INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE MODELS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

This paper explores the literature on intercultural competence(IC) to act as a path for educational and intercultural scientists. Its aim is to review three main models commonly used in this area of research, namely the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) by Bennet (1986-1993), the Intercultural Communicative Competence model (ICC) by Byram (1997), and lastly a new born of the field, the model of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) by Earley and Ang (2003). The paper also looks at the different tools used to evaluate IC using different instruments and evaluation methods proposed by these models. The similarities between the models are highlighted and the different ways they could be further explored in the field of education are discussed and explored.

Keyword: Intercultural Competence, Cultural Intelligence, EFL

1.INTRODUCTION

We live in a world that is becoming a global village day by day and where people are finding opportunities to connect with others globally now more than ever. This situation has prompted a need for effective intercultural communication and competence in many fields. A previous event in history that also impelled a similar need is the post WWII situation. Due to the disturbed peace in the world, one-way educators and stakeholders have thought of achieving stability through research in the field of IC development and the encouraging of intercultural exchanges. Researchers have also developed ways to evaluate IC in individuals in different disciplines, including education. According to Spitzberg and Changnon (2009), there exist over 300 traits and variables that have been used in IC models so as to track the development of IC and evaluate the individuals' IC. Yet, each of these models has its own traits and pitfalls. This article seeks to review three models of IC, namely the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) by Bennet (1986-1993), the Intercultural Communicative Competence model (ICC) by Byram (1997), and lastly a new born of the field, the model of Cultural Intelligence (CQ) by Earley and Ang (2003). As these three models are being extensively used in multiple disciplines, the aim of the paper is to look into their strengths and weaknesses and how they can help predict and evaluate IC. For that, a review of the models is provided and the different strategies and tests used to evaluate IC in individuals are presented.

2.CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Intercultural competence is a key skill for interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds, be it within one's home country or in foreign countries. The following sub-sections introduce the conceptual framework the concept involves and its limitations.

2.1. The Importance of the Intercultural Competence

Having a global cultural awareness in today's international environment has become a key element for engaging with the world's nations and communities. This skill is increasingly necessary both locally and internationally when interacting and communicating with people from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds (Lustig, 2005). Cultural diversity would then eventually manifest itself within the global marketplace and other spaces, rendering intercultural competence an incredibly valuable skill (Deardorff & Hunter, 2006). In the light of the Delphi study, Deardorff (2004) defines intercultural competence as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in

intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 194). For Meyer (1991: 137), IC is "the ability of a person to behave adequately in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations representative of foreign cultures." In other words, IC is the capacity to handle disparities using intercultural skills, which, for the most part, includes managing one's own interests within a completely new environment. Spitzberg & Changnon (2009) consider that various notions are frequently associated with competence as a concept and therefore, need to be considered when seeking models of intercultural competence to cater for adaptation, assimilation and adjustment.

2.2. Defining Culture Shock

The widespread assumption that cross-cultural contact generates stress is completely debatable among researchers who continuously argue around the concept of "culture shock" and the best way to reduce its impact on people experiencing it. While constructing models to define "culture shock", some clinical analysis was brought into discussion, as it can be a hard situation that may bring people down. For instance, a list of cultural shock signs may include perceptual, mental, physiological and other responses. This is what has basically helped some researchers in their attempt to classify the personal variables that seem to help predict who and how often people experience culture shock, such as Neuroticism, Language proficiency, Openness, and tolerance for opposition (Spencer-Rodgers et al., 2010).

Cultural shock is described as a severe, transient and often chronic affective response to a new (social) environment (Furham,2012). Similarly, Kalervo Oberg (1901-1973) describes culture shock as a mental illness, or a frequent pathology for people living abroad who are usually "precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse. These signs or cues include the thousand and one ways in which we orient ourselves to the situations of daily life" (Oberg, 1960). Adler's (1975), on the other hand, includes the individual's reaction in his definition when he states that:

Culture shock is primarily a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture, to new cultural stimuli which have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences (p. 13).

Besides what has been advanced, cross-cultural adaptation is frequently related to two main practices. One is based on the learning opportunities that help to achieve the requisite social skills to navigate life in the new world, while the other stresses on managing life-changes that trigger tension, requiring many coping initiatives to improve mental well-being (Ward et al., 2001).

