn into - sometimes voluntarily, sometimes by orders from university management.

WHAT MAKES a UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONAL?

For a university to be international, a few **internationalization enablers** of the university curriculum need to be present (Caruana, 2011), among them such as:

- **the presence of international students (of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds),**
- **international collaboration and partnerships,**
- **links with all stakeholders (including businesses and the third sector),**
- **internationally accredited programmes,**
- **international staff and staff who have experience in teaching and conducting research in other countries,**
- **learning material and resources originating outside the host country, the opportunity to learn foreign languages.**

In Slovakia, universities have an international character, as shown particularly by the influx of international students and teachers. Their presence has put new requirements on teachers´ professional competence in **pedagogic, linguistic,** and **cultural** areas of expertise. We can identify the specific **role of a teacher** that is teaching on international study programmes. Teaching in an international context may be considered a challenge for all educators as this requires new paradigms and concepts of teaching in order to manage the cultural diversity in education (Gopal, 2011).

The second area that needs attention is the **role of the English language**. Most international processes at universities are enhanced and facilitated using the **English language**. English has become **a lingua franca of higher education** as complete study programmes are designed and taught in English (**English-medium programmes)**. The role of English in this process is therefore significant in two ways:

first, it serves as a **medium of education**, and, secondly, it is a **cultural mediator**. It enables the users of English to function effectively in situations where cultural otherness and differences are involved (Morgado, 2017, 24-25). Teachers using the English language may create a bridge between two (or more) different worlds. Therefore, the university should support the development of teachers' language skills, as this broadens their understanding of different cultures.

CHALLENGES OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

In the view of many researchers (Byram et al., 2009; Morgado, 2017)) it is evident that teaching in an international context creates **teaching problems** related to the following issues:

- **language barriers,**
- **the English-language proficiency of students and teachers,**
- **different educational practices,**
- **changed social dynamics in culturally diverse groups of students,**
- **different learning styles and strategies,**
- **deficits in students´ performance due to the new cultural and educational situation,**
- **a weak international context (deficit of universities to create a culturally responsive teaching/learning environment,**
- **other issues.**

A raised cultural awareness and **intercultural competence** of university teachers is essential for reducing the barriers between them and their students from various cultures.

As Stone (2006) observes, other issues that present a challenge for teachers and the management of universities are **curricular issues** and **support services** for both local and international students from

diverse cultural backgrounds. New **study programmes in foreign languages** are launched and **joint-degree-programmes** created to enable students to enrol in study programmes at two different universities and study in a foreign language. At Slovak universities, **English-medium programmes** prevail, but there are also **French-medium** and **German-medium programmes**. In the past two decades, Matej Bel University has developed some international joint-degree programmes, for example a joint degree programme between MBU Banská Bystrica and the Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt (Tourism and Regional Planning - in German), or with the University of Warmia and Masury in Olsztyn (Law - in English), and with French universities in French, such as Université de Poitiers (Law, Economics and Management), Université de Lorraine, Nancy (Finance, Banking and Investment), Université de Reims-Champagne-Ardenne (Territorial Studies) .

In addition to the creation of joint-degree programmes, individual **courses** or **study programmes** are offered **in foreign languages**. In these programmes local students or international students (mainly Erasmus+ mobility programmes) can study a selected number of courses in English.

It is important to notice that this development has put a lot of **challenging requirements on all stakeholders** in this process: teachers, students, university leaders and administrators. The question is whether all these actors are prepared to respond to new challenges effectively. Based on our research among teachers who teach courses in English (Zelenková & Hanesová, 2019) we can assert that there are challenges in following aspects:

a) curriculum design and its international (global) content,
b) administration,
c) pedagogy (teaching and learning),

d) the use and quality of the English language in the pedagogic process,
e) interculturality – communication and competence in intercultural context.

In the next chapter we shall look at some of the issues connected with curriculum design, and some specifics of teaching and learning in the international context.

READING & DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Reflect on your involvement in the internationalization of your university. How did you start teaching in English? Has there been any training concerning language and culture or other international, political issues organized by the university for you? Who helped you, where did you look for help (if you needed any)? Compare your beginnings with how things are now and share your experience with other colleagues.

2. There are many documents on the internationalization of higher education and related issues published by the UNESCO, OECD, Council of Europe or European Commission. Are you familiar with them? Here is a short list of some of them. It would be advisable to get acquainted with the main aims and ideas in these documents. Read them, make notes, and report your findings to your colleagues:

- *Higher Education in Globalized Society* (UNESCO, 2004);
- *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity* (CoE, 2008);
- *Living Together: Combining Diversity and Freedom in 21st Century Europe* (CoE, 2011);

- *Competencies of Democratic Cultures. Living Together as Equals in culturally diverse democratic societies* (CoE, 2016);
- *TASKs for democracy: 60 activities to learn and assess transversal attitudes, skills and knowledg*e (CoE, 2017);
- *Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education* (UNESCO, *2019)*;
- *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching and assessment* (CoE, 2020).

UNIT 2 INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

An international university must ensure that the **learning environment** is "international enough". This means it should cover **the needs of international students**, as well as **domestic students**, including students from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds. The curriculum should respond appropriately to their learning and cultural needs. Walková (2021) explores the factors that impact the international educational context (language proficiency, cultural and linguistic background of students, teachers background, job security and opportunities for development, progression, and promotion, etc.). **The international learning environment** may include such aspects as:

A. **International (global) education**: The global aspect of education means a focus on the future, i.e. the **curriculum content** and **design** should be appropriate for graduates who will be operating in an increasingly international environment. An international university curriculum is not only another language variety of the home curriculum - a home programme (in Slovak) translated into, e.g., an English version. An international university should cover international issues - **global issues** for students to get acquainted with and be prepared to deal with in their future jobs. Global issues, such as social, economic, ecological, and political questions, should be reflected in particular subjects and programmes across curriculum. What are these global topics across the curriculum? Dolinská et al. (2018) introduces among others the following:
   - international cooperation and international solidarity
   - global mobility
   - access to education

- technological advancements and the labour market
- poverty
- climate change
- human rights
- discrimination, racism, migration
- overconsumption
- unequal distribution of power and wealth
- waste of resources
- over-consumption
- disease, epidemics (by the way, this issue found very low resonance then).

The findings of the survey conducted among Slovak economics students show that there is a high awareness of some global issues among students (concerning the economy), but very low awareness of other issues (disease, poverty, climate change, racism, and terrorism), i. e. these are poorly covered in the curriculum.

Covering these topics must be oriented not only to developing knowledge (about) but they should serve for the development of global skills and competence (attitudes, values, and behaviour) that students need now and will need for the future to deal with global problems), e.g.

- thinking critically
- working well (co-operating) with people from different cultures
- engaging with conflicting perspectives
- considering the impact of one own´s actions on society
- responsibility for making ethical decisions that benefit society
- promoting innovation in the marketplace

Through the inclusion of the global education into the curriculum, the university becomes international and contributes to the education of **democratic European (global) citizens** who will be aware of their future responsibilities towards a community, country and the whole world.

B. **Recognition of the benefits of international experience:** Internationalisation should present benefits for all stakeholders: for staff, students and institutions (universities). These benefits should be **identified, exploited,** and **valued,** and the universities should try to maximise them. Among the benefits is the exchange of information and expertise and the follow-up implementation in the form of innovation. For students, the benefits are on a professional level (exposure to and orientation within the new environment, study methods, gaining new knowledge) as well as a personal level – students confirm their ability to become independent, gain a new worldview and improve language, communication, and intercultural skills. Exploitation of benefits means making the benefits public, i.e., the university should openly demonstrate pride in their internationalization, build on staff experience and value it. Valuing these benefits can be reflected in students automatically receiving credits for the courses they have studied in their exchange programmes. Valuing benefits for the teachers´ (researchers´) participation in the international programmes should be reflected in the reward scheme of the employer. This is not always a case at the MBU, even if it is clear and demonstrable that the teachers who participate in the Erasmus+ teaching mobility bring new expertise and can implement innovations based on their teaching experience abroad. Such agents in internationalisation have a multiplier effect and the management of faculties or of the University should be aware of this. Consequently, the results gained by students during their study experience abroad (credits, assessment) should be recognised by

their home university. Language proficiency improvement and the development of intercultural competence of the participants (students, researchers, administrators, and teachers) are expected benefits and as such should be also measured and checked (before and after exchange).

C. **Collaborative management** of developing the joint-degree programmes with foreign partners, as well as collaboration in research. Joint-degree programmes should be built, based on thorough research into the capacities of each university to complement the capacities of another university and achieve synergy to create an innovative programme with a stronger potential than separate programmes in each university.

D. **Collaborative delivering** of the designed programmes. a good example is lectures by visiting professors, videoconferencing of lectures by experts followed by students in both universities, and finally theses supervised by experts from the partner university. Another example is the method used successfully for the final assessment in a French-Slovak study programme at the Faculty of Economics, MBU: Examination boards from both universities participate: the state exams and diploma thesis oral defence of individual students are transmitted through online videoconferencing facilities to the examination board in the partner university.

To fulfil all the above-mentioned aspects of an international university, there are some key issues that need attention or change, for example the issues about the pedagogic, linguistic, and intercultural competence of teachers, the linguistic proficiency of teachers, students and staff, and raised cultural awareness of teachers, students and administration staff.

PEDAGOGIC COMPETENCE IN AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

We can see the following challenges for pedagogy:

- **Foreign-language competence** - knowledge and skills, language proficiency of all participants involved; the linguistic competence of teachers delivering the courses in a foreign language (English); students´ proficiency in the foreign language that should help them to master their international studies and fulfil the criteria for the successful completion of a course;

- **Pedagogic, didactic competence** - teachers must be able to apply appropriate **learner-centred teaching methods**, with variable and inclusive methodology in order to help students succeed in the course of study, i.e., the methodology must reflect and cover the needs of students from different cultural backgrounds;

- **Communication and social skills**, which would facilitate **positive social interaction** and enduring professional **relationships** (interactive, social competence);

- **Opportunities** for staff and students **to develop a "global citizenship"** competence providing opportunities for exploring, understanding, and **promoting cultural diversity** (adapted from Stone, 2006, 336). In other words, the teachers should have developed their own intercultural competence in order to develop it further in their students;

- **Culturally relevant pedagogy**

Ladson-Billings (1995) introduced the concept of culturally relevant pedagogy, mainly with the aim to balance current social inequalities in schools. But some of the principles of her model may be applied in a university context, as culturally relevant pedagogy addresses student achievements and helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity. There are three criteria to be fulfilled for culturally relevant teaching:

- it must develop students academically;
- it must nurture and support cultural competence;
- it must develop a socio-political or critical consciousness.

According to Aronson (2016), culturally relevant educational praxis includes (a) a caring community, (b) holding high expectations, (c) cultural competence, and (d) socio-political awareness as a teacher. Culturally relevant teaching enables students to see their own cultures reflected and affirmed in the curriculum as well as enabling their cultural identity to be maintained (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Lindsey et al. (2009) introduces a scale of cultural proficiency of leaders in education, which can be manifested as a continuum in the following stages: cultural destructiveness, cultural incapacity, cultural blindness, cultural pre-competence, cultural competence, and cultural proficiency. In our opinion, cultural competence and cultural proficiency are the desired targets to be attained by all teachers teaching in international groups of students.

LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Teaching a subject (or course) in a foreign language requires a set of pedagogic and linguistic competencies. The **communicative language competence** does not only involve 'knowing the language', or 'knowing' specific English or subject-specific vocabulary. It requires specific skills to communicate in English and use the foreign language in the **classroom management** process to enable students to study, read and write in that language on the **academic level**. Studying in a specific subject /course in a foreign language always means developing not only the subject knowledge but also the linguistic competence. This approach is called CALLA - *Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach*, or CBL - *Content-based learning* and is used to mediate the subject content and at the same time to develop foreign language skills. This approach requires the following **language communication abilities (language competence) of teachers**:

- the ability **to introduce the main topics** from the subject content;

- the ability **to develop academic language skills**, such as **listening** (to lectures); **speaking** (in discussions, presentations); **reading** (of articles, books and learning materials); and, **writing** (lecture notes, seminar works, abstracts and the final thesis);

- the ability **to instruct students in learning strategies** for both content and language acquisition, such as metacognitive, cognitive and social/affective strategies.

The **linguistic competence of the teacher** teaching a course in a foreign language consists of several complementary parts (slightly adapted from Scarcella & Oxford, 1992):

- **Linguistic competence**, which means knowing the system of the target language, grammar, vocabulary, specific vocabulary of the teaching content, etc.

- **Discourse competence** (spoken and written) as an ability to use the language for academic and pedagogic purposes, in the teaching process: presentations of topics, leading discussions, explanation of learning outcomes, communicating the results of assessment and their justification, etc. In a written form, this competence concerns writing articles to be published in foreign journals (in English), abstracts for international conferences and designing powerful presentations for conferences.

- **Socio-cultural competence**, which means the use of the language appropriately in different pedagogic and social situations (for teaching and socializing purposes), in student-teacher interactions and management of the classes, lectures, seminars and administering tests; this competence involves also the specific competence of **intercultural communication and knowledge**, which is one of the requirements necessary to be fulfilled in international education; this competence will be explained later in a separate section.

- **Strategic or compensatory competence**, which means the ability to communicate the message even if there are some drawbacks in the knowledge of the language system, i.e., to stay communicative and find a way of reaching the communication goals.

We believe that these abilities and skills should be part of teacher training courses, both for in-service and pre-service teachers.

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

An international, multinational, and multicultural university environment can be of benefit to all stakeholders (teachers, students, management, administration and supporting services) but only if they have all developed the ability to function successfully in this environment. It is especially important that "teachers are conscious of cultural dimensions. Moreover, they need empathy and knowledge of foreign cultures to be able to take positive measures in accepting diversities and in intercultural understanding" (Nissilä, 2021, 47). Such capability is called **intercultural competence**. What is it?

Teachers should be aware of the various **educational** and **cultural backgrounds** of their students, have certain **knowledge** of cultures, **skills** to communicate with them appropriately, and acquire a set of **positive attitudes** towards cultural diversity in the classroom. Teachers´ **cultural awareness** needs to be raised as they are exposed to multicultural groups of students. Culture is a phenomenon that is present in daily communications and as such also influences the educational environment, e.g., the interactions between teachers and students of different cultural backgrounds. It reflects the native and the 'foreign' cultural values, beliefs, behaviours, and body language, which students and teachers bring with them to the class.

This kind of competence is a primary goal of all initiatives leading towards a mutual understanding and co-existence of diverse group of people in such areas as management of a diverse workforce, the productivity of multicultural teams, marketing across cultures, educational settings, and the development of a **climate of respect for di-**

versity in the organization (Landis et al., 2004, 149). Landis et al. (2004) suggest an "intercultural mindset and skillset" for an intercultural communicator that is reflected in one´s behaviour, knowledge and emotions. They assume that "although the primary emphasis is on behaviour, no behaviour exists separated from thought and emotion" (ibid, 149). The **mindset** refers to one´s awareness of operating in a cultural context. This entails some conscious knowledge of one´s own culture, creating a framework for useful contrasts between cultures and a clear understanding of how to use (and avoid) cultural generalizations and stereotyping. The intercultural competence (see Scheme 1) should influence all three dimensions of human personality: cognitive, affective, and behavioural (Gudykunst, 2003, Landis et al., 2004, Deardorff, 2009; Zelenková, 2019).

Scheme 1: Intercultural competence (based on the above-mentioned resources)
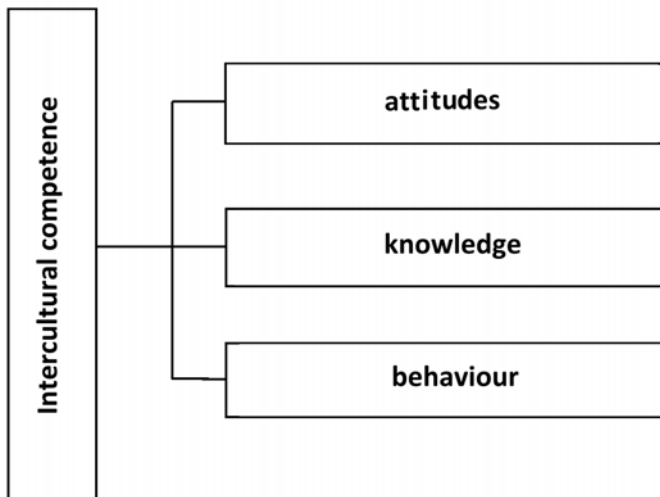
Because **intercultural communicative competence** contributes to a higher quality of professional performance by university teachers, it should attain at least C1 level (CEFR, 2018).

