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Creating a Model for Intercultural Competence in Early Years and Primary ELT

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1 Introduction

The development of intercultural competence is an essential goal of language teaching (Byram & Wagner, 2018) and has a crucial role to play in enabling learners to become responsible citizens who can lead positive lives in diverse societies, including their own (Porto, 2019). Language teaching thus not only contributes to the education and development of individuals but also to whole societies (Porto et al., 2017). Given the lowering of the starting age for learning English as a foreign language globally in recent years (Rixon, 2015), it has become imperative to address how intercultural competence may be effectively integrated in early English language programmes in order to develop awareness, understanding, skills and attitudes that are relevant to children's immediate,

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everyday lives, and lay the foundations for creating responsible, open-minded global citizens in the future.

The aim of this chapter is to propose a pedagogical model which provides a framework for developing intercultural competence with children between the ages of four and twelve. The design of the model addresses key issues related to the feasibility of developing intercultural competence in an early years or primary school context in a fast-changing world. The three-phase model goes beyond a superficial, fact-based approach to teaching culture and is realistic for early years and primary ELT teachers to deliver within current provisions of teacher education. The model is designed to reflect children's cognitive, conceptual, psychological, social and emotional development at different ages. The model builds on the concept of windows and mirrors (Short, 2009; Sims Bishop, 1990) with parallel objectives to open windows on children's awareness and understanding of other cultures and, at the same time, to provide a reflective mirror in which children develop awareness and understanding of their own cultural identities. Through focusing on connections rather than differences between peoples and cultures, the model also draws on the notion of intercultural threads (Driscoll & Holliday, 2019).

2 Current Issues and Research

Intercultural education has been variously described as teaching culture, intercultural understanding, intercultural communicative competence, and intercultural citizenship. These terms reflect different perspectives which need to be considered in a model of developing intercultural competence with children.

Teaching Culture

Culture is widely used as an umbrella term to refer to the common history, social behaviour, attitudes and traditions shared by a group of people (Driscoll et al., 2013). A distinction is sometimes made between culture with a capital 'C' as in art, music and literature, and culture with a lower case 'c' as in habits and behaviour (Driscoll et al., 2013). The

metaphor of an iceberg is also used to characterize the concept of culture, with social behaviour and cultural information as the visible part of the iceberg and less tangible aspects, such as values, attitudes and beliefs lying below the surface (Dolan, 2014; Woodgate-Jones & Grenfell, 2012). While culture is one element that contributes to an individual's sense of identity, it is recognised that this is defined by a complex blend of other influences as well. Culture is a shifting, dynamic concept which is reflected in a multitude of ways in different individuals in any society (Byram, 2020b; Hoff, 2020; Holliday, 2011). The traditional concept of homogeneous national cultures gives a static and outdated representation of culture (Holliday, 2011). A focus on 'teaching culture' also tends to lead to an emphasis on what is 'foreign' and a simplistic 'us' and 'them' approach based on national borders (Byram & Wagner, 2018; Dervin, 2010; Driscoll & Holliday, 2019; Woodgate-Jones & Grenfell, 2012).

Intercultural Understanding

Intercultural understanding is the term used for children to learn about other cultures and better understand their own. Intercultural understanding is seen as a vehicle to combat prejudice and stereotyping and to promote tolerance and diversity. It also involves being open to different ways of doing things as well as being willing to suspend judgement and understand the world from different perspectives (Driscoll, 2017). Although primary children may be exposed to other cultures and languages through children's literature (Dolan, 2014; Ibrahim, 2020; Leland et al., 2018) and technology (Driscoll & Holliday, 2019), the use of the term intercultural understanding recognises that primary children are likely to have less direct contact than older learners with people of other cultures outside the classroom. In this way, intercultural understanding can be seen as the precursor or foundation for developing intercultural competence.

Intercultural Communicative Competence

The concept of intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997, 2020b) has to date been the most widely used theoretical framework in foreign language programmes. Following Byram (1997, 2020b), this

builds on communicative competence and is based on five *'savoirs'* which comprise knowledge, skills, behaviours, attitudes and awareness:

- *Savoir*—this refers to knowledge of self and other social groups and their cultures.
- *Savoir comprendre*—this refers to interpreting and understanding cultural meanings.
- *Savoir apprendre/faire*—this refers to skills of discovery and interaction, and includes the ability to decentre and empathise.
- *Savoir être*—this refers to attitudes of curiosity and openness, including how to relativise one's own cultural values and see things from other viewpoints.
- *Savoir s'engager*—this includes political education and the development of critical cultural awareness.

Byram's (1997, 2020b) model assumes the mature cognition and access to real-life contexts of an adult. However, Byram and Doyé (1999), Doyé (1999) and Kirsch (2008) have also claimed that some aspects of the model could be appropriate for children at primary school, such as the development of comparative knowledge, attitudes of openness, curiosity and tolerance, and skills of interaction and discovery. In addition, it is arguable that in upper primary, with appropriate support, it is possible to develop the ability to interact in an intercultural context and to foster critical cultural awareness as well.