3. INVESTIGATING INTERCULTRAL COMPETENCE

The sub-sections below introduce three different IC models chronologically, starting with Bennetts DIMS (1993), followed by Byrams' ICC (1997) and concluding with Earley and Ang CQ (2003).

3.1. Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

Dr. Milton Bennett (1986, 1993) came up with the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) in an attempt to describe people's responses to cultural differences. After extensive observations, he realized that individuals experienced cultural disparity in certain predictable contexts, in both academic and business fields, as they learned to become professional intercultural communicators. He gathered all his findings into what he listed as the six phases of growing cultural sensitivity, using ideas from cognitive psychology and constructivism. Bennett lists the first three DMIS steps to reflect the degree of ethnocentrism while keeping the remaining ones to highlight ethnorelativism (1993).

3.2. Intercultural Communicative Competence Model(ICC)

In a world where virtual or actual interactions between people of different backgrounds and cultures are increasing, being aware of our dissimilarities entails adopting globalized skills of critical thinking, negotiation of ideas and sensitivity to cultural differences, in order to maximize successful interactions. Nevertheless, Bennett (1998) sees that adhering to cultural differences is neither an innate nor a common aspect of human behavior. Cultural differences have the

potential to generate misunderstandings, conflict and culture shock. Therefore, the need for intercultural competence (IC), especially in foreign language teaching, is increasingly relevant. In an attempt to describe intercultural competence, Fantini (2006) states that it relates to the individual's ability to step beyond one's culture in order to interact with individuals with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As discussed earlier, IC implies the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to communicate effectively (Deardorff 2006). In other words, the constructed relationship between the 'self' and the 'other' entails adapting to the expectations of the 'other', which could be considered as an imbalance of presence and power between the participants in a given context.

Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) does, however, go a step beyond IC and hence, should be an essential component in every educational system. Byram (1997) comprised communicative competence (CC) and intercultural competence (IC) to come up with ICC. Contrary to Bennett's descriptive model, Byram's ICC model is of a prescriptive nature with implicit recommendations for educators, curriculum designers and foreign language teachers, in particular.

Byram's model advances clear instructions and recommendations for foreign language teachers. For Byram, there is a clear distinction between IC and ICC: interlocutors have the capacity to be culture mediators since they have the capacity to successfully interact in their language with others from different cultures. On the other hand, IC speakers cannot be culture mediators since their interaction is done through a second or foreign language. In this respect, foreign language learners ought to communicate successfully, interpret and understand cultural perspectives of the 'other' and evaluate their culture. In a study on the instructor's beliefs and ICC by Young and Sacheve (2011), the intercultural speaker concept was highly accepted by teachers who felt that it was useful as long as it placed learners in the middle of the way between their own culture and language and those of the target group.

Byram's model of ICC (see figure1), which is inspired by EK's model (1986) of communicative ability and Canale and Swain's (1980) communicative competence, comprises four key components. Linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and intercultural competence. The four components revolve around competencies that interact and interrelate to

form culture mediators within the framework of ICC. Indeed, Byram's model differs from Ek's in the fourth competence, which in itself comprises five factors known as the Savoirs (Byram 1997, 34)

- Savoir: refers to knowledge of one's culture and foreign language culture that learners deal with. It also includes knowledge of societal practices in both host and target cultures (p. 51)

-Savoir être: refers to the learners' attitudes towards interlocutors from different cultures (p. 34)

-Savoir comprendre: refers to the skills of interpreting texts from the host culture and comparing or contrasting them with texts from the learner's host culture.

-Savoir apprendre/ faire: refers to the skill of discovering practices from the host culture and interacting with them.