In this publication we focus on some selected issues for further development of teachers´ competencies, skills and attitudes. The selection of issues was based on the research into Matej Bel University inservice teacher capabilities to teach in foreign language programmes. The research was undertaken in 2011 and 2018. The comparative survey (Zelenková & Hanesová, 2019) with approximately the same number of teachers (around 200) showed deficit in skills and abilities necessary for teaching in foreign languages. Most respondents teach their courses in English, so we will refer to English-medium instruction needs.

Attitudes

Why attitudes first? Which attitudes? These are common questions when defining intercultural competence. Byram et al. (2001) and Deardorff (2009) argue that in an intercultural environment one begins with attitudes (changing them if required) and moves towards the acquisition of skills and knowledge that produce the internal and external results. In an unfamiliar cultural environment or multicultural situation there is a condition that these attitudes must include the readiness to accept differences, valuing other cultures; openness to intercultural learning and to people from other cultures, and withholding judgement. Another set of attitudes include the teacher´s tolerance of culturally ambiguous situations and the curiosity to discover and explore the cultural backgrounds of students. These attitudes will allow teachers to manage intercultural encounters in the classroom and interaction and communication in intercultural educational settings.

Knowledge

What kind of knowledge do the teachers need to have? The above-mentioned attitudes are a pre-condition to generate better under-standing of cultural differences and raise the overall cultural aware-ness. Teachers have to gain the knowledge of how culture influences behaviour (e.g., in educational settings). At the same time, they must have a certain knowledge of their own culture as this will allow them, through comparison, to get the knowledge of other cultures (Byram calls this basic knowledge of other cultures *a cultural minimum*). This knowledge can be based on experience with representatives of other cultures but not be limited to this source as it is often generalised and stereotyped in the form of anecdotal experiences. We recommend a serious study of the basic cultural issues (what is culture, culture and identity, cultural diversity, cultural values, beliefs, norms and their demonstration, specific features of cultures, basis of communication patterns, and others), which can be defined as a *culture-general framework* (Bennett, 2009, 97).

Behaviour

Behaviour is the desired external outcome of attitudes and knowledge (Deardorff, 2009). Knowledge and attitudes are reflected in behaviours, such as adaptability and adjustment (to manage cul-tural context of the classroom), flexibility (to select and use appropri-ate communication styles or appropriate study resources), empathy (with students struggling with a culturally different environment), tolerance and respect (to cultural diversity). These types of behaviour can allow teachers to manage or reconcile cultural dilemmas in the multicultural classroom (or out-of-school) environment.

There are other components of what is defined as the intercultural competence, e. g.:

Motivation

Some authors argue that behind the attitudes (and their desired change in many cases) motivation plays an important role. Without any motivation to listen to students from different cultural origins, or to observe and evaluate the intercultural situations, teachers will not gain the skills to interpret cultural behaviour, relate it to their own culture and behave accordingly. Teachers must be motivated that will shift them from the ethnocentric to the ethno-relative stage in their cultural development. Cultural ethnocentrism is the feeling that leads us to conclude that our own culture is superior to other cultures (as represented in the classroom). Cultural relativism is the ability to view and understand other cultures on their own terms. Stepping in-to other cultural systems reminds us that our own system is by no means universal or superior. It is simply familiar. To be able to understand other cultures it is important to evaluate them from a relativistic rather than an ethnocentric perspective.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. There are many different types of cultures and people can be part of more than one type, for example a national, regional, profes-sional or company culture, and a religious culture. Some cultures are easily identifiable, others are not. Have you ever thought of your own cultural identity? How would you define it? How many cultures do you represent?
2. How do the cultures (´hidden in you´) influence your values and behaviour? Give some examples.
3. Did teaching international groups of students influence your teaching? How did it change your views of culture, your attitudes to otherness? Are you aware of some impact the teaching may

have on your personal profile? Give examples (if you can) of cross-cultural situations that help to improve your understanding or raised your awareness of cultural issues. Think of teaching international students or your Erasmus teacher mobility in a culturally different country.

UNIT 3 CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM

Education, like any other social activity is anchored in the **culture** of a society. The culture of a country is behind the decisions made in education concerning, for example,

- **the structure of the system of education,**
- **the way the schools are managed,**
- **approaches to teaching,**
- **approaches to learning,**
- **methods of assessment,**
- **the role of teacher,**
- **the role of pupil/student/learner**.

University teachers, who carefully observe their groups of international students, are already aware of some of these differences that foreign students bring with them when crossing the borders for an internship in a Slovak university. During the teacher training courses (2013, 2014)[1] they have discussed their astonishment, surprise (or shock) about what other students know, do not know, how they behave, and why they are doing well or badly as learners in different educational settings. These discussions revealed that in many cases, teachers´ preconceptions are that our own (Slovak) teaching/learning culture is the only one acceptable at Slovak universities. They view their own culture as 'the only one', as the central,

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[1] *Within the project Enhancing foreign language programmes at university*

most important one, and do not allow for any deviations from this perspective ("*Only what we do here is OK*"; "*We have always done it like this so it must be good*."). In their view all students should adapt to how we teach, learn, assess, etc. once they have come to study at our university. Many teachers are sure that students have to adapt to our criteria. This approach is known as an **ethnocentric approach** (our culture is the only one and the only good one).

Imagine that students bring the same opinions about their way of learning, ways of teaching in their home culture, about methods of assessment, organization of studies, requirements for students, etc. In their expectations, a Slovak university has the same style of education as their home university. Here it comes to a '**clash of educational cultures',** or **classroom culture clash** – not only between a Slovak and another culture but between Slovak and other (**various) cultures in one classroom**. We can speak about **educational culture diversity**. This cultural diversity needs to be acknowledged and properly managed in order to avoid some students suffering discrimination just because of a teachers´ failure to adapt to a new situation pedagogically and culturally. Therefore, we think that teachers need to be aware of the cultural background of students and should be prepared (trained) to use teaching strategies that respond to all.

Our research in **intercultural pedagogic skills** showed that up to 70 % of teachers participating in the research had very low awareness of other educational cultures (Zelenková & Hanesová, 2019). The research also showed that teachers still carry with them lots of **deep-rooted stereotypes** about nationalities and ethnic groups. This means that they are applying one simple experience with representatives of e.g., French or Turkish culture on the whole group of students from France or Turkey repeatedly, year after year. Teachers are likely **to make generalizations** in the assessment of students' performance based on nationality. For example, some teachers put foreign stu-

dents into stereotypical national or ethnic groups when stating, for example: students from this country are lazy; others do not know how to make presentations; students from another country are always good at speaking, and you can rely on them to contribute to class discussion, etc. In many cases these attitudes may lead to some of their **students being disadvantaged** a priori.

TEACHING AND LEARNING ACROSS CULTURES

To clearly illustrate the cultural differences in teaching and learning we would like to give some examples of differences between two extremes: **traditional Western** and **Asian teaching methods and learning styles** (based on Christopher, 2012).

Asian cultures are mostly based on the values of **Confucianism** and **Hinduism**. Here we will explain some of the values anchored in Confucianism and therefore influencing the educational culture of that part of the world. Nevertheless, we must be aware of the fact that some of the values are not solely attached to Eastern educational system but may be found universally in other cultures of the West e.g. (respect to elders).

Confucianism is a traditional religion. Its thought and philosophical concepts are part of the Chinese way of life. Confucius´s thinking and principles have commonality with Chinese traditions and beliefs putting a strong family in the foreground, as a basis for an ideal government. Some of the **values** that direct social relations are **loyalty**, **respect toward authority** and social hierarchy (being respectful for elders by children, for husbands by their wives, respect for teachers by pupils). **Humility**, **trust,** and **honesty** and **doing things meticulously** and carefully as required by Confucius are highly valued and respected. Other values include **virtuous** behaviour, valuing **hard work** and **moderation** in all aspects of life. If we understand these values,

we can better understand the educational system, the way of teaching and learning, in many Asian countries.

Moderation means that one should never boast about achievement or status (the success of a collective – team or company – is more important than the individual´s success).

Respect for authority means respect for the boss, status, and seniority. Important positions will be taken by senior persons. Collectivist values mean that the society (and every company) operates in a "collectivist fashion under a strong leader who nevertheless has his/her team interest at heart" (Tomalin & Nicks, 2010, 270). Common physical morning exercises on the school yard in an orderly and obedient fashion are not exceptional.

Virtuous behaviour indicates how surface harmony is important. Harmony means *accepting others at face value and saving one´s own face* – being sincere in all actions and modest about your achievements. In South Korea there is a special social concept to be aware of - *kibun*, which means protection of personal dignity or inner face.

This concept also tries to avoid any public unpleasantness or embarrassment so that people can maintain their status even in the face of bad news. The Chinese are comfortable with the way things are. As Confucius stated, **carefulness in speech** and **proper conduct** are of utmost importance. Despite the **need for consensus**, however, the **hierarchical structure** and the need to preserve status also that once the leader makes a decision, it is final.

According to the cultural typology designed by Richard Lewis, cultures around the world can be divided into three groups: a) linear-active cultures, b) multi-active cultures and c) re-active cultures. This categorization is done according to how people communicate, interact

and behave during the interaction. Most of the Asian cultures (such as Vietnam, China, Japan and partially Korea or Thailand) belong to the third category, **the reactive cultures**. What does this mean?

Lewis characterizes the re-active cultures as courteous, amiable, and accommodating. In communication and interaction, the members of these cultures prioritize **courtesy** and **respect, listen quietly** and calmly to their interlocutors (i.e., are **good listeners**). They tend **to react carefully** to the other side´s proposals, prefer careful listening before making any decisions. They are also likely to get the other side to talk first so that they can react to what was said They also tend to **avoid confrontation** (pursuing harmony) and find suitable ways for both parties to make an agreement (**importance of relationships**).

Chinese (Asian) education

Their education is **based on these values and principles**. Confucius supported personal development toward wisdom, respect for authority, and constant personal improvement so as to reach satisfaction with one's existence. Hence, he favoured learning about poetry, history, music, and social relations over learning any workplace skills. Much teaching in China today is still delivered in lecture form, with the teacher as the expert and the students "silent 'sponges' soaking up the knowledge dispensed and showing a preference for rote learning and regurgitating facts" (Wang, in Corcoran, 2013). This approach is familiar to European teachers as a teacher-centred approach.

Respect for authority and hierarchy

This system is often described as a system in which students passively receive knowledge and information from the teacher. Therefore, large classrooms (and an English class may consist of 80 students) lead by authoritarian teachers are a common thing. The learning process (also called '**rote learning**') is a **laborious** and **repetitive** one. This contrasts with Western way of learning through empowering students to ask, discuss, doubt, discover, comment, argue, analyse and question (Christopher, 2012, 179).

By 'rote learning' many Western scholars mean (Watkins and Biggs, 2001, as cited in Christopher, 2012) repetition as not favoured in the West. But this repetitive learning helps forming better impressions, resulting in better recall and enhanced understanding through discovering new meanings.

Virtuous behaviour (obedience)

In Asian education generally, emphasis is given to **effort** and **motivation**. The correlation between a student´s effort and educational success is part of Confucian philosophy. There even are two old Chinese written characters that represent learning. The first means ´to study' and the second means ´to practice repeatedly´ (according to Dahlgaard-Park, 2006, as cited by Christopher, 2012, p. 179), these two characters emphasize mental (cognitive and intellectual) and physical (endless physical exercise) learning.

Effort relates to hard work. **Working hard** is the only way to achieve academic success. Hard work means that students need and spend more time studying, mastering the course materials, and getting better test results. These benefits, on the other hand, have resulted in heavy pressure on pupils and students and disappointment when

they are not able to succeed. Cases of suicide among Chinese or Japanese students are not an exception.

COMPARING DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL CULTURES

Even if Slovak universities do not get many students from China or Japan (real representatives of these cultural types), there are students of such origins coming on the Erasmus programme from Western European countries. Matej Bel University has already hosted Japanese, Vietnamese, and Chinese students. But this is not the only reason to mention the Chinese (Asian) educational culture in this part of the book. We do it for another reason too: the example of the Chinese educational culture should introduce the readers (teachers) into the problems arising from differences in learning and teaching style and show how these particularities are deeply anchored in culture. The understanding of the culture (values, beliefs, cultural assumptions) as the background for all social interactions and systems seems to be the gate to understanding the differences between students from various cultural domains.

The teacher's role in East Asian education: teacher–centred education

- authority, honour, at the top of hierarchy (requiring respect)
- source of knowledge: passes knowledge on to students
- strict demeanour (not familiarizing with students)
- formal relationship with students, distant from students (seen by Western eyes as unfriendly and cold)
- more prone to criticize than to praise students (simplified according to Christopher, 2012, 180-181)
- teacher-student relationship based on a high-power distance (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Today, these characteristic features of Asian educational culture prevail, but are melded with Western approaches.

The teacher's role in Western education (learner-centred education is the aim, based on constructivist approach)

- more democratic, not the ultimate authority,
- not source of all knowledge (low-power distance cultures),
- facilitator, guide in students' learning,
- more informal relationship with students,
- teacher-student relationship based on low power distance (Hofstede, 2005) – equality, informality.

The student's role in East Asian education:

- obedient: pays respect to teacher, takes teacher as the ultimate model
- makes effort, devoted to tasks
- not questioning
- learns in silent classroom
- learning by memorization and repetitive learning,
- learning collectively, under the main authority of the teacher
- collaborates in class, classroom relationships (the harmony of the group is more important than an individual´s performance)
- group members are expected to subordinate their needs to those of the group by promoting group values, demonstrating group loyalty
- extrinsically motivated (saving family´s face, material rewards)
- learning based on books (increasingly on IT).

The student's role in Western education:

- learning individually, trying for excellence individually
- learning under guidance from the teacher
- allowed/encouraged to ask, question, discuss, argue
- can question the teacher´s ideas and authority
- intrinsically motivated (coming from personal rewards: mastery, self-fulfilment)
- learning not based solely on book (increasingly on IT)
- learns in a lively classroom.

These simplified examples of two extreme-poles characteristics of educational cultures are chosen here to demonstrate how culture influences educational processes. In an **international teaching/learning environment** the learning environment becomes **culturally diverse** and presents challenges to students and teachers alike.

It is necessary for teachers to be aware of this possible **mix of differences** and to become aware of their own teaching styles and cultural preferences. The awareness of different values hidden behind educational practices across the cultures of the world can make teachers **revise their pedagogical approaches** to mediating knowledge, expectations relating to students performance, learning preferences or styles and outcomes, to classroom and time management, etc., in order **to create equal opportunities for all students** avoiding (quite often unconscious) discrimination of some students who do not fit perfectly into the picture of "my own, and only one" pedagogic approach.

UNIT 4 DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM

1. How do you understand the term *diversity*? Have you come across this term? In which context? What can be diverse? For example, it is very often mentioned in connection with nature: you might have read or heard about *biodiversity.* What does that mean?
2. How does the term *diversity* translate into your national language?
3. What changes does the **internationalization of higher education** bring to a classroom? To brainstorm your ideas, fill in the following mind map.

39
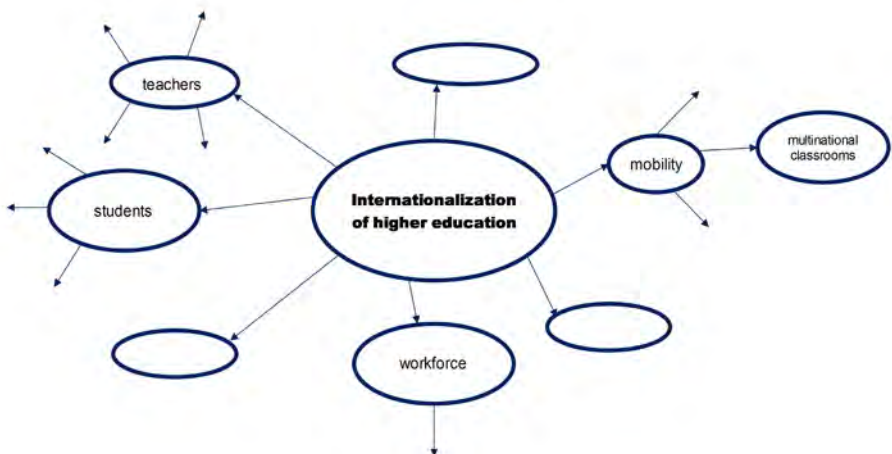
Diversity is a complex concept. Besides cultural diversity in an international classroom, we should always carry in mind that student groups are complex learning bodies, diverse in their personal qualities and characteristics, their origins, or ethnicities; they are all products of different educational systems, of different educational backgrounds, with particular learning styles and strategies. As we have shown in the comparative examples between Asian and Western styles, students differ in their learning habits, ways of acquiring and maintaining knowledge, etc.