While Byram's (1997) model has the benefit of being concrete and coherent (Hoff, 2020) and feasible to implement by classroom practitioners, it has also been criticised for its limitations as a guide for intercultural teaching and learning in the twenty-first century (Hoff, 2020; Holliday, 2011). One reason for this is due to the complex, dynamic cultural changes taking place in a fast-moving global world and the need to account for ambiguities, tensions and contradictions in more varied intercultural communicative contexts, such as encounters between multicultural, multilingual members of society and digital communication (Hoff, 2020). Byram (2020b) acknowledges this in reflections on the rapid increase of 'sojourners', more frequently referred to as 'migrants' or 'immigrants', in the global context of the twenty-first century and their

multiple modes of experiencing, comparing, analysing, critiquing, accommodating and adapting to other ways of life which he would ideally like all language learners to be able to achieve.

Intercultural Citizenship

Intercultural citizenship builds on the concept of intercultural competence by extending this to involvement and action in the local community, or wider, global community, outside of home or school (Byram 2020b; Porto, 2019). Intercultural citizenship is based on a view of language that takes into account multilingual identities and translanguaging, as for example in the use of bilingual and multilingual children's literature (Ibrahim, 2020), and builds on the affordances of globalisation and technology to allow intercultural communication and coordinated social action to take place (Byram, 2020b; Byram et al., 2016; Porto, 2019). Topics with a high social relevance which are directly related to citizenship and global concerns form the content of lessons. These may include issues such as poverty, hunger, education, gender equality and climate change based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Read, 2017) and develop a wide range of analytical and critical thinking skills potentially leading to direct action or service to the local or wider, global community (Byram, 2020b; Porto et al., 2017). Although children in upper primary develop initial analytical, critical thinking and organisational skills associated with intercultural citizenship, there are obvious ethical, permission and safety issues related to promoting certain kinds of activism outside their school and home.

Issues in Developing Intercultural Competence with Children

Research and discussion of approaches to intercultural learning have largely focused on older learners. However, some attention has also been given to current practice and what it might be possible to achieve with children at primary school (Driscoll et al., 2013; Driscoll & Holliday, 2019; Driscoll & Simpson, 2015) and arguably in the early

years as well. Based on this, it is suggested that there are six key issues which any proposed model for teaching intercultural competence to children needs to take into account. These are briefly examined in turn, including implications for the model for developing intercultural competence proposed.

Gap Between Theory and Practice

The intercultural dimension of learning a foreign language is widely seen as desirable by policy makers, school administrators and teachers (Driscoll, 2017; Driscoll et al., 2013; Driscoll & Simpson, 2015; Woodgate-Jones, 2009). In addition to providing opportunities for children to explore and reflect on the lives of others as well as their own, intercultural learning is seen to play a significant social role in the prevention of negative stereotypes, prejudice and racism (Driscoll et al., 2013). However, at the same time, research has shown that there is a gap between the ascribed value given to intercultural learning and what actually happens in practice which is neither strategically planned nor systematically implemented (Driscoll et al., 2013; Woodgate-Jones, 2009).

This gap between views about the desirability of integrating an intercultural dimension into English language classrooms and actual practice may be due to a lack of confidence and skills in teaching intercultural competence in age-appropriate ways. It may also be due to a limited focus on culture in most English language syllabuses and the lack of time given to English language learning in the curriculum. A model for developing intercultural competence with children needs to close this gap by providing a pedagogical framework for a holistic approach to the development of intercultural knowledge, skills, awareness and attitudes that is in sync with children's ages and stages of development, as well as their English language proficiency levels, and can be implemented by practitioners who are not specifically trained or skilled in intercultural education.

Focus and Design of Early Years and PELT Syllabuses

In most preschool and primary ELT coursebook syllabuses, there is a clear emphasis on the development of linguistic competence and skills. This is historically the result of the influence of adult syllabuses and the CEFR, as well as a response to the requirements of external YLE exams (Parker & Valente, 2019). Although intercultural learning is an integral part of the process of learning a language (Driscoll & Simpson, 2015), the knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness needed are not specified in as much detail as language, if they are included at all. This may be due to an implicit assumption, or widely held misconception that if you teach the language, you also automatically teach the culture (Byram & Wagner, 2018). It may also be due to the priority given to language learning in the limited time available for foreign language teaching in the school curriculum, as well as the difficulties of assessing intercultural learning (Byram, 2020a; Perry & Southwell, 2011).

When intercultural learning is specified in early years and primary ELT syllabuses, this is likely to be either with reference to traditional songs, stories, rhymes or games from the so-called English-speaking world or to cultural facts and social behaviours that children are invited to compare with their own. However, it is important to recognise that many modern, preschool and primary ELT coursebooks