-Savoir s'engager: refers to having a critical cultural awareness to evaluate perspectives and practices among other manifestations in host and target cultures. In brief, Byram's ICC model is significant as it combines communicative competence with intercultural competence, both of which are critical and essential in foreign language teaching. Moreover, its simplicity makes it easier to implement in language and culture assessments. It is worth mentioning that the ICC model has gained fame in the European context; hence, it has been used for assessing intercultural competence in various scopes.
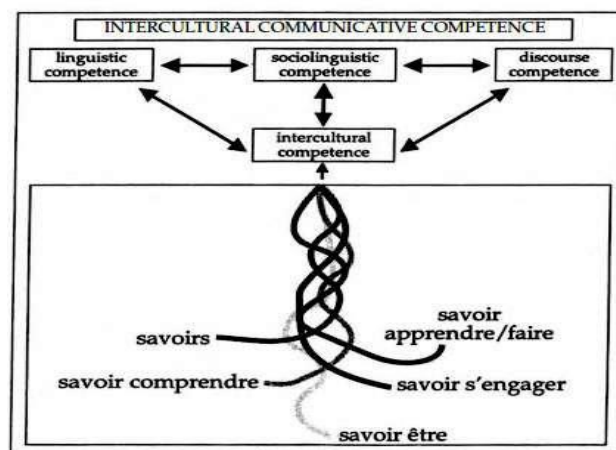

Figure. 1 Model of ICC (Byram, 1997, p.73)

3.3. Cultural Intelligence(CQ) Model

Cultural Intelligence model was first introduced by Earley and Ang in 2003. It came out as a reaction to a

need in the literature to bridge the gap between two fields: Cultural studies and Psychology. Cultural Intelligence was first defined by Earley and Ang as the capability of a person to successfully adapt to novel cultural settings. Follow up extensions to the definition and the components were introduced by other prominent figures in the field of IC and CQ, but the commonly used definition that captures the reflection of its four facets is the definition introduced by Dyne and Ang which sees it as "an individual's capability to detect, assimilate, reason, and act on cultural cues appropriately in situations characterized by cultural diversity" (2012). Ang and Dyne (2008) recognize CQ as a type of domain-specific, everyday real-world knowledge that transcends traditional academic knowledge. It goes beyond only understanding cultural differences to also having the option to connect those distinctions among different cultures. As discussed earlier, Earley initially presented the model in 2002, followed up by more top to bottom work of him and Ang (2003). Back then, they presented three distinctive CQ factors as Cognitive, Motivational

and Behavioral. Ang and Dyne (2007) did later on recognize cognitive and metacognitive CQ abilities separately, which brought about the presently basic four-factor model presenting CQ Drive, CQ Knowledge, CQ Strategy, and CQ Action. CQ Knowledge, also known as the cognitive aspect of cultural intelligence implies knowing the norms, values and practices of other cultures. CQ Strategy, or metacognitive CQ, entails the individuals' conscious cultural awareness during intercultural encounters. While CQ Drive, known also as motivational CQ, implies the individuals' ability to direct attention and energy toward learning about and managing intercultural situations. Finally, CQ Action, a reflection of the other three mental factors in real live events, also known as Behavioral CQ, requires adapting verbal and non-verbal behaviors when engaging in cross-cultural situations; in other words, it requires flexible actions and the tailoring of already acquired behaviors to fit a new cultural situation. Each of the four factors also has sub-dimensions (see figure 2).

Steps of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)	Denial Defence Minimization Acceptance Adaptation Integration
Byram's Intercultural Communicative Competences	Linguistic competence Sociolinguistic competence Discourse competence Intercultural competence (Savoir, Savoir être, Savoir comprendre, Savoir apprendre/ faire, Savoir s'engager)
Earley and Ang Cultural Intelligence(CQ)	Metacognitive Factor (Awareness, Planning, Checking) Cognitive Factor (Business/ cultural systems, Interpersonal/cultural values, Sociolinguistics, Leadership) Motivational Factor (Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, Self-efficacy) Behavioral Factor (Nonverbal Verbal, Speech Acts

Table 1. Stages and Dimensions of IC models

4. INSTRUMENTS FOR ASSESSING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

The aim of the following sub-sections is to present and discuss the different instruments used in the assessment of intercultural competence in the three models

presented in the study, namely, Bennetts DIMS (1993), Byrams' ICC (1997) and Earley and Ang CQ (2003).