We have looked at **cultural diversity**, which means the diversity in all factors that contribute to the cultural background of students, for example *ethnicity*, *religion*, *country of origin* and *culture of origin*. It is the task of the management of schools (or classes) **to reconcile the differences** between students, prevent problems arising from these differences and restore friendly relationships among students and between teachers and students, or between university administrative and organizational staff.

DIVERSITY IN GENERAL (according to Collins, 2012)

To understand the diversity of people in any company (or university), we can look at the dimensions of diversity model designed by D. Collins (2012). According to this author there are four unique dimensions of diversity that need our attention: **permanent**, **evolving**, **personality** and **organizational** dimensions. These dimensions help us to illustrate the diverse identities of students and the diversity in the learning environment at university. The following table No.1 summarises and exemplifies the diversity dimensions in any company. Can you add any other examples of personality or evolving diversity dimensions?

Table 1: Diversity dimensions (designed after Collins, D. 2012)

Diversity dimension	Examples
Permanent	race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, birth generation
Evolving	age, height, weight, religion, education, physical ability, marital status, income level, geographic location
Personality	extraversion, introversion, emotional stability, conscientiousness, openness, motivation
Organisational	hierarchical status, work content (load), department and seniority

The **permanent dimension** of diversity refers to physical attributes people are born with. i.e., they are mostly unchangeable. These attributes include, for example, colour of skin, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. They do not naturally change over time and can significantly influence a person's identity and life experience. For example, an African student in a small university in Slovakia may experience "staring looks by other people (students) as if they had never seen black people before, and very unpleasant judging, criticizing, or simply laughing since we do not understand Slovak language".[2]

Evolving dimension refers to evolving (changing, developing) attributes, such as age, weight, religion, educational background, physical ability, marital status, economic status, or geographical location. These qualities may influence the way people are treated as stu-

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[2] *An example from the survey taken by foreign and Erasmus+ students as part of the project Plurilingual and intercultural edulab to enhance the strategy of university internationalization. KEGa 004UMB - 4/2019.*

dents/teachers at different stages of life or in different cultures. At one point in life, a student is a young, dynamic person. Later in life, the same person may not be responding to educational requirement with the same enthusiasm. Older people may be treated very differently by others just because of the change in age. Students at the beginning of their studies are different personalities from what they become in higher years of study. Students' personalities also evolve, change and mature during their international exchange studies. Their international study experience contributes to the development of their personalities. As one of the students put it: "It was during my stay in Banská Bystrica that I discovered myself and became a mature person. Without this I would not know who I really am".[3]

Personality dimension refers to the attributes that make everybody's personality type. Psychologists and researchers have developed several instruments to analyse aspects of personality. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a well-known personality assessment tool. It can provide individual students, as well as their teachers and colleagues, with a better understanding of a student´s personal preferences and behaviour. MBTI is based on four dimensions:

1. Introvert vs extrovert (based on where you get your energy from). As an introvert you get your energy from yourself, i.e., internally. As an extrovert you get your energy and capacity from relationships with others, i.e., externally.
2. Sensing vs intuition (based on the ways you learn). a sensor type learns by understanding procedures; an intuitive type learns by understanding the big picture.
3. Thinking vs feeling (based on how you make decisions). a thinking type follows logic and rationality; a feeling type tries to find and ensure harmony.

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[3] *Ibid.*

4. Judger vs perceiver (based on how you organize your time). a judger is rigidly organized and scheduled; a perceiver is flexible.

These characteristics of student personalities should be considered when designing tasks for group or pair work, joint projects, or individual projects, or, generally when choosing and applying teaching strategies. Not all strategies fit all students. Not all students respond to all types of teaching strategies.

Organizational dimension refers to the patterns of an organizational (university) culture and the attributes that are connected with the status the student has in the organizational structure. It shows the relationship of the university (authority) to students and vice versa. For example, university organizational cultures may differ in the following aspects:

a) Organisation of the university: either a *hierarchical organization* (high power distance cultures maintain the rigid hierarchy showing the power of the institution and teachers, while students have little power), or a *flat organization* - equality culture (low power distance cultures) that takes students as partners who can have their say in curriculum design or university life;

b) Student work content and load (how much of the individual study load students are required to master – a lot of reading, or just learning the facts from course books);

c) Departments, to which students primarily belong to at the faculty (even if there should be a unified university culture, departments differ in their requirements, duties for students and in their teaching philosophy);

d) Use of leisure time, engagement of students in social life, events and activities;

e) Welcoming or neutral culture towards foreigners.

Every student and teacher or individual can be characterized according to these five dimensions. These dimensions can unify people (based on what they have in common) or create friction, clashes (based on what they have different). Both commonalities and differences occur in every organization.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND CULTURE

Before we look at the cultural diversity and cultural relations in a university classroom, we should understand the term *culture.* Culture is defined in many ways, according to the field of its study.

- Anthropology emphasizes "the knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, customs and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, as cited in Landis et al., 2004, 167).
- Psychological sciences stress the fact that culture is acquired by learning from other members of society: culture is learned, shared and adaptive.
- Communication sciences see culture as communication, interaction and accompanying behaviour, as a special characteristic of human species.
- Social sciences emphasize the shared patterns of living and behaviour: culture is a set of "basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people" (Spencer-Oatey, 2009, 15).
- Other definitions see culture as a set of values, beliefs, norms, and behaviours shared by a group of people but different for

each individual, communicated from one generation to another (Matsumoto cited in Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009, 14). We refer to this definition when we deal with teachers´ stereotypical thinking about foreign students´ nationalities.

All of these definitions apply to the international education environment. a set of values, beliefs and behaviours concern any organizational (university, faculty, college, dormitory) culture. The way of life, policies, norms, procedures, and conventions are also product of a particular, e.g., educational, culture. Students and teachers are on the one hand a product of their native cultures and have become members through learning by language or imitation) and inheriting ways of thinking and behaviour. On the other hand, at the same time they are also creators of their own culture through repeating, perpetuating and sharing their culture with their group.

This concept of culture shows several important characteristics that teachers in international education should be aware of:

- Culture is associated with social groups, but not every individual shares the same cultural characteristics (we should avoid stereotyping students according to country of origin or nationality, for example).
- Culture is learned, shared, and adapted (we should remember the different origins of international students – probably they all learned in different ways, have different learning experiences, they may or may not like to share their knowledge).
- Culture is manifested through different types of customs and norms - explicit and implicit (we should be aware of the impact of culture on these norms – not all countries have the same approach, hierarchy, organizational structure, etc., so

students may go through difficulties in adapting to a new culture).

- Culture affects people´s behaviour and interpretation of behaviour (we should not deny or punish some kinds of behaviour that is different from Slovak habits – it is better to try to understand the origin of different behaviour and explain it by cultural background – nevertheless, this is possible only in case we have knowledge about culture; therefore intercultural training for teachers should be advised).

WHAT MAKES CULTURE?

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. As we could see, the word *culture* has many meanings and is open to many interpretations. What is culture for you? What would be your definition?
2. What do you think makes a culture? What are the components of culture? Brainstorm it in your groups and make a mind-map showing your ideas about culture.
3. Here is a list of components of national cultures. Some of these components, such as dress or language, can be recognised easily (at first sight). Other features of culture are not so easily recognised, e.g., cultural values. In your groups, study the list of components of national cultures, and discuss which categories you place them in[4]:
   A. Things which can be recognised easily (at first sight).
   B. Things which take some time to recognise.
   C. Things which you can recognise only when you are very familiar with a culture (live longer in it).

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[4] *This activity was inspired by and adapted from Utley, D. Intercultural Resource Pack. CUP, 2004, p. 17.*

COMPONENTS OF CULTURE	Categories
Greetings (formal, informal)	A B C
Material things (artefacts): art and architecture	A B C
Relations to authority (teacher)	A B C
Driving rules	A B C
Emotions shown in public	A B C
Dress	A B C
Language	A B C
Eating and drinking habits	A B C
Students' leisure time	A B C
The role of women, relations to women	A B C
The role of men	A B C
Humour	A B C
Organization of the university (company)	A B C
Personal relations, friendship	A B C
Body language	A B C
Punctuality in schools	A B C
Social organization and class	A B C
Treatment of outsiders/foreigners	A B C
Values of university	A B C

Add any other elements which you think belong to culture.

4. Think of the elements of culture that may bring difficulties for foreign students when they enter a new university environment, for example the incoming Erasmus+ students to Slovakia. In which aspects of life may they feel disoriented? If you teach them, have you ever asked them about it?

In our textbook we have looked at **cultural diversity**, which includes factors that culture is 'made of', such as ethnicity, religion, country of origin and culture of origin. It is the task of management to reconcile the differences, prevent problems arising from these differences and restore friendly relationships among employees.

DIVERSITY IN ABILITIES, INTELLIGENCES, LEARNING PREFERENCES OR STYLES

In the previous parts of this chapter, we have mentioned diversity in an international classroom deriving from the national, cultural, and ethnic background of the students. We should not forget that there are further sources of difference between students that should be taken into consideration – whether it is in a mono-national, or a multinational group of students. For example, people (students) differ in the way they learn and take in new knowledge. a theory that explains these differences is the **theory of multiple intelligences** developed by Howard **Gardner**, Professor at Harvard University. In his book *Frames of Mind* (2011). *The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* he proposes the existence of seven separate human intelligences that can be applied to **differences in learning styles**. As this theory underwent a lot of criticism (as not based on a serious research), we are using the term learning preferences. Nevertheless, we are differentiating among learning preferences that are similar to multiple intelligences, as we believe in their benefits: the more varieties of activities teachers apply in order to cover various learners´ preferences, the more beneficial the teaching is for all types of students.

Linguistic, verbal intelligence involves sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals. Individuals with this intelligence are very good at memorizing facts, writing stories, and reading.

Logical-mathematical intelligence features the capacity to analyse problems logically**,** carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically. Individuals with this type of intelligence are good at reasoning, recognising patterns and are good at using numbers and figures.

Musical intellingence involves skills in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns. People with strong musical intelligence are good at thinking in patterns, rhythms and sounds.

Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence entails the potential of using (engaging) one´s own body or parts of the body in solving problems and learning. People who have strong bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence are said to be good at body movement, performing actions, and physical control.

Spatial intelligence features the capacity to recognize and manipulate the patterns of wide space. The individuals with this intelligence are good with directions, maps, charts, and pictures.

Interpersonal intelligence denotes the person´s capacity to understand and interact with other people; the ability to assess intentions, emotions, motivations and desires of other people and, consequently, to work effectively with them.

Intrapersonal intelligence involves the capacity to understand oneself, one´s own desires, fears, and capabilities - and to use such information effectively in regulating one´s own life.

Naturalistic intelligence denotes a person´s capacity in nurturing and exploring the environment and learning about anything connected with nature. a person who is high on this intelligence likes to explore

the outdoors. This type of intelligence is the most recent addition to the first seven types (the original theory).

One type of intelligence may prevail, but people usually have a **unique mix of intelligence** types. Prevailing intelligence means that a person is strong in something - has strong capacity or preference for doing certain things. But these intelligences may also mean **different learning preferences** or **learning styles**[5]. Linguistic intelligence is apparent with those students who like to read a lot, tell stories, repeat the vocabularies loudly (verbalize the read content); musical intelligence means that people can learn better with music in the background; kinaesthetic types prefer learning while doing things (movement supports their learning).

Application of multiple intelligences model on students´ learning styles & preferences

5 At present, the theory of learning styles has been criticized by several researchers as insufficiently proven. They recommend focusing on learning preferences, interests or attitudes (Pávová, 2018). In this book, we mention both concepts to include readers from the whole spectrum of opinions. We want to emphasize that there are individual differences between students also in the area of learning.

Study the following table and think of activities that can be applied to support learning by each type of student. After a discussion in your groups, fill in the last column in the table.

STUDENT Learning style / preference	is good at	learns best by prefers to learn by	Suggested activities
Linguistic	reading writing telling stories	speaking, listening, visualisation of words	
Logical-mathematical	solving puzzles and problems, recognising patterns, reasoning, logically analysing problems	asking questions, searching for answers to why? categorising, making logical sequencing and patterns	
Musical	singing, listening, music production, playing instruments	using rhythm, listening to and recognising rhythm, learning with music in the background	
Bodily-kinaesthetic	spatial orientation, movement in space, working with things, body movements	moving around, touching things, work with subjects	
Spatial	drawing, constructing, arts and crafts	visualisation, eyesight, opportunity for imagination	

Interpersonal	contact with others, working in groups, making contacts with other people, socializing, leading groups, understanding other people, mediation	co-operation, learning in pairs or groups, group work, sharing	
Intrapersonal	individual work, working alone, pursuing one´s own goals and interests	working alone, in private	
Naturalist	work outdoor, work in the natural environment, out of school activities	working outdoors, observing nature and natural environment	

Task 1

To practice the understanding of the theory, match the following student characteristics with one type of intelligence:

CHARACTERISTICS	INTELLIGENCE TYPE
1. has excellent problem-solving skills 2. enjoys thinking about abstract ideas 3. remembers written and spoken information 4. remembers by doing, rather than hearing or seeing 5. enjoys reading and writing 6. debates or gives persuasive speeches 7. has excellent physical coordination 8. recognizes musical patterns and tones easily 9. has excellent self-awareness 10. remembers songs and melodies 11. creates positive relationships with others 12. analyses their strengths and weaknesses well 13. enjoys analysing theories and ideas 14. resolves conflicts in group settings	a. linguistic b. logical-mathematical c. musical d. bodily-kinaesthetic e. spatial f. interpersonal g. intrapersonal h. naturalist

Task 2

If we as teachers understand these intelligences and their prefer-
ences, we can adjust our teaching to cover the needs of all or most
students (of all types of intelligences) in class. Think of the following
teaching strategies and activities and identify the intelligence types
they can address. Match the activities with intelligence types:

TEACHING ACTIVITIES	INTELLIGENCE TYPE
1. reading some passages from well-known authors	a. Linguistic
2. giving student hand-outs	
3. demonstrating a product	
4. using silent music in the background	b. logical-mathematical
5. reciting a poem	
6. initiating work in pairs	c. musical
7. asking students to work in groups	
8. showing a film/video	d. bodily-kinaesthetic
9. showing graphs and pic-tures	
10. assigning work on a group project	e. spatial
11. giving students time for personal reflection	f. interpersonal
12. giving students time for individual work	
13. 'writing on the wall'– putting posters, notes, student work, etc. on classroom walls	g. intrapersonal

Self-reflection

Is the knowledge of this theory of importance to you as a teacher? Do you have any personal experience from your teaching practice with different intelligence types in classroom? Do you think you can adjust your teaching strategies to the application of this theory in the classroom? How can you utilize the knowledge of multiple intelligences theory in a multicultural (international) group of students?

Have you assessed your strengths? Which kind of intelligence is prevalent in your teaching? Have you assessed your own learning preference or learning style? On what intelligence is it based? Do you think it helps learners to know their individual learning preference or learning style?

UNIT 5 LEARNING OUTCOMES

Why think about learning outcomes in international higher education?

In 1999, the Bologna Declaration was signed with the aim to establish a common European Higher Education Area (EHEA). For this purpose, it started to be necessary for university degrees (Bachelor and Masters) to be also described in terms of **learning outcomes**, rather than simply by number of credits and syllabus content. Behind this effort there was also the need to improve traditional ways of **describing qualifications** and qualification structures for the labour market. The Bologna Declaration authors (Ministers of Education in particular countries) encouraged the member states to elaborate a framework of **comparable and compatible** qualifications for their higher education systems in terms of workload, level, learning outcomes, competencies, and profile (also UNESCO 2019).

What are learning outcomes?

The **traditional** way of designing courses and study programmes was to start from course content. Teachers decided on the **content** that they intended to teach, planned how to teach this content and, finally, assessed the content. The teaching concentrated solely on the **teacher´s input**, which **students were expected to absorb**, learn, acquire, and demonstrate the level of their knowledge at the end of the course, when their knowledge was assessed by the teacher. The main decision maker about the course content (what, how, how much and how well) was the teacher. This approach is known as a **teacher-centred approach** to teaching/learning. In a teacher-

centred university, traditional ideas about teaching prevail, such as regular lecturing or presenting information to students and then testing them on their memory of the facts in midterm tests and final exams. Classes are usually large, and students do not usually ask questions. In fact, there is very little or no interaction between professors and students and very rarely between students during the class (except for foreign language classes, where the communicative approach to teaching foreign languages has already brought some interaction and activity into the classrooms).

If the course should be described in terms of what is **expected from a student to demonstrate at the end of the course**, a shift must be made towards the students. This alternative **student-centred approach** focuses on what the students are expected to be able to do at the end of the course, module, or study programme. The achieved capabilities, skills, knowledge, and attitudes that a student demonstrates at the end of a learning period (course, study programme, module, year of study) is known as an **outcome-based approach.**

To sum up, here are the main differences between a teacher-centred approach and a student-centred approach (Table 2):

Table 2: Teacher-centred approach and a student-centred approach (own source)

Teacher-centred approach (teacher´s input)	Outcome-based approach (student-centred approach) (student´s outcomes)
Teacher decides on content of the course (what shall be covered)	What is expected that student can do as a result of the learning activity? What has the student achieved?

Teacher plans the implementation of the content (when, how, how much)	What will the student know (which knowledge will be acquired)? How will the student show the ability to apply that knowledge?
Assessment of the knowledge (how well students absorbed the content) is done by the criteria set by the teacher	What will the student understand? Which skills will be acquired?
	How will the student behave? What will the student demonstrate, etc. …

We must acknowledge the fact that it can be difficult to identify precisely what the student must be able to do in order to pass the course or programme. It causes problems for many teachers as they themselves have passed through the education system which did not concentrate on these issues.

Slovak teachers and study programmes guarantors were given this task a few years ago while being required to submit study programmes for a new accreditation by the Ministry. For each course a *Course Information Sheet* (Appendix 2) was designed, unifying common items across Slovak higher education institutions. Each information sheet should contain certain items giving all necessary information for the student about the course organization and content. Besides the number of hours, the content of the course, prescribed study literature and other administrative information on the delivery of the course (easily done), one obligatory item on the sheet presented a challenge for many teachers: **learning outcomes**.

Without being trained in this pedagogic issue, many teachers struggled to fulfil this task. Finally, a model Information Sheet was de-

signed by the University showing a formula for writing the learning outcomes: ***At the end of the course the student should be able to….,*** which helped many, but stayed problematic for others as they were not used to think within these categories.

What helped (and could always help), was the thinking in terms of **Bloom´s taxonomy of learning objectives**, so teachers had to be acquainted with the verbs which can express the level of required (and, finally, acquired) knowledge, capabilities, and skills.

In the following part we shall therefore devote our attention to the explanation of an outcomes-based education and the definition of learning outcomes. Finally, we shall look at ways to design and write learning outcomes successfully and effectively to enable teachers improve their pedagogic skills. Well written learning outcomes should also help students and higher education institutions to have a target toward which they can concentrate their efforts.

OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION

Outcomes-based education' (OBE) or 'outcomes-based teaching and learning' (OBTL) is known as a term for the application of constructivist pedagogic approaches or for the constructive alignment in teaching and learning. Outcomes-based teaching and learning is a convenient and practical way of maintaining standards and of improving the quality of teaching. Standards are stated up front, and teaching is tuned to best meet them, assessment being the means of checking how well they have been met (Biggs & Tang, 2007, 5).

The term outcomes-based education has been used in **different ways** and **on different levels**:

- University, faculty (institution) level (what the graduates of a university should be able to do,
- study programme level (what the graduates of a particular study programme should be able to do),
- course (modules) level (what the students should be able to do at the completion of the course or module).

Outcomes-based education is sometimes confused with **competence-based** education (competence is more than a skill), or the learning aims or assessment.

Biggs and Tang, in their book *Teaching for Quality Learning at University* (2007), outline the development of outcome-based education. Originally the term was used in 1994 when William Spady set up programmes for disadvantaged schools and designed *targets for each student to reach* so that all could achieve some sort of success (Biggs & Tang, 2007, 6). He called it outcomes-based education.

Another use of outcomes-based education can be traced in the *accountability movement* in the USa some ten years later, when universities set the outcomes on an institutional level (graduate outcomes). These outcomes comprised "averaged student performances and other kinds of institutional outcomes, in order to meet accreditation requirements and the requests of external stakeholders like employers and policymakers" (Biggs, 2007, 7).

The third wave of the use of 'outcomes' identified by the authors is the focus on the **outcomes-based teaching and learning** (OBTL). In this case outcomes should be defined solely to enhance teaching and assessment, not to serve any other purpose. According to Biggs and Tang (2007) the essential features of OBTL are as follows:

a) it states what schools/ teachers intend the outcomes of their teaching on a particular course or programme to be (how we would recognize if or how well students have learned what is intended they should learn (of course, this should be different from a prompt list of topics for teachers to 'cover' in a curriculum);

b) teaching should be done in such a way as to enable most students to achieve those outcomes (engage students in learning activities that directly lead to achieving those outcomes);

c) assessing how well the outcomes have been achieved. Usually this means using an *assessment task* that requires the student to perform the intended outcome itself.

   This, in many cases, is not best achieved by giving students questions in which they write answers, or multiple-choice tests in which they just circle the correct answer.

LEARNING OUTCOMES DEFINITIONS

There are many definitions of learning outcomes in the relevant literature. It depends on what the authors focus on: either on what the student should know, be able to do, or what is expected from a student at the end of a course. Here are some of the definitions for our consideration:

- Learning outcomes are **statements** of what is expected that the student **will be able to do** as a **result of a learning activity** (Jenkins and Unwin, 2001).
- Learning outcomes are statements that specify what learners will **know** or be able to do as a result of a learning activity. Outcomes are usually expressed as knowledge **(cognitive level), skills (behavioural level) or attitudes.**

- Learning outcomes are an **explicit description** of what a learner should **know, understand and be able to do or demonstrate** after completion of a learning process.
- Learning outcome: a statement of what a learner **is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate** at the end of a period of learning. (Gosling & Moon, 2001).
- Learning outcomes describe what students are able to demonstrate **in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes** upon completion of a programme.
- Finally, the ECTS Users' Guide (2005) summary definition is what we should acquire as we all work with the ECTS system: *"Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning… The process of learning could be, for example, a lecture, a course or an entire study programme."* (2005, 47)

From these definitions, it is clear that the learning outcomes focus on **what the learner has achieved** (or can demonstrate) **rather than what the teacher intends** to do.

As we can see, what all these definitions have in common is a concentration on student outputs at the end of a learning period.

WRITING GOOD LEARNING OUTCOMES

a well-structured course should show clear **alignment between the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria** used on the course; in turn this requires teachers to design appropriate **assessment tasks**, and to deliver the course in a way which enables students to reach the required outcomes. This alignment between learning outcomes, learning and teaching methods, and assessment tasks and assessment criteria makes the whole process transparent to the students

(and other interested parties) and helps ensure that there is **coherence in the course**.

Teachers know that in many cases it can be difficult to identify pre-cisely what a student has to be able to do in order to pass a course or study programme. But we should also accept that there are good reasons for writing understandable and real learning outcomes in an international university where students from different educational backgrounds meet. Consider the reasons that Gosling and Moon (2001, 11-13) introduce**:**

- reaching coherence in curriculum design,
- enabling quality assurance and standards,
- attaining consistency (for volume and standards of learning),
- creating criteria for transparency to the student (for the con-tent and assessment of learning),
- enabling and developing student self or peer assessment,
- supporting the fight against plagiarism.

In our opinion, another reason for considering appropriately written learning outcomes is the opportunity to **divert** teachers´ attention **from** teaching and **learning for memorization**. Very often students are/were required to memorize facts, to enumerate facts and infor-mation that is constantly changing, and its changing influx is available to everybody at any time on the internet. If some knowledge should be memorized, it should be clear **why and for what purpose**. So, we think that teachers should be trained in this pedagogic issue, either in continuous education or in projects of further education. For now, we shall do an exercise and have a discussion around this topic.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING LEARNING OUTCOMES – BLOOM´S TAXONOMY

The learning outcomes should specify the minimum acceptable standard for a student to be able to pass a course (the threshold level). It is important to express the **essential learning** of the course in a small number of outcomes rather than have many superficial outcomes.

First, the outcomes of a study programme should be designed and then the learning outcomes of a course should be developed.

Therefore, a good start for writing programme outcome is the phrase: *a successful learner from this programme/course will be able to…* Course outcomes can be expressed in the following phrases (examples):

*On successful completion of the course, **students** will be able to ….*
*On successful completion of the course, **you** will be able to…*
After completion of the course, the student will be able to… / you will be able to…

To enable teachers to prepare learning outcomes for their courses it may be advisable to use ***Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*** (Bloom, 1956) or the revised taxonomy (Anderson et al., 2001). This taxonomy allows teachers to concentrate on levels of student learning domains: the cognitive, the affirmative, and the behavioural.

This is a basic framework in which teachers could think. To label the categories and subcategories of learning domains, it is advisable to use verbs (to do something or gerunds (doing something), rather than nouns of the original taxonomy. Let us look at some examples for the **cognitive domain**.

In the cognitive domain, these '**action words**' describe the cognitive processes by which thinkers encounter and work with knowledge.

a **statement of a learning objective contains a verb** (an action) **and an object** (usually a noun), e.g., to make suggestions for solving a problem, to express politeness, to describe a process, to apply the newly gained knowledge, etc. These action verbs and objects used to write the learning objectives are called **descriptors.**

> "*The verb generally refers to [actions associated with] the intended cognitive process. The object generally describes the knowledge students are expected to acquire or construct*" (Anderson et al., 2001, 4–5).

The Revised Bloom's taxonomy consists of six hierarchical levels of learning. Teachers should seek to enable their students to reach the highest levels of learning at the top of the pyramid. All levels of learning depend on a solid foundation of those that come below. Scheme 2 shows the levels of Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives in the cognitive domain:

Scheme 2: Revised Bloom's Taxonomy of cognitive objective (based on Anderson et al., 2001, developed by authors)

Creating — Putting information together in an innovative way: creating a new product or point of view (write, develop, design, invent)

Evaluating — Making judgements and justifying decisions (argue, defend, judge, support, value, evaluate, test)

Analysing — Breaking the concept into parts and understanding how each part is related to one another (organise, select structure, deconstruct)

Applying — Using the knowledge/information in new ways (demonstrate, implement, use, interpret)

Understanding — Making sense of what you have learnt; constructing meaning (identify, classify, discuss, explain)

Remembering — Recalling relevant knowledge from long term memory (define, list, recall, repeat, reproduce, state)

TASKS, EXERCISES & DISCUSSION POINTS

Task 1: Think of the course(s) you are teaching. In groups, discuss the possible learning objectives and learning outcomes for the course(s).

Discussion: Try to explain the above-mentioned reasons for choosing and writing proper learning outcomes for individual courses. Think of how the learning objectives can contribute to improving university education in general (in the internationalization process, teaching foreign students). Can you introduce some reasons for writing proper learning objectives? Give examples from your information sheets and critically evaluate the learning objectives you have designed. Can they be improved?

Exercise: Discuss the following examples of learning objectives and categorize them into two groups (give reasons for your decision).

   a) clearly or correctly written (specific and realistic, easy to assess),

   b) unclearly, superficially or incorrectly written (too broad, difficult to assess).

Students should be able to:

- apply the theory in their seminar work
- deliver a project
- demonstrate the understanding of the issue by…
- explain the subject of pedagogy as a science
- read pedagogic journals
- apply theory in practice
- practice all skills, mainly reading and writing
- understand the basic structure and content of pedagogic disciplines
- understand the importance of general didactics for effective functioning in practice
- demonstrate the rules of effective communication in group work
- critically and correctly assess and evaluate the presentations of others
- explain and exemplify the differences between traditional and modern (teaching) methods
- create a glossary of key words; use the words appropriately in the right context
- design and prepare a leisure time activity for a class
- use (a kind of) tool to evaluate the activity proposal
- write a training report based on specific activities

- write a proposal for (a marketing campaign, educational activity, etc.)
- write a SWOT analysis of a business/school/university
- assess and evaluate appropriate methods and choose one to start an activity (in business or school)
- demonstrate knowledge of a specific vocabulary in presenting a project
- present a project
- co-operate with counselling establishments and professionals
- co-operate in resolving problems of pupils with different diagnoses,
- apply appropriate methods of counselling activities,
- use their knowledge of alternative school systems
- analyse and assess alternative pedagogic/economic/business concepts
- to know theories
- take part in cultural-educational events of various institutions
- write a short report from taking part in an (educational) project
- respond to legal conditions regulating the activities of facilities
- show knowledge of legal conditions regulating out-of-school activities
- gain complex of knowledge of a specific field of leisure time education
- argue in a communication and be accordingly emphatic, tolerant, and assertive
- orientate in the text from the pedagogic field.

Task 2

Write a set of five or six descriptions of learning outcomes for the cognitive domain for a semester-long course you are teaching. Each LO should contain a key 'learning verb' referring to Bloom´s taxonomy of learning objectives.

COURSE DESIGN: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AIMS, OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

The aim

The aim of a course is a broad, **overall general statement** of teaching intention, i.e., it indicates **what the teacher intends to cover.** Aims are usually written from the teacher's point of view to indicate the general content and direction of the module. For example, the aim of an intercultural communication in business course could be "to introduce students to the specific features of communication between members of different cultures". The aim of the course on pedagogic theories development could be "to provide a general introductory historical overview of pedagogic thought".

Remember: the overall statement of the course direction is the aim (overall aims).

The objective (goal)

The objective of a module or programme is usually a **specific statement of teaching intention**, i.e. it indicates one of the specific areas that the teacher intends to cover.

For example, one of the objectives of an intercultural communication course could be that "students should understand influence of one's native culture on behaviour", or "students should demonstrate understanding of cultural incidents", "students should demonstrate awareness of possible cultural conflicts due to language" or "students should give suggestions for resolving a cultural conflict".

The aim of a module gives the broad purpose or general teaching intention of the module, whilst the objective gives more specific information about what the teaching of the module hopes to achieve.

The problem with aims is that teachers often confuse them with objectives and then with learning outcomes: sometimes they write them as teaching intentions, and other times they write them in terms of expected learning.

Remember: a specific statement of the teaching intention is the objective.

So, to design a course, it should be clearly stated what the aim is and what the objectives are. Stating objectives (as teaching objective can help teachers to specify the learning outcome (what is student learning through teaching intention and what should be the result of the teaching and the student´s learning). The objective of a cultural course may be the ability to understand and interpret body language in various cultures; students should be able to avoid cultural conflicts in using non-violent language; students should be able to participate

in a project and work in co-operation with others; or students should be able to make a small talk or lead a business talk to entertain a business partner (know the topics and perform a short conversation).

One of the problems caused using objectives is that sometimes they are written in terms of teaching intention and at other times they are written in terms of expected learning, i.e., there is confusion in the literature whether objectives belong to the teacher-centred approach or the outcome-based approach.

The learning outcome

The learning outcome states the expected results in terms of students' newly gained knowledge, skills and behaviour or motivation. It specifies what the students have learned, what they are able to do with the newly gained knowledge and how they can demonstrate it (students should be able to evaluate the positives and negatives of a multicultural society; or students should be able to negotiate a business deal, should be able to solve a problem, should come-up with suggestions to resolve a conflict).

Remember: the result of our teaching and student learning is the newly gained ability of the student to use the knowledge (in a particular context, situation, practical life, etc.), which gives the student additional capacity (as a learner and future worker).

Summary

Designing a course using learning outcomes leads to a more student-centred approach: It marks a shift from the content of a course (what we teach) towards its outcome (in other words, what the student can do on successful completion of the course). Learning outcomes can:

- help to guide students in their learning by explaining what is expected from them, and thus helping them to succeed in their studies;
- help teachers to focus on exactly what they want students to achieve in terms of both knowledge and skills;
- provide a useful guide to inform potential candidates, employers and other stakeholders about the general knowledge and understanding that a graduate will possess.

To sum up the whole outcome-based approach, we can say that the principal question asked of the student will therefore no longer be "*What did you do to obtain your degree?*" but rather "*What can you do now that you have obtained your degree*?"