4.1. Tools for Assessing IC: The Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)

Chen & Starosta (2000) developed the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) with a major focus on the investigation of the intercultural communicative competence. Chen & Starosta realized that the process of intercultural communication is an overarching term consisting of cognitive, affective and behavioral capacity among the interlocutors. Chen & Starosta (2000) also proposed that "individuals must possess six affective elements to be interculturally sensitive: self-esteem, self-monitoring, open-mindedness, empathy, interaction involvement, and suspending judgment" (p: 6). In this context, intercultural sensitivity in Chen & Starosta (1998) means an "active desire to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures" (p. 231). To come up with their new scale, Fritz and Mollenberg (2001) note that they combined three conceptual dimensions of the intercultural communication competence, adding intercultural sensitivity to the intercultural awareness (the cognitive aspect of intercultural communication),

and intercultural adroitness (the behavioral aspect of intercultural communication) (p. 60).

The Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS) is a 24-item questionnaire based on five factors: 1) Interaction Engagement, 2) Respect for Cultural Differences, 3) Interaction Confidence, 4) Interaction Enjoyment, and 5) Interaction Attentiveness. A five-point Likert scale was used to provide the answer for each item: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = uncertain, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree. The ISS scale has been correlated with other related measures such as Interaction Attentiveness Scale, Impression Rewarding Scale, Self-Esteem Scale, Self-Monitoring scale, and Perspective Taking Scale for the validity of the inventory. In their analysis, Chen and Starosta (2000) explain that "higher scores of this measure are suggestive of being more interculturally sensitive" (p. 10).

(1) Interaction engagement	e.g., "I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures"
(2) Respect for cultural differences	e.g., "I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded"
(3) Interaction confidence	e.g., "I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures"
(4) Interaction enjoyment	e.g., "I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures"
(5) Interaction attentiveness	e.g., "I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures"

Table 2. The Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS)

4.2. Tools for Assessing IC using the ICC Model

While navigating the literature on assessment tools for IC, we came across the most significant qualitative and quantitative tools that are being used. For quantitative assessment tools we ought to list the following:
BASIC: The Behavioral Assessment Scale for Intercultural Competence (Olebe & Koester, 1989).

ICSI: The Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992)

CCAI: The Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (Kelley & Meyers, 1995)

IDI: The Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer et al., 2003)

INCA: Intercultural Competence Assessment Project (INCA project 2004)

As for qualitative approaches to assess IC, we list the following assessment tools:

Performance Assessment (Byram, 1997): relies on conversations amongst interlocutors to elicit the individuals' abilities in demonstrating IC.

Portfolio Assessment (Byram, 1997, Jacobson et al., 1999): relies on the individuals' reflections on their personal documents or work to measure IC evolution.

Interviews (Fantini, 2006; Straffon, 2003): relies on in-depth questions through which researchers can elicit data in the nature and development of IC.

BASIC	Developed for observers to assess behavioral acts of observes Uses 4-5-point Likert scales Assesses individual's display of respect, interaction management, knowledge, empathy, tolerance for ambiguity
ICSI	Measures individuals' ability to adapt when living between an individualistic culture and a collectivistic culture. Uses questions on a 7-point Likert scale
CCAI	Measures individual's ability to adapt to emotional resilience, flexibility and openness, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy Uses self-report survey of 50-items using six-point Likert scale.
IDI	Measures the changes in intercultural competence Uses a 50-item self-assessment with five-point Likert scale
INCA	Diagnoses and keeps record of achievement for the assessment of language competence and subject knowledge competence. Uses questionnaires, scenarios, and role plays

Table 3. Intercultural Competence Quantitative Assessment Tools

4.3. Tools for Assessing CQ

20-Items CQS

There are multiple tools by which CQ is measured, but the commonly used model is the 20 items-scale by And and Dyne 2007, also referred to as CQS. The CQS is composed of 20 items covering the four factors of CQ. Four items targeting the metacognitive, six items for the cognitive CQ, five motivational CQ items, and finally five behavioral CQ. Respondents of scale are asked to rate each of the 20 statements to the best of what describes who they really are from 1, representing strongly disagree to 7, representing strongly agree. The score of each factor is calculated and the general four factors are also calculated to explain the CQ of individuals. The CQS went through an in-depth process of validation. It was tested on multiple students, on different time intervals and in many countries (Dyne and al.,2012). Examples of factor statements are shared in the figure below (Table 4).