DISCUSSION POINTS

In your groups discuss the difficulties you have encountered when specifying the aims and learning outcomes for your course. Have you been trained in this pedagogic issue? Do you discuss the learning outcomes in your department or are you left alone to do it? Do you align the outcomes of the course with the intended outcomes of the study programme? Are you sure you know how to write them?

UNIT 6 CULTURE SHOCK DURING STUDIES ABROAD

Why have we decided to talk about the issue of culture shock? We believe that teachers should be aware of what students experience when coming to a foreign university, what stages they go through to understand the 'other culture' and, how they overcome this state of being totally lost in new life circumstances. This state can be of a short or longer period and may affect students´ wellbeing and their performance at school. It is therefore necessary to be acquainted with this phenomenon to help students overcome it as soon as possible.

Everybody who undertakes an assignment in a foreign country (students, teachers, businesspeople, diplomats) can experience this **psychological state** as it is a natural adaptive response to a foreign environment.

What exactly is culture shock? Culture shock is not a one-time experience of a cultural difference and the awareness of it (visible things like meals, dress, driving, behaviour of people, etc.). It is a more complicated state of mind and soul when the **exposure to the otherness may cause distress and unease** and may influence your state of wellbeing. Cross-cultural encounters and culture shock are often cited as key reasons why assignments (in our case the school performance) fail. We should be aware that students have to go through a process of adjustment to the new environment (educational and cultural). This period of adaptation is called culture shock or acculturation stress (Dolinská, 2016, 68).

The term culture shock was first used and described by Kalervo Oberg (1960). He described it as a **distress or anxiety that results from losing our familiar signs and symbols**, daily routines, and orientation in everyday life. According to him, this loss of symbols, leads to disorientation, frustration, and anxiety. Culture shock means the feelings of helplessness or "**inability of an individual to cope with the new cultural environment while being overloaded with unfamiliar stimuli**" (Reisinger &Turner, 2003, 57).

Researchers give a list of symptoms of culture shock, such as confusion about values, role, anxiety, criticism of the new country, embarrassment, disorientation, helplessness, deprivation in relation to friends and status and feelings of frustration or humiliation. Physical discomfort, such as insomnia, nervousness or loss of appetite can also accompany these feelings (Reisinger & Turner, 2003).

Oberg (1960) divided adaptation to a new culture into four stages:

1. **The honeymoon stage**, when one is fascinated and optimistic;
2. **The hostility stage,** when one develops negative attitudes to the new environment and people;
3. **The recovery stage,** when one attempts to cope with a new environment;
4. **The adjustment stage when** one starts to adjust and accept the new environment.

We asked students if and how they experienced culture shock when starting to study at Matej Bel University. We have chosen a list of statements that describe their experience at each of the stages. They introduce some examples for every stage:

1. **The honeymoon stage (the first contact - excitement, euphoria**, and a sense of cultural similarity).
   - *At the beginning, I felt excited and happy about coming to learn about a different culture, language and meeting new people. Everything went as I expected.*
   - *When I arrived, I felt the same mentality, similar culture, quite similar customs, and lifestyle as Serbians* have *and I enjoyed it.*
   - *I did not experience any shock. My buddy took me to the town and showed me all the restaurants and discos. I looked forward to going there.*
   - *But once I got into the dorm, I fell in love with it. Even if I had to share the room with 2 more guys, I didn't care, I knew that something special was going to happen in that dorm. So as a summary, I can say that because of my feelings and positivity, my first impression was really great. I was just a happy man.*

2. **The hostility stage** (a kind of disintegration, tension, confusion, depression, and a **strong rejection of the second culture**; decreased sensitivity to deal with the other culture):
   - *"But after a certain time, I experienced quite a huge shock: it was the language problem I was most worried about..."*
   - *"In the first two weeks or so it was really hard to find orientation in school.... People were going to the wrong places and lessons, including me, because there's no proper signalling. Another thing I was completely lost at, was everything related to the ISIC card; the location to do it, the activation and explanation (I didn't know until the second month that for the university canteen and the bus, we had to use the ISIC but charge it with money in two different accounts...)."*

- *"Everything was OK at the beginning. But once I was told we can find the information in the AIS system, my problems started: nothing was in English there. Some teachers used also the English version of LMS, but others did not. When I went to the library, nobody spoke English there. I felt I was lost and wanted to go back home. Why did I come here? I started hating this country and my decision to come here."*
- *"Next thing I noticed were the people. When I just came, every Slovak I met was keeping me at a distance and that made me feel weird and I did not know why it is like this, so I felt like being in the land of ice cubes."*
- *"People in the street or on the bus refused to speak to me in English. I had the feeling that they feared and hated foreigners. I was shocked. I did not meet many Slovaks as the courses I attended were for international students only."*
- *"There were also many other things that made me feel uncomfortable such as food, habits, customs and values."*
- *"Feeling of anxiety, fear and shame, because of my insufficient language skills, accompanied me for the first half of the semester (a Slovak student studying on Erasmus+ programme in Spain)."*
- *"All in all, I faced culture shock even though I expected not to have any problems in my 'new homeland'. "*

3. **The recovery stage** (trying to **cope with the new environment**)
   - *"And then, when the crisis of homesickness and feeling of not belonging was over, I started to enjoy the stay and began to look at the Slovak culture in a more positive way."*
   - *"It took a quite long* time *for me to get used to the new way of life, but then I started enjoying being in the group of international students. We visited many places together with my Slovak buddy."*

- *"Everything changed when I realized that it was easier for me to find a common language with Slovak students than with other Erasmus students. Personal contacts with them helped me to fully understand and feel Slovakia (even if I did not speak the Slovak language, which would really be the key to it)."*

4. **The adjustment stage** (sensitive **relationship with host nationals**; **a cherishing of cultural differences**):
   - *"At a certain moment, all the negative experiences went away and living in Turkey seemed as amazing as I had originally projected. (Slovak student in Turkey)."*
   - *"... so I came to the conclusion that Slovaks were not distanced and cold, they were just afraid to speak English, and when they finally broke the ice I have seen that the culture shock I have experienced at the beginning should have not been that strong."*
   - *"The buddy system turned to be very useful and helpful, as an organization, not only the individuals forming it."*
   - *"Another thing I was really surprised at and that helped us to feel the Slovak culture was the quantity of events the ESN of BB organized for us. Not only parties, but also sports events such as football and volleyball, hiking to Urpin, dog walks and even social and charity events in the house of St Elizabeth."*
   - *"After considering all pros and cons I think this experience was really good. My English is so much better now, and I tried out how it is to live without my parents. I have met a lot of great people that I am will be in touch with and I saw representatives of totally different cultures."*

These statements were chosen from the questionnaires students were asked to fill in for research purposes over the past decade. They illustrate what the stages of a culture shock mean in practice –

- perceiving the otherness of the new environment,
- responding to it (sometimes through rejection of the host country, sometimes with a struggle to overcome the difficulties), and
- the 'way out' of being stuck in the period of culture shock.

Some of the statements indicate the possible solution of this situation – finding friends, communicating with natives, participation in social events and talking to teachers.

We did not mention statements giving evidence about the 'educational shock' (differences in teaching, learning, school duties, assessment, and others). You should think of that by yourself.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Have you personally experienced a cultural difference while teaching international students or being on a teaching assignment at a foreign university? Give examples and discuss them with your colleagues. Say what was different and how you felt about it and how you responded.
2. Discuss the question: How can culture shock affect the performance of students? Give some examples when you have experienced any.
3. Discuss this question: How can we as teachers help students overcome culture shock. We know that everybody on a foreign assignment experiences culture shock as described above. So even if students do not complain, we should be aware of their struggle to cope with the new environment, new demands, and differences in educational culture.

UNIT 7 CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING

As mentioned in previous chapters, **culturally relevant pedagogy** is characterized by providing inclusive, equal learning opportunities to all domestic and international students coming from various cultural backgrounds. It not only focuses on the chance for achieving success in terms of academic results, but also for the future employment of graduates in the labour market. **Culturally relevant lessons** prepared by university teachers teaching various English-medium courses take into account the learning needs of all their students. The teachers should take them into consideration even before the start of classes during the planning stage and creation of the curriculum. During its implementation, they may use various interactive, and at the same time inclusive methods available which enable any incoming student to learn in a new, foreign or different environment. Of course, they must plan for inclusive evaluation and feedback methods, too.

CULTURALLY RELEVANT METHODS

Here are some examples of culturally relevant teaching methods used at universities (Turek, 2008; Zelenková, 2014; Čapek, 2019):

- **Lectures**
  We recommend an interactive form of lecturing. It ensures active interconnection between the lecturer and students from various countries with different cultures, as well as between students and the topic of the lecture. The interactive lecture is not a one-way communication from the teacher to the students as in the classical form of lecturing.

The speaker may interrupt his / her speech by inserting appropriately formulated questions and room for responses - the so-called buzz-lecture (Zelenková, 2014, 125). It leads students to discover for themselves the facts and contexts hidden in the lecture point, thus supporting their motivation to acquire new information and stimulating their own thinking, research and finding solutions to problems. The basic requirements for an interactive lecture in a multicultural group of students include the teacher's focus on building rapport at the beginning, including 'a hook' – a motivational start of the lecture as well as introducing the lecture outline, signposting, asking questions and waiting for students' answers, and maintaining eye contact. It is important to support it with keywords and key ideas, e.g., via PowerPoint, handouts, bibliography, subsequent questions for thinking, reflection and problem solving. The teacher is expected to thoroughly prepare not only the theme itself, but also to plan the individual interruptions, leaving space for questions, as well as how students might answer. Sometimes only certain students are willing to respond - the most active, the best acquainted with the topic, etc. An important support for the inclusiveness of lecture teaching is to involve various guests in the lecture process, especially from other cultures, universities, or areas of practice. All the features of the interactive lecture mentioned here are quite feasible also in online teaching. During the 2020-2021 pandemic lockdowns, interactive discussions, chat rooms, online polling, zoom-whiteboards and jam-board techniques were used for interaction with students during online lectures. According to our experience, the international students highly appreciated them as inclusive and culturally sensitive.

- **Group projects** – The main purpose of group projects is to involve all students registered in the courses in an active, heuristic, and constructivist way of learning. The group must search for solutions to specific problems, tasks or assignments. The teacher must formulate the goal of group work appropriately and in a culturally relevant way. The learning outcomes of the group activity can be achieved only with the participation of all students in the group, including newcomers or students who have just arrived for mobility exchanges. Unlike frontal teaching, group work provides space for the consideration of needs, the starting positions and abilities of all its members, regardless of their cultural background. During the work on the project, the student teams learn to cooperate, communicate, negotiate, be tolerant, be empathetic and search for consensus in resolving conflicts. This method goes through several phases:

  o project preparation (goal, topic, topic mapping, project assignment formulation, project outline, searching and processing of information on the project topic)

  o project implementation and presentation,

  o self-reflection and joint evaluation of project results.

Online teaching opens a wide space for participation in group projects by students from practically all over the world (any technically equipped country). During the pandemic, the application of group projects within any study program has proved its worth. The students appreciated not only the acquisition of academic content and professional skills, but especially the development of their intercultural competence and transversal skills.

- **Students' journals** – Reflective individual journals kept by all students are a mandatory part of culturally relevant teaching. Self-reflection of one's own learning process should be an integral part of any university course. The journals often play a therapeutic role (Morris et al., 2011). Guided journal writing, accompanied by a solid structure or assignments of ongoing tasks, is recommended to help the student clarify his / her thinking processes, reflect on past experiences, articulate his / her feelings, and seek answers to important questions (Zelenková, 2016). If written regularly, just after each unit, the journal enables their writers to stay in close contact with their learning experience and reduce the risk of erroneous retrospection. The methodology of using learning journals is as follows: Based on initial agreement, the students pass their journals to the teachers to give them regular feedback. Then the teachers write his/her feedback, returning it to the students. In this way, all students can freely express their experiences with other cultural encounters, provide the teacher with ongoing feedback on whether they felt accepted, respected, or ignored, and to what extent the course is culturally related to their needs. Writing reflective diaries is especially important in online education because it is practically the only direct contact with each student and a way of evaluating the inclusiveness of the course.

- **Simulations** is another method suitable for creating a culturally inclusive learning environment. In the university context, this method allows the teacher and students to simulate academic or professional situations. Its advantage is that it simplifies the situation to some extent, shortens the real duration of a certain phenomenon, and yet allows the students to try different decisions and see their predictable

consequences. Unlike role-playing games used e.g., in linguistic subjects, where students adapt to a certain prescribed character in the situation presented, in simulations everyone solves the simulated situation in a personalized way - for himself/herself. Simulations train students' abilities to make decisions and solve simulated situations. They are applicable in any study program. In a group of international students, if used at the beginning of the semester, they may play a preventive role against inappropriate intercultural behavior and support the positive inclusive climate. Thanks to various software platforms, this method can also be applied in the online teaching mode. However, the teacher must think in advance how to use – or even pilot – this method: what topic, in what culturally relevant way (e.g., in groups), whether to record the simulations as well as how to reflect on the simulation activity (e.g. in chats, blogs or in groups discussions).

- **Brainstorming or brainwriting methods** are problem-solving methods that contribute to achieving the top learning outcome according to Bloom's revised taxonomy (by Anderson et al., 2001) – the development of a student's creative thinking. They can be used in virtually all kinds of university courses as an activating element, e.g., introducing a new topic or during the application learning phase. It is based on group discussion and group problem solving (best within a group of 5-12 members). The course of the discussion is to some extent guided and recorded (in written form). It usually has two phases:

  o In the first phase, the members of the group produce spontaneous ideas on a given topic.

- In the second phase, they analyse, group, and filter their ideas.

Culturally relevant use of brainstorming/brainwriting facilitates students' learning to acquire not only scientific content knowledge, but also enable the formation of positive emotions and attitudes towards other cultures, reflection on one's own culture from a new perspective, and the ability to respect the opinions of others. Brainstorming is often used as a pre-lecture method, focusing students' thinking on the lecture topic. Thus, the teacher creates additional space for international students to get better acquainted with the topic.

Some brainstorming methods are particularly suitable for creating a culturally inclusive, heuristic learning environment. In the Lotus Blossom method, students in groups, search for solutions to a certain professional, academic or socio-political problem in several phases, going deeper and deeper into the set problem. At the first, most superficial level, the students are expected to expose at least two to eight sub-problems. In the next phase, they are trying to brainstorm up to eight solutions to each of the sub-problems. In groups of international students, the cultural perspectives of each participating student can be recorded in the final solution. Similarly, the SCAMMPERR method is also suitable for creating an inclusive learning environment where students jointly create, modify, maximize, minimize, re-order or extend solutions to a selected problem. The Six Thinking Hats method by De Bono (1985) is another creative and culturally sensitive method in which students discuss solutions in groups during six subsequent discussion rounds: 'white' thinking about the facts, 'red' thinking enabling emotions, 'yellow' positive ar-

gumentative thinking, 'black' negative argumentative thinking, and finally 'green' lateral, creative thinking. All these methods (described in Hanesová, 2014) are suitable tools for teachers in multicultural classes, enabling international students to be involved in learning according to their own cultural background. They are also equally appropriate for the online learning context.

- **Peer learning or teaching** are educational methods allowing students to learn with and from each other. In peer learning, the knowledge is not transmitted by the teacher, but it is constructed in the minds of the learners during interaction with their classmates/ peers (in pairs or groups). Students learn via opportunities to present their own opinions before classmates and teachers, during discussions or working together on an assignment. It is a less stressful and more empathetic way of learning than through a teacher's instruction. The method is particularly advantageous in groups of international students. Peer learning in culturally heterogeneous groups causes an evident development of not only professional competencies, but also foreign language, intercultural and other transversal competencies. Some universities also encourage student-led workshops, peer-to-peer learning partnerships or creating a system called cross-year peer tutoring, where students in higher grades teach students in lower grades – e.g. in learning centres or self-study centres established by universities (Biggs & Tang, 2007[6]). This learning must also be guided by

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[6] For example via a project *Enhancing Foreign Language-Medium Programmes at MBU* No. 26110230025, co-financed from the European Social Fund, Matej Bel University, 2012-2015.

certain predefined learning outcomes and study rules, by defining the roles of the individual participants in this learning.

- **Flipped learning/teaching** is a form of blended learning, combining the advantages of traditional classroom education and online education. Students are stimulated by reversing the chronological order of activities as opposed to traditional teaching. Activities that students originally did in the classroom (listening to a lecture, introduction of a new topic) are carried out at home (e.g., through video recordings); and those that they used to do at home (e.g., project work, discussion, practical tasks), are being done at school. Unlike traditional education, where the teacher tries to adapt to the whole class, flipped teaching allows an individualized approach to each student. The role of the teacher moves from the position of a lecturer to the position of a coach or a consultant. Each student will get acquainted with the new curriculum at home, has enough space and opportunity to study the video and relevant texts in advance at his/her own pace, and then be effective in discussions or practical exercises at school, in front of their classmates and the teacher. It not only supports the internal motivation and autonomy of each student and their own responsibility for learning, but also creates more space for interaction and teamwork with students from other cultures.

- **Reading assignments** are traditionally set as tasks after a lecture. However, according to the good practice of many internationally oriented universities, reading assignments are also suitable as a preparation before coming to the seminar or lesson, as the so-called course preparation assignments. Students are informed of the topics of lectures, seminars, and

the required reading in advance. After reading the assigned texts, students will come to the joint lessons better acquainted with the new topic, able to ask relevant questions and work in groups. This method has been researched to be statistically and significantly more effective than classical reading assignments (Biggs & Tang, 2007). This approach is especially helpful for international students who, compared to native speakers, are at a disadvantage in traditional assessed tasks by reading and analysing texts. However, if they have enough space to read in advance, students are given the opportunity to prepare well for the lesson and to be just as effective in solving practical tasks.

- Culturally relevant teaching clearly requires ample space for **discussions** as a way of applying inclusive, team problem solving, in which all students in the class should be able to participate. Discussions can be focused convergently, towards a joint assessment of the pros and cons of one particular solution to a problem, or divergently, on generating as many adequate solutions to the problem as possible. One of the typical discussion methods, suitable in a multicultural classroom, is the Socratic dialogue or discussion (Zelenková, 2014). The conversation begins with a problem, most often in the form of a question, usually set by the teacher. Students try to answer it (individually, in pairs, in groups), to suggest ways to solve the problem. The teacher follows their suggestions with additional questions (When? Why? How? What happens if? What is the consequence? What are the reasons?). Students must think more and more deeply about the problem when looking for answers to these questions. At the end of the discussion, everyone should come to a consensus about the solution to the problem. The teacher acts as an 'inner critical voice' (Turek, 2008, 259)

which facilitates the development of students' critical and creative thinking. For the use of Socratic conversation in university education, it is most important that the teacher is able (a) to ask appropriate, carefully formulated, culturally relevant questions, and (b) to sensitively involve as many students as possible in the conversation. Ensuring an equal opportunity to respond to the teacher's or students' (peers') questions in this form of discussion requires reasonably large groups (we recommend a maximum of 12 students), especially if it is to implement it in the online form of education.

- **Service-learning strategy** allows a connection between local and global learning environment (Hanesová & Kubišová, 2019). It is based on two complementary components: service to a community and evidence of student learning. The procedure after students enroll in the course is as follows (Brozmanová Gregorová et al., 2014): The teacher organizes the first, introductory meeting of all the students in order to explain the main aim, principles and requirements (learning statements), especially of the service-learning methodology. Students have time to ask questions and to reflect and express their emotions, doubts, or agreement with the course. Afterward, the students are divided into groups of 4-5, ideally creating culturally mixed groups. The groups work is based on a set of practical guides (worksheets) that lead them through three phases: (1) preparation (creating the team, setting rules, choosing a target community group, carrying out needs analysis of that community group and choosing one need, preparing a project to fill the chosen community need that will also enable them to learn; (2) implementation of the service-learning project and continuous recording and reflecting on one's own

learning process; (3) reflection and presentation of the finished project. At the end of the term, the teacher initiates the 'celebration' meeting of all registered GELS students. At that meeting, all the groups present their intercultural projects, reflect on them, evaluate them, and get feedback from each other as well as from the teacher.

Not all of these methods will be suitable for each domestic and international student, but at least they should create space for all of them to learn, process various learning stimuli and reflect on their learning, even if they are learning in a new educational or cultural environment. Following the experience of the pandemic (2020-2021), it is clear that more attention will have to be paid to research on the "cross-cultural effects of COVID-19" on higher education and updating of teaching methods (Kefalaki et al., 2021).

Nowadays, there are various tools and materials that can help teachers to create international, culturally relevant learning environment. They are characterized in the Appendix 3.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Reflect on the ways you used to study at university, evaluating their pros and cons. Think about the above-listed methods of university teaching/learning. What kind of experience do you have with them? Discuss their strengths and weaknesses, their risks and opportunities. Which of them do you consider to be effective and useful in your academic field and why? Do you vary the methods of teaching according to the specifics of the group of students you teach? How does your choice of a teaching method affect the fact that you teach international students or mixed groups of international and domestic students? Do you invest any time in personal development of your intercultural competence?

INVENTORY OF TEACHER COMPETENCIES FOR CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING

"Respect for otherness is manifested in curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend belief about (the 'naturalness' of) one's own culture and to believe in (the 'naturalness' of) other cultures." (Byram et al., 2009, 23)

In chapter 2, we already mentioned intercultural competencies of university teachers teaching international student groups. Ensuring culturally relevant learning at a university requires that its teachers have certain cultural competencies – first in attitudes, but also in knowledge, skills, as well as specific behaviours.

Exercise:

Familiarize yourself with the following inventory of requirements for knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions of a teacher that need to be met in order to be able to teach in a culturally relevant way (based on Deardorff, 2009; Byram et al., 2009, 23-25). In pairs or small groups, think and reflect on which areas you need to develop more as a teacher. If your colleague knows the style of your learning, ask him / her for their opinion on the dimension of your cultural competence and compare it with your self-assessment. In case of a detected deficit, consult each other about the possibilities of personal growth in this competence (whether through some courses, training, peer-learning, important publications, conferences, and webinars, etc.).

1. **Attitudes:**

   a. **Respect**: *Am I interested/do I value diversity of cultures, or do I concentrate only on my own culture? Do I respect people from*

other cultures? Am I open to 'unlearn' my stereotypes about other cultures?

b. Openness: *Am I open and willing to learn from people from other cultures? Am I judging other cultures according to my own criteria? Or am I able to withhold my judgements?*

c. Curiosity and discovery: *Am I willing to accept the fact that there are/will be some things in other cultures that I am not aware of and that's why I need to leave some space for ambiguity and uncertainty? Am I willing to meet this challenge and to accept ambiguity? Am I able to deal with it constructively? Do I realize that people from other cultures probably have a different set of beliefs (what is truth), values (what is important in life) and behaviours (what they normally, subconsciously do in everyday life)? Do I leave room for new discoveries, explanations and findings about other cultures, even when something doesn't suit me? Do I enjoy diversity in various cultures and investigate them?*

2. **Knowledge & Comprehension:**

a. **Cultural self-awareness:** *Do I realize and distinguish which aspects of my life are influenced by culture? Where else can I see the influence of culture? How can I learn more about cultural differences? Do I realize the impact of other people's beliefs and values on their actions?*

b. **Deeper understanding and knowledge of culture**: *Am I able to explain, in general, what culture is, its role and its impact on our lives? Do I understand deeper cultural contexts? Do I realize the impact of people's worldviews? Do I discuss my experience with other teachers? Do I exchange ideas about cultural topics with other colleagues? Do I use opportunities to learn (be trained)*

in intercultural areas? Are there any opportunities to attend further training?

c. **Culture-specific information**: *Do I master/am I willing to learn more specific information about the culture I am going to become involved in (e.g., via teaching international students)? Am I willing to invest into studying/reading/visiting webinars or courses on any specific culture I am going to be in contact with in the future?*

d. **Sociolinguistic awareness:** *Am I able to use English (or any other specific foreign language) appropriately in different pedagogic and social situations (for teaching and socializing purposes)?*

3. **Skills:**

a. **To listen, observe, and interpret**: *Am I a good listener, observer, interpreter of intercultural situations around me? Do I consider it important to become a good listener, observer, and interpreter? Am I able to recognize different communicative (both verbal and non-verbal) conventions? Am I able to interpret a document or event from another culture?*

b. **To analyse, evaluate, and relate:** *Am I able to analyse, evaluate and relate facts about culture – either general or specific ones? For example, am I willing to learn the different meaning of gestures, mime, volume, pauses in a specific culture? Am I able to relate documents/events in other cultures to documents/events in my own culture?*

4. **Behaviour:**

   a. **Internal:**

   Am I able to adapt to different communication styles and behaviours, to negotiate communication rules in intercultural communication?

   Am I able to adjust to new cultural environments? Am I flexible in selecting and using appropriate communication styles and behaviours? What about my cognitive flexibility? Am I able to take on another person's perspective?

   What do I think about my own culture in the context of other cultures, and what is my ethno-relative view? Am I able to 'de-center' from my own culture to become aware of other cultures?

   Do I take full notice of other people's identities and acknowledge their identity? Am I able to show empathy towards people from other cultures, e.g., my international students? Am I able to show real interest in what their view is and how they feel in various situations? Am I able to critically evaluate my own culture in the context of other cultures? Can I make my own values to become explicit and conscious?

   b. **External:**

   How do I behave towards other cultures? How do I communicate with representatives of other cultures? Are my ways of behaving and communicating with other cultures effective and appropriate? How do I succeed in achieving some of my goals in life at the same time? Do I allow others to achieve their primary goals and fulfil

their own needs? Do I know how to ask people from other cultures about their beliefs, values and behaviours?

Can I take seriously the opinions and thoughts of others? Can I give my own opinion, speaking coherently and giving transparent reasons? Am I able to speak coherently? Can I give transparent reasons? Can I find compromise, seek consensus, accept majority decisions, tolerate minorities, encourage others, show trust and courage? Can I organize group work and cooperate with others? Can I accept tasks, demonstrate trustworthiness and other positive human characteristics? Am I willing to undertake a task because I reflected on how to contribute to the common good?

UNIT 8 DELIVERY OF ENGLISH-MEDIUM COURSES

LINGUISTIC ASPECTS

Teaching a course in English (or another foreign language) as a communication medium requires its teachers to consider not only the cultural but also the linguistic limits of their students. These can hinder students' understanding of the new study content, academic assignments, methods of assessment, as well as their academic writing and fulfilling various study assignments. Therefore, we bring some tips on how a teacher could help students eliminate their linguistic barriers as much as possible. On the other hand, it might help students to develop their linguistic skills and their self-confidence in the correct use of the foreign language.

- One of the basic expectations from teachers who teach courses in English (or other foreign languages) is that they pay attention to **metacognitive strategies of learning how to learn**. It is assumed that he/she will be interested not only in how to study a specific subject (e.g., the scientific field), but also strategies of communication and learning/studying in a foreign language. Thus, these teachers are strongly encouraged to attend relevant webinars, seminars and to learn how to solve various communication problems in oral and written expression, creative thinking expressions, use of discourse markers, etc.
- It is recommended that the teacher pays **attention to clarity, conciseness, comprehensibility, and accuracy in communication** throughout the course. The clear

formulation of learning outcomes is particularly important. That will assist the students to orientate themselves and understand the requirements of the course, ways of evaluation, etc. correctly.

- On the other hand, although it will sound redundant, it is necessary to **repeatedly explain the new concepts and definitions** from various points of view, to paraphrase them, and to **teach subject-specific vocabulary** so that the student can be sure of their proper meaning (Dearden, 2014). Costa & Marriotti (2021, 82 & 87) suggest using:
  - o **linguistic input strategies** - the so-called Q-DRESS strategies: rich use of questions, definitions, repetition of expressions and words, examples, summaries and signposting, but also humour or codeswitching;
  - o **paralinguistic strategies**, such as more emphasis on pronunciation and articulation of words, slowing down the pace of speech;
  - o **extralinguistic strategies**, for example, the use of presentation software (powerpoint, prezi, etc.), tables, graphs, handouts, modality - application of multiple literacies in one medium).
- During the lesson, the teacher should give **space for breaks**, so-called **language-related episodes and to elicit students' questions** regarding language used. It is important especially in the first phase after students' arrival in a new language environment, that they may ask questions about unknown words, or the meaning of grammatical structures used.
- **Cooperation between the subject teachers and the language teachers** is strongly encouraged to provide help to the subject teacher and the students in linguistic matters.
- The teacher should also **consider the choice of texts** for compulsory reading so that they also are to some extent

culturally and linguistically relevant. In the case of more demanding texts, he should provide students with explanations.

- Another alternative to help students who are at a lower level of foreign language level is to create and offer **various seminars, webinars or entire courses for language-specific / academic purposes / professional purposes**.

- Another excellent tool for studying a course in English or any other foreign language are various **glossaries** that are part of study texts for individual courses.

- Although the course is taught in a foreign language, it is **not necessary to avoid the possibility of using the students' mother language** (L1). Using plurilingual strategies, including L1, might contribute to bettering students' understanding of the curriculum and communication within the classroom, e.g., in inferring the correct meaning of an unknown concept.

- If a student regularly makes **mistakes** in the language of instruction, and the teacher notices them and knows the right alternative, he/she should **tactfully point out the correct form** of the word or sentence, even if he/she is a subject teacher, not a language teacher. It will improve the intelligibility of the student's utterance.

- The teacher combines **various organizational forms** during the lesson. This is also important in an online form of education (a mix of **fronta**l lecturing with **group and pair work**, as well as **individual work**). Thus, the teacher also nourishes development of students' autonomy as well as their ability to collaborate and other transversal skills.

- It is very important to keep in mind the well-known fact that the lower level of the student's language proficiency and of his/her preparedness to study in a foreign language (e.g., an incorrect accent) does not mean that the teacher should

not consider him/her a good student, competent in the given professional field, nor able to think critically. The teacher should try to **remove the negative psychological filter**, e.g., from a limited spoken communication level. Conversely, the teacher should **encourage** the student **to formulate his/her opinion**, which remained unspoken, by, e.g., giving the student more time to prepare. This will ensure that the students will have the opportunity to express their deeper knowledge / ways of thinking and at the same time this will rapidly develop their skills in a foreign language.

- Finally, it is necessary to pay attention to the **language used in the evaluation and feedback** within the course taught in a foreign language. It should be clear whether the student is going to be assessed and graded based on the content mastery, or also on the level of his/her linguistic output. If so, he/she must be given sufficient time to prepare for it.

- In case the **teaching** takes place **online or in a hybrid way**, the teacher must **adapt the language** of his/her lectures, materials, and instructions to this form of teaching. Specifically, this means paying attention to the correct volume, intelligibility of his/her speech, and repeated reassurance that his/her speech is understood by the students. For this purpose, he/she applies culturally **relevant requirements** for the environment into which the students connect via online platform (also during the division of students into groups) as well as ways of inviting to participate in the discussion, evaluation of classmates, etc.

- Language barriers increase in direct proportion to fatigue, loss of concentration, lack of fluids or energy in the brain during teaching/learning/studying. It is advisable for the teacher to study the neurological facts about **how the brain works when the students study in a foreign language**.

This includes the need for breaks, maintaining a certain rhythm of periods with intensive and less intensive attention required during the lesson, the appropriate way of explaining new things to learn and of subsequent individual or group activities in a foreign language. For this reason, it is appropriate to **alternate activities more often** during the course taught in a foreign language, to activate students and allow them more space to learn.

- Appendix 4 offers useful terms that are appropriate to use in pedagogical communication with international students.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

As stated above, the language proficiency and communication skills of all actors in the international education context are important, because they affect the quality and quantity of international contacts. The interaction with members of the host culture or between international students and home students and their teachers depends on the fluency and communication competence. It can increase or decrease the socio-cultural adjustment problems (Ward, in Landis et al., 2004, 190).

Besides the linguistic proficiency, the communication skills include also the understanding of non-verbal behaviour. Non-verbal behaviour includes mainly the body language, expression of feelings, thoughts and experiences of others that may differ across cultures. In this context we touch upon the body language for two reasons:

- Teachers should be aware of their own body language, its utilization in their teaching practice, and the impact it may have on the delivery of learning content,
- Teachers should be aware of the differences in body language in various cultures in order to avoid cross-cultural misunder-

standings that maya rise from neglecting or not respecting this feature of communication.

What is body language?

Body language is also called **non-verbal communication**. It refers to **body movements** and **gestures** instead of, or in addition to, sounds, verbal language or other communication. It forms part of the category of paralanguage, which describes all forms of human communication that are not verbal language. Body language includes the movement of eyes (eye contact), face (facial expressions), hands and arms (gestures), whole body movement (stance and posture), voice and personal distance (Zelenková, 2011).