E-CQ Scale

In 2012 Ang and Dyne, joined by other colleagues, introduced what they called the Expanded CQ Scale. This new addition to the field of CQ responds to a need and a gap in CQ literature where scholars called for a more in-depth scale that tests each of the sub-dimensions of the four factors, to end up with a list of 39 questions.

Nine questions addressing individually each of Metacognitive, Motivational and Behavioral CQ and twelve items addressing Cognitive CQ. Similar to 20-items CQ scale, the E-CQ also uses a 1 to 7 likert scale rating system.

Other instruments are also being developed by practitioners who suspect the objectivity of the self-assessment scales, such as the Quasi-Observational CQ. Yet, the 20-items scale is the one commonly used in the literature.

20 Items- CQ Scale question examples	
Metacognitive CQ	e.g. " I know the rules for expressing non-verbal behaviors in other cultures."
Cognitive CQ	e.g. "I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures."
Motivational CQ	e.g. "I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it"
Behavioral CQ	e.g. "I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it"
E-CQ Scale sub-dimenssions and question examples	
Metacognitive CQ	e.g. "Checking: I carefully adjust my cultural knowledge after a cultural misunderstanding."
Cognitive CQ	e.g. "Values: I can describe differences in family systems and the varied role expectations for men and women across cultures."
Motivational CQ	e.g. "Extrinsic Motivation : I value the reputation I would gain from living or working in a different culture."
Behavioral CQ	e.g. "Speech Acts: I modify the way I disagree with others to fit the cultural setting."

4. DISUSSION

The current article provides a presentation and description of how ICC models are being used in foreign language teaching. Bennet's work illustrates that intercultural awareness is very complex. He succeeded to demonstrate how people are interculturally receptive and need to be inspired to be able to embrace differences between cultures, and to create a good

result from intercultural experiences. Nevertheless, there was still a need for a deeper look at the intercultural sensitivity dimension through the ISS test. As for Byram's (1997) model, attitude, knowledge and skills along with the different competencies mentioned earlier are essential components for an interculturally competent person. While the Cultural Intelligence model is also built around competencies or what Earley and Ang called factors, three of which are psychological, cognitive CQ, metacognitive CQ and motivational CQ

and the fourth is a translation of the former ones into real life actions, and that is behavioral CQ.

As for ICC assessment, Kauffmann, Martin and Weaver (1992) raised the issue of ICC assessment consistency; in other words, it is not surprising that different results can be drawn of the same phenomenon using different ICC assessment tools. However, when researchers or educators possess enough knowledge on how and when to use a certain ICC assessment tool, the process of results interpretation comes with ease. The assessment trend in foreign language learning needs to rely on alternative assessment tools as Byram prescribed in his model. In order to assess individuals, particularly the learners' ICC, the use of reports, portfolios, observation checklists and rubrics needs to substitute traditional standardized testing based on norms, grading with marks. In fact, both Bennett's DMIS and Byram's model of Savoirs have had a great impact on the intercultural research field in both quantitative and qualitative research. Bennett's IDI and Byram's INCA models have contributed enormously in mixed-method paradigms. As for the CQ, though it was first introduced as " the new kid on the scientific block", its CQS is being explored by many disciplines worldwide and is gaining popularity in various fields of research and instruction. In fact, other researchers are committed to finding new ways to explore the scale qualitatively as well and turn it into an observational method where instead of self-assessment, respondents are tracking the frequency of observed behaviors, skills and knowledge that could be useful in cross-cultural settings.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on our discussion of the three models' merits, we came to the conclusion that the previosly mentioned models are most widely applicble to identify and assess the progress of acquiring IC. The current review of the three models has also shown that there are extensive commonalities cross the three models we presented. Throughout this review, we came up to the conclusion that IC models can be divided into two types: co-orientational and developmental. The former is best presented through the Intercultence Competence Model by Byram (1997) and deals with shared meanings and communicative mutuality between interlocutors. As for

the developmental type, it focuses on the stages of maturity and progression in IC, and it is best presented through the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) by Bennett (1993), and the Cultural Intelligence CQ model by Earley and Ang.

The main objective of this review article was to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of each model as they are being extensively used in multiple disciplines. Thus, the assessment instruments of each model have been contrasted to help teachers of foreign languages have a wider view on how to choose an instrument to assess the progress of acquiring IC for their learners.

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