- The awareness of **eye contact** in presentations or lectures is important, as it helps establish one-on-one contact with the individual members of the audience and maintain audience rapport. On the other hand, when speaking to a room full of people, the lecturer must speak to the whole room, not just one person or a part of the audience. Keeping eye contact also involves the audience in the presentation and enables the speaker to be more conscious of the feedback from the audience.

- **Facial expression** normally contributes in conveying the emotional state of the individual. such as the passion for and interest in the subject or the depth of concern for the audience. Therefore, a simple smile at the beginning can make others feel more at ease where a frown can make people see that you are unsure of something.

- **Hands movements and gestures** can **emphasize** the meaning of what we are saying, e. g. they can support our message. Simple hand movements such as holding up the number one

with your fingers when you say "the first point is" are appropriate.

- **Posture** is the bearing of the body, our stance. We can stand completely still and hunched, or we can stand upright, look straight ahead, not down at the floor or up at the ceiling. When giving a presentation in sitting, our body should be also in the upright position.

- **The movement** of our body or the lack of movement will influence the tone of the presentation (lecture). It is also good to walk around a bit to get closer to the audience. In that case the teacher will be perceived as more accessible to the audience members. When teaching small groups, it is normal to mingle with the audience (to be able to monitor the activities).

- **Voice** is an equally important part of communicative proficiency. Using voice effectively means using **modulation, pausing** and **volume** as these features are all crucially important in **maintaining audience rapport**.

Body language across cultures

Body language reflects the cultural background of the 'speaker' (Resat, 2019). Cultures differ in all aspects of body language to express similar or different meaning. For international education it is necessary to be aware of the role of body language in communication. Misunderstanding body language can cause prejudices and communication problems. Linguistic barriers in intercultural interactions are often compounded by difference in **nonverbal behaviour** (Gudykunst, 2003, 74). Andersen's research (Andersen, 2000) in intercultural nonverbal communication suggests that differences lie along eight nonverbal codes:

- **time perception** (how time is used in communication, if people are on time, in time or "have enough time" – e.g. being late is acceptable),
- **space** – and how it is used in communication, keeping closeness or distance when communicating with others,
- **body movements**, gestures, facial expressions,
- **touching,** using sensation in interaction,
- **eye movement**, eye contact, gaze and eye-related nonverbal communication,
- **voice** and its qualities that go along with verbal messages, such as pitch, volume, rate, vocal quality, and verbal fillers,
- **smells** and how they are perceived in different cultures,
- **physical appearance** (keeping dress-code or being casual, etc.).

Problems exist in interpreting **nonverbal behaviour** of people from other cultures. The meaning of facial expression, for example **smiling**, is different across cultures. In some cultures, it is considered friendly and polite to smile and in others it is considered stupid. Talking with your hands (using a lot of **gestures**) is natural in many countries. In others it may be considered a sign of instability. Acceptable gestures in some countries may be offensive in others (for example the A-OK sign). In many countries **direct eye contact** is considered normal, while in other countries it is seen as aggressive and challenging. In the Far East, looking down or looking away and making infrequent direct eye contact may be seen as courtesy and respect. The Latin countries are more tactile than northern European countries and the USa and Canada. When speaking about the use of **space** in personal communication, it is important to remember that **comfortable zones** (physical closeness or distance) may vary across cultures between 30 or 40 centimetres and 1.2 metres. Other communication behaviour covers the use of hands when, e.g., greeting people, handshakes, nodding the head up and down, and others.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION POINTS

Reflect the nonverbal behaviour of your international students in terms of their culture.

- In your teaching practice, where and when have you experienced differences in body language (of your colleagues or in the international environment)?
- How do students from other countries traditionally show politeness? How do they address you?
- Do you know how the student's country traditionally shows respect? (Opening a door for an elderly person may be offensive in individualistic countries.).
- Do you know how the student's country traditionally show familiarity and affection? (Touching people when speaking to them may be considered OK in the southern countries but not in the northern European countries or the US, UK and Canada.)

UNIT 9 CASES AND CRITICAL INCIDENTS
IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Here are five cases of intercultural encounters. Study them carefully and answer these questions:

a) In which case do you see a possible clash of cultural norms? Where might the problem(s) be?

b) In which social areas do you see the cultural differences? What, in your point of view, is different in the Slovak culture, what is different in culture AAA, BBB, CCC, DDD and XYZ?

c) Where do you see educational differences?

d) How should people react to avoid the possible misunder-standings, false expectations, or false judgements?

e) Can you guess which countries might be hidden behind the acronyms AAA, BBB, CCC, DDD and XYZ?

CASE 1

Slovak university teachers took part in an international conference where they met colleagues from international research project teams, including the AAa country partners. During a break, a group of smokers met outside the building. The Slovak teachers were sur-prised when they saw an AAA-country colleague spit on the pave-ment in front of them. On the other hand, they noticed that during a conference session another AAa country participant left the room just to blow their nose outside the meeting room. So, Slovak partici-

pants experienced two situations that they considered to be strange and unusual, or even shocking.[7]

CASE 2

"*The first four Erasmus students from BBB country to arrive in Banska Bystrica were very smart students. They had been selected very carefully by their home university for this study assignment. They attended my course in Intercultural Communication and they developed their academic strengths by doing their readings properly, completing their assignments on time, showing motivation, and participating actively in discussions in very good English. They made good contributions to the class dynamics and friendly atmosphere. After some time, I discovered that in some other courses their performance was assessed by lower grades. The students were disappointed and sad. I could not believe this and I decided to investigate the reasons for their failures. To my surprise, one teacher told me that they did not present their homework with power point slides. The teacher in question expected this automatically but did not articulate the requirement before the course started. So, the grade for the performance was reduced simply because of this technicality. When I talked to the students, and they said that in their home BBB university nobody asked them to make presentations with PowerPoint.*"[8] This happened some 15 years ago. Today everybody knows how to use PowerPpoint slides to support their presentations.

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[7] *This case was described by Slovak teachers in a teacher-training course in 2013 within the project Enhancing foreign language programmes at universities, Podpora výučby študijných programov v cudzích jazykoch ITMS 26110230025.*
[8] *Ibid.*

CASE 3

a teacher of English from CCC country (who now lives in Slovakia) told us about his first impressions at a Slovak elementary school, where he started teaching. For him, it was a shock to see on the school corridor boards the names and photos of "OUR BEST PUPILS" (from every class or in some disciplines). He considered this an injustice toward other pupils. He asked a question: How can they do it to other pupils? Each of them is good at something (after all, every teacher´s goal is to help every pupil succeed) but only some students' work is presented pub-licly.[9]

CASE 4

a student from DDD country reacted to the assessment sche-ma in a Slovak course: "*At my university, I have never been tested by a multiple-choice test in economics! Knowing some definitions exactly word by word does not prove my understanding of economic prob-lems or my ability to solve the problem.*"[10]

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[9] *This case was reported during a teacher-training seminar at Metodické centrum in Banská Bystrica, 2014.*

[10] *This case was reported during a a teacher training course in 2013 within the project Enhancing foreign language programmes at universities, Podpora výučby študijných programov v cudzích jazykoch ITMS 26110230025.*

[11] *The J. W. Fulbright Program is a US Cultural Exchange Program with the goal to promote the educational, research and cultural exchanges between the United States and other countries. Selected US scholars, researchers and teachers may re-ceive scholarships to conduct research or teach in, e. g. Slovakia, and Slovak citizens may qualify to do the same in the USA.*

a Fulbright[11] fellow form XYZ country came to a Slovak university for a two-semester assignment. Accompanying him was his wife, who was not teaching at university or any other school. Both were at the age of an early retirement. When the lady was asked to give conver-sation classes to a group of secondary school (Gymnázium) students, she agreed and was delighted to do it voluntarily once a week and fill her free time with a worthwhile activity. When things were arranged at the secondary school (agreements of the class teacher, parents, etc,), the XYZ country volunteer had to be introduced to the head-master of the school to get his final approval. The class teacher and another colleague (mother of a student) took the foreign volunteer to the headmaster office. After a short conversation the headmaster agreed with the project, but nevertheless, when the delegation was leaving his room, he whispered to the class teacher: "*Why does this lady not stay at home and knit socks for her grandchildren?*"[12]

DISCUSSION POINTS

For the interpretations of these cases see Appendix 1. After you have read the cases and their interpretations, give examples of similar cul-tural encounters that you are aware of (if there are any) or which you personally experienced in school or in your life outside of school.

What can we learn from these cases?

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[12] This case was reported during the teacher-training course, 2013.

UNIT 10 GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Action research

is a form of practitioner (teacher) research which typically involves investigating and reflecting on a problem in order to improve teaching practice.

Administration of education

is the process of allocating and integrating the appropriate human and material resources and making them effective for achieving the purposes of a study programme or an educational institution. This process involves planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, controlling, and evaluating performance (including the process of internationalisation, Erasmus program, student allocation, etc.).

Assessment

is connected with feedback; it determines what a student knows or can do; assessment results affect student advancement, placement, and grades, as well as decisions about teaching strategies and curriculum.

Behaviour

is the way we act based on our learned beliefs and values.

Beliefs

are our conviction about the truth of something that we learned by living in a culture; they are the core of our actions and tell us how to behave in the world. Our beliefs are the basis for our values, which are reflected in our behaviour.

Blended learning

is a form of education in which students learn via traditional face-to-face (in-person) teaching and via electronic and online media as well. This form of education is also called hybrid learning and mixed-mode learning,

Bloom´s taxonomy

is a classification of the different objectives that educators set for students (learning objectives). Bloom´s taxonomy divides educational objectives into three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (sometimes loosely described as knowing - head, feeling - heart, doing – hand). Within the domains, learning at the higher levels is dependent on having attained prerequisite knowledge and skills at lower levels. a goal of Bloom´s taxonomy is to motivate educators to focus on all three domains, creating a more holistic form of education.

CEFR

stands for the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. As one of the main documents of language policy in the EU, published by the Council of Europe in 2001, it gives guidelines to describe the proficiency of learners of foreign languages across Europe on six levels, charac-

terised as: Basic User (A1, A2), Independent user (B1, B2) and Proficient User (C1 and C2). All Erasmus+ students selected for the programme must reach at least B2 – C1 level in order to be able to study on English-medium programmes.

Competence (teacher competence)

is the ability to do something (perform a job) successfully or efficiently, in an expert way; to demonstrate expertise in a field; it also indicates the state or quality of being adequately qualified and capable of performing a given role.

Course (of study), university course

is a set of classes or a plan of study on a particular subject, usually leading to an exam or qualification; it is normally recognized for credit towards the granting of an approved degree. In Slovak we use 'subject' ('predmet') instead of 'kurz' when speaking for instance about a mandatory, elective, obligatory, non-obligatory, bachelor (undergraduate) or master graduate) course. The completion of a course guarantees a certain number of credits.

Course syllabus

is a university document that describes comprehensively all aspects of a course to students, such as the course aims and objectives, learning outcomes and assessment requirements; it clearly outlines connections between content and learning outcomes, as well as pedagogic practices to guide students in their learning.

Culture

a group of people who share a background because of their common language, knowledge, beliefs, views, values, and behaviour. Culture often results in hidden patterns of communication, viewpoints, and expressions that people in that specific culture share. These hidden patterns influence the way people behave, perceive the world, and interact with others.

Culture shock

is a feeling of distress or anxiety experienced during a study (or teaching) period in a foreign country. It results from losing one´s familiar surroundings, daily routines and orientation in everyday life. As a period of distress, frustration, and anxiety, it may negatively affect the well-being of students (teachers) and study results.

Cultural pattern

is the collective term to describe a cluster of interrelated cultural orientations. Cultural patterns are made up of interrelated cultural behaviours which are influenced by values that are shared by a cultural group.

Curriculum

is a comprehensive set of subjects (courses) that will be taught at a school (college, faculty) and the content of these subjects. It includes also a variety of activities designed to foster education (e.g., a practicum or internships during studies). Curriculum expresses the mission of the school, and the knowledge and skills that the school expects successful students to acquire during their studies.

Diversity, cultural diversity

means the state or quality of being varied, different, dissimilar or even evil. Cultural diversity of a country, region, or company (school) includes such factors as ethnicity, religion, country of origin, educational levels, economic wealth and culture of origin of their members. In a society, diversity means differences in various factors that interact to define the society of a particular culture.

English-medium instruction (EMI)

is the teaching of academic programmes in English; it refers to the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries where the first language of the majority of the population is not English.

English-medium programme

is an international academic programme taught through the medium of English; Matej Bel University also offers a few English-medium programmes, such as Business Economics and Management or Marketing Management at the Faculty of Economics. There are also courses taught in English (English-medium courses) to allow foreign students to complete their Erasmus+ mobility and get credits, for example Intercultural Relations in Business, Marketing and Case Studies in Business. These courses are usually also offered to domestic students as elective courses to improve their English proficiency.

Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is a programme of the European Union to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. ERASMUS stands for **E**uropean Community **A**ction **S**cheme for the **M**obility of **U**niversity **S**tu-

dents... Erasmus+ offers mobility and cooperation opportunities in higher education, vocational education and training, school education (including early childhood education and care), adult education, youth and sport. It has an estimated budget of €26.2 billion, which is nearly double the funding compared to its predecessor, the Erasmus programme (2014-2020). Matej Bel University hosts around 250 – 300 international Erasmus+ students every academic year.

Ethnocentric

is a term used to describe the opinion that one´s own way of life (the system of education, teaching and learning, for example) is the most (and the only) natural and correct one; this feeling leads people to conclude that their own culture is superior to other culture(s). Viewing the world from the perspective of one´s own cultural reality (as an ideal) is called ´cultural ethnocentrism´.

Ethnorelativistic

is a term to describe the viewing of one´s own culture in the context of other cultures. As we begin to acclimatise ourselves in another culture, we are able to view and understand it on its own terms. Stepping into other cultural systems reminds us that our own system is by no means universal or superior. It is only familiar. Anthropologists call this ´cultural relativism´.

Facilitator

is someone who helps to make something happen or who makes it easier; in an educational context, it is a teacher's role to enable students to learn something more easily, in the way that suits them best (facilitating learning).

Intercultural competence

is the ability to function effectively across cultures, to act and behave appropriately, and to communicate and work effectively with people from a different culture.

Internationalization

is defined as the policies and processes of making a product, (study programme) services or an organisation (university) international, i.e., making it meet the needs of users in/from many countries.

Joint-degree (double degree) study programme

is where two or more institutions collaborate on a joint study programme. For example, the Faculty of Economics, MBU, collaborates in a joint-degree programme with French universities (Université de Poitiers, Université de Lorraine, Nancy and others) and the graduates can be awarded two degrees (a double-degree programme). Students study partly at the Slovak university, and partly at the French university.

Global skills

is a term used for the action oriented skills that students need for success in a globalized world. a selection of these life skills are: communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking (4 Cs); intercultural competence and intercultural citizenship (Byram & Golubeva, 2020); emotional self-regulation and well-being; and digital literacies.

Heterogeneous /society/group /school class

is one in which members of the group/class come from diverse cultural groups. Usually there are differences in economic wealth, educational levels, and social status among the groups or cultural backgrounds. In educational settings, a group consisting of students of differing abilities (sometimes referred to as ´a mixed-abilities class/group´), is a diverse group of students put into one learning group. Grouping students in heterogeneous groups may be considered a teaching practice to ensure higher student achievement.

Homogenous society/group/school class

is one in which the majority of the members share the same cultural beliefs, attitudes, and values, and there is little difference in the economic wealth of or the social distance between the members. In an educational setting it is a distribution of students who function at similar academic, social, and emotional levels, being placed in the same co-operative learning group.

Learner-centred approach

is an approach to education that focuses on the needs of the students, rather than those of others involved in the educational process (such as teachers and administrators). Student-centred learning is focused on the student´s needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles with the teacher as a facilitator.

Learning strategies

is a student´s individual way of using and organising a particular set of procedures, skills and steps in order to learn effectively the content of the course and accomplish the required tasks. Strategies are im-

portant to facilitate self-regulated learning (goal setting and planning steps to achieve the aims and objectives of the course, self-monitoring and evaluating). The use of strategies can be taught.

Learning objectives

are specific statements of teaching intention (what the teacher intends to achieve). They indicate one of the specific areas that the teacher intends to cover.

Learning outcomes

are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after the completion of a process of learning. The process of learning could be, for example, a lecture, a course or an entire study programme.

Learning preferences or styles

are preferred ways of learning. Some of them may be dominant learning strategies or preferences, others less dominant, and it is advisable to use a mix of learning styles (multiple learning styles).

Lingua franca

is a term used today for English being a general means of communication between speakers whose native languages are different from English. In many fields, such as business, sport, science and higher education, English is considered lingua franca today.

Stereotypes (cultural stereotypes)

are the beliefs or opinions held by one group that the majority of a different group can be classified by the actions, appearance, or attitudes of a few members of that group.

Supporting services

comprise internal services at university that enable the smooth functioning of the internationalization processes (exchange, management and orientation of international students, teachers and staff, advising, counselling, etc.). University support staff members provide instructional support as well as support to students while they utilize school facilities. ... They can foster positive, trusting relationships with students and improve the school climate.

Teacher-centred approach

is an approach to education associated mainly with the transmission of knowledge (from the teacher to the student). Student performance is at the forefront of a teacher centred curriculum, but teachers are driven to meet accountability standards and therefore the needs of students are often neglected or not taken into account.

Teaching methodology

is a set of methods a teacher uses to explain or teach material to students so they can learn the content. The methods chosen often depend on the educational philosophy and preferences of a teacher.

Values

are a set of beliefs that are made up of rules for making choices that we have learned. They tell us what is right and wrong, good or bad, and tell us who to live our lives. a value dimension is a set of interrelated values that exist along a continuum of relative importance. We use this term to describe the values that influence cultural behaviours in all cultures. Our views (values) are what we have learned from our culture about how to think and believe about certain issues and ideas.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERPRETATION OF CASES 1-5

CASE 1

This situation actually happened, and it shocked the Slovak teachers. Why? Because this experience violated our cultural norms. In Slovakia, spitting is considered (even if not by all!) unhygienic, disgusting, and a means by which diseases spread. Needless to say, in Slovakia, you will possibly see people spitting in public spaces (think of a bus stop), but most Slovaks will not do it. On the other hand, in China this is still a common habit that shocks travellers from around the world.[13] Viewed through Western eyes, spitting in public spaces (streets, sidewalks, subway) is uncivilized and rude. But in China, as in many Asian countries, it has historically been considered acceptable. Today, because of global influences, China´s authorities consider spitting in public spaces unhygienic and a way that diseases spreading, and they are launching anti-spitting campaigns (think of the campaign before the Olympics in Beijing in 2008). Studies in culture offer a certain explanation of this habit, which is related to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TMC).[14] In that sense, many Chinese people see spitting as a cleansing action for the body, simply as getting rid of an excess of one fluid in order to balance the whole-body system. According to TCM, phlegm is considered a toxin that needs

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[13] https://www.heredg.com/2019/01/spittingculture-in-china/

[14] https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007%2F978-3-319-65021-0_25

to be removed. And it is a most disgusting thing to carry it around with oneself or swallow it. Similarly, they condemn the Western habit of blowing noses into tissues or hankies, then returning them to pockets and carry around. This is, in their eyes, unhygienic and pointless.

So, what can we learn from this case? Compare this case with the results of your discussion.

- There are certain social norms, customs, and habits in every culture. These habits may be totally different from our own cultural norms, beliefs, and acceptable or forbidden behaviours.

- a given culture's norms may seem strange, rude, disgusting, or abnormal to members of other cultures. When we judge such norms, we do so from our own perspective, with our cultural background, our experience, and our cultural norms.

- For better understanding of the differences, it is good for the members of other cultures to know about the social practices, historical background, and traditions of the culture of a business partner or colleague of with whom one is dealing.

- What is condemned in some countries (cultures) may still be a fully acceptable part of a lifestyle somewhere else. Shame is different across cultures.

- Before entering a foreign country (culture) in today´s globalized world it is always advisable to learn something about the other culture.

CASE 2

This case illustrates the frustrations that foreign students may experience during their studies abroad. These disappointments may result from expectations anchored in their own cultural background (seeing the new culture from their own perspective). Moreover, they experience the many aspects of a different educational culture: how students are treated (partners or subordinates), what performance is expected, ways of teaching, and how learning is assessed. In this case, the Slovak teacher´s preconception was that everyone must possess certain knowledge that can be measured by grades, and those students who do not know what they are expected to know should be punished with lower grades. What we can learn from this case is:

- Students´ knowledge and expectations may be different from our knowledge and expectations (try to understand the foreign students´ expectations and needs).

- In the same way that there are many cultures, there are many educational cultures as well (don´t assume Slovak culture is the only one right and good—it is only common to us, as we have grown up in it, it is only one of many).

- Teachers who know more about other cultures and are able to view their own culture from somebody else´s perspective are more understanding and open to examining their cultural assumptions; they are more motivated and able to develop themselves as intercultural personalities (take into account other educational cultures, explore, be motivated to understand today´s world).

CASE 3

hThis case illustrates the educational culture in one country, and how it is perceived by a foreigner (a member of a different culture). According to Hofstede´s theory (Hofstede et al., 2010), there are two opposite types of cultures: masculine and feminine cultures. In a masculine culture, the dominant values are performance of an individual, achievement, competition, strength and success. In a feminine culture, completely opposite values prevail: caring for others, quality of life (for everybody), kindness, good social relations and harmony. These contrasts are clearly reflected in educational systems. The teacher from country CCC came from a feminine type of culture, where the educational goal is success of every child. Therefore, seeing such things as competition for the best pupil, and public presentation of the best student work in a school was a shock for him. In Slovak system, success of every child may be a proclaimed goal, but the practice stresses performance outputs, good grades (competition for best grades), attaining the best position and others.

- What have we learned?

- Educational cultures differ across cultures.

- They differ in the aims, goals and the ways they are achieved.

- We should take into account that such differences are not bad or good, they simply are. While they may seem abnormal here, they are considered normal somewhere else.

- We can learn about these differences, and we can understand and adopt them if they benefit pupils or students.

- Cultures are not monolithic or unchangeable; they are 'liquid', which means that they can undergo changes when influenced by outside circumstances (namely now, in a global world).

CASE 4

This is another example of **educational culture**. Here, the **differences in assessment** and knowledge-testing at university is a case. We have mentioned the specific points at which educational cultures differ. We can learn from this case that students assume that assessment methods in an international class should be varied. Applying only one method may not reveal the real knowledge and abilities of a student. The final grade may reflect only the level of factual knowledge, missing other skills and abilities that are stated in the learning outcomes. Teachers should vary the assessment methods, which may include reading and interpreting texts, solving problems and defending the solution (while applying the gained knowledge), writing essays, summaries and reports (with the applied knowledge), suggesting and solving projects, and others. These academic skills also reflect real life, as well as global and future job-oriented skills.

CASE 5

This case was chosen to present both cultural and personal values in different cultures. In American culture, volunteering plays an important role. Candidates for a new job are eager and proud to include their volunteering activities in their CV. All group ages take volunteering for a normal part of life. Therefore, the older American lady was willing to teach voluntarily (that is, without being paid) a group of Slovak students. Another point is the relation to age. Age is looked at differently in different cultures. Societies differ not only in how they value age but also in their awareness of age and the practices expected of certain age groups. In Slovakia, we have a general notion

of retired people as those who should not work anymore; they should sit at home and relax. The practice is, of course, different. Many older people have a job, take care of grandchildren, or study at the Third Age University. They are fully 'employed'. In American culture, it is normal to pursue hobbies, have a job, volunteer, and to remain active even in old age. This approach to life is considered acceptable. Telling Americans they should sit at home and do nothing is a kind of insult and even discriminatory toward older people. In many countries discrimination on the basis of age (ageism) is unlawful in any aspect of employment. EU law has enacted legislation to outlaw discrimination against age in interviewing for employment and in working conditions.

What have we learned from this case?

- Our personal and cultural **values may differ** from those in other countries.

- Our personal values may not reflect the national values.

- To avoid making an insult or causing misunderstanding, we should be carefully avoid **judging a situation or a person** from another country.

- We should avoid jokes and rude remarks about members of another culture (of course, the same goes for members of our own culture).

- **Ageism (discrimination based on age) is unlawful.** Even in personal situations and contacts we should treat people based on their qualities, not on age.

APPENDIX 2: COURSE INFORMATION SHEET

COURSE INFORMATION SHEET

University:	
Faculty:	
Code:	**Course name:**
Type, workload, and method of educational activities **Course type:** *compulsory/optional/elective* **Recommended course workload: Lecture – L, Seminar – S / Exercise – E,** **Field Training – FT, Specialised Practice – SP (in hours):** *number of hours per week/semester* **Method of study:** **Form of study:** internal, external	
Number of credits:	
Recommended semester of study: *winter/summer*	
Degree of study: *3 – PhD, 2 – Master, 1 – Bachelor*	
Prerequisites:	
Course completion conditions: *Assessment of partial assignments:* *Final assessment: a – 100–94% (Excellent), B – 93–87% (Very Good), C – 86–80% (Good), D – 79–73% (Satisfactory), E – 72–65% (Passing). Fx – 64 and less (insufficient).*	

Educational outcomes (performance standard): for example
     1. *The student understands the main concepts…*
     2. *The student can provide arguments to justify the importance of ….*
     3. *The student can distinguish ….*
     4. *The student can identify the potential of*
     5. *The student can analyse and evaluate …*
     6. *The student can creatively and functionally apply the elements of … to preparation and implementation of …*	

Brief outline of the course (contents standard): for example
1. Concepts and categories …
2. Complementarity of …
3. Specificities of …
4. Social contexts of ….
5. Barriers in …
6. Validation of…
7. Current trends and innovation in

Recommended literature:
1. …
2. …

Language of instruction:

Notes:

Course assessment

A	B	C	D	E	FX

Time workload for the student: e.g. *150 hours: lectures – 26 hours; field training – 26 hours; analytical work – 40 hours; preparation for the colloquium – 20 hours; self-study – 38 hours.*

Instructor: lectures/consulting/seminars:

Last changed:

Approved by:

APPENDIX 3: DEVELOPMENT & ASSESSMENT OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

Recommended resources:

- *Developing and assessing intercultural communicative competence: a guide for language teachers and teacher educators* (Lázár et al., 2007) describes how to plan intercultural communication workshops, materials developing intercultural competence. It also offers guidelines for assessment of intercultural communicative competence (of intercultural knowledge, know-how, being).

- *Cultural Proficiency. a manual for school leaders* (Lindsey et al.,2009) is a guide how to develop and assess cultural proficiency (6 stages: 0 - cultural destructiveness, 1 - cultural incapacity, 2 – cultural blindness, 3 – cultural pre-competence, 4 – cultural competence, 5 – cultural proficiency).

- *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* (Byram et al., 2009) provides guidance on "how to think about our experiences ... with other 'cultures' ... to decide how we can and should learn from an intercultural encounter, what we should do, what action we might take, how we can find out more about and benefit from the event which has been important to us, and how we can make it part of our understanding of 'others' and their 'cultures'" (p. 4).

- *Intercultural Readiness Check: Four competences for working across cultures* (Brinkmann & Weerdenburg, 2014) offers suggestions on how to develop competencies affecting human intercultural interactions: intercultural sensitivity, intercultural communication, building commitment, and managing uncertainty.

- *Managing across Cultures* (Schneider et a.l, 2014) - although aimed specifically on business managers, it includes generally applicable ideas how to work in multicultural teams. Training of the metacognitive ability to "continuously learn how to learn about cultures" is of particular importance in the university multicultural setting.

- *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication*: *Identities in a Global Community* (Jandt, 2021) - its aim is to promote the skills of intercultural competence by developing an understanding of cultures.

APPENDIX 4: PEDAGOGIC COMMUNICATION
CLASSROOM LANGUAGE

This section contains a list words and phrases for classroom communication. You may not find it useful if your English proficiency is good, but we hope that for some colleagues who start teaching in English-medium programmes it may help to develop their English skills and be a useful guide. The list is divided according to the pedagogic situation in a classroom where you interact with students.

Introducing the class: Say what the lesson will be about

What we are going to do today is to Today we´re going to	learn about cover read about deal with hear about	... (topic, theme, ... content) ....

Let´s start today with…. Are you ready?
Settle down now so we can start.

Sequencing

First, Second, Firstly, Secondly, Then, After that Finally	I´m we´re	going to	learn about read about discuss do ....

First, I´ll check your homework.

Asking about the last lesson

Can anyone remember what we did in the last lesson?
Who can tell me what we talked about in the last seminar?
What did we learn last time / last week?
Do you remember what we did last week?
Was it OK/easy/difficult?
Did you find it OK / easy / difficult?

Moving on to the next stage of the lesson

Right, let´s move on (to the next point).
OK, then, shall we go on…
OK, let me continue with the next point / issue.
Now can we move on to..../ can we do.....
The next point/step/question is....

Eliciting responses

Who wants to start? Who would like to start? Who is going to start?
Who knows the answer?
Who can say....?
Who can tell me...?
Any volunteers? Anybody...?
How would you say it in your own words?
Who can summarize the... Do you know the answer?
Put your hands up if you know/if you can say / can tell me....
Hands up if you can tell me............
Do you know...? Does anybody know...?
Can anybody say....? Can anybody tell me what the difference be-
tween AB and XY is?

Eliciting opinions in a discussion

What do you think? Why do you think that?
Any reasons for your decision / answer / view?
What´s your opinion? What´s your point of view?
How do you see this? How do you read this ... ?
Can you give some arguments to support your opinion?
What else can say about this?
Explain it in your own words.
Why is this wrong?

Moving to another student

How about you – what do you think?
Anybody else?
Does anybody else want to say something?
Does anybody know?
Now, what do you think (name)?
Do you also agree with that? Is that OK?
Are you happy with that?
Any objections?
Anything more to say / to add?
Let´s listen to what XZ is saying.

Encouraging students

That's interesting!
Come on. I´m sure you know it.
You know this.
Let me give you a clue / hint.
That really is very kind of you.
Don't worry about it.

Don't worry, I'm sure you'll do better next time.
I'm really impressed. I knew you could do it!
Have a go! Have another try!
Take your time.
Good! Excellent! Well done! That's great!

Correcting learners

No, that´s wrong.
Not exactly. Not quite. Not really.
That´s partly true... That´s part of the answer.
One small mistake
Try again.
Have another go.

Giving praise

Well done! Excellent! Good job. Perfect. Great. That´s right. Looks good.
I appreciate your effort.
That was a very nice seminar work that deserves a good grade.
You´ve got good (10) points for this presentation.

Assessing and evaluating students´ work and results

The final grade is a because you have been working continuously very well and scored 95 points out of 100. **a means a distinction (an outstanding) result (1).**

The final grade is B because you lost some points in the final test. The overall number of points you gained is 90. **B means excellent (above average) results (1,5)**.

The final grade is C as you lost some points in the mid-term test, in the final test and in the seminar work. But you still scored quite a high number of points, 80. Congratulations and good luck in the next semester. **C means good (average) results (2)**.

The final grade is D, which is still a pass. You must work better on your writing tasks: the seminar work was poor. You just made it in the final test. **D means satisfactory (acceptable) results (2,5).**

The final grade is E, which means you got the minimum required points. But I would have liked to see better results from you. **E means passing (results only meet the minimum criteria) (4).**

FX means fail (results do not meet the minimum criteria) (4).
You must improve your..............., read more,
Congratulations, you have scored 100 percent (points).

ECTS: assessment using grades

Assessment using grades is implemented according to the classification scale consisting of the following classification grades:

a means a distinction (an outstanding) result (1)

B means excellent (above average) results (1,5)

C means good (average) results (2)

D means satisfactory (acceptable) results (2,5)

E means passing (results only meet the minimum criteria) (3)

FX means failure (results do not meet the minimum criteria) (4).

Criteria for success (percentage expression of the results in the course assessment), are for the classification grades as follows (e. g. at the Faculty of Economics, MBU):

A: 94 -100 %   a = EXCELLENT - outstanding performance with only minor errors

B: 87 –93 %   B = VERY GOOD - above the average standard but with some errors

C: 80–86 %   C = GOOD - generally sound work with a number of notable errors

D: 73 –79 %   D = SATISFACTORY - fair but with significant shortcomings

E: 65 –72%   E = SUFFICIENT - performance meets the minimum criteria

FX: 65 and less   FX= FAIL - some more work required before a credit can be awarded

a student obtains credits for a course. The course is passed success-fully if the student´s results were assessed within any of the classifica-tion grades from a to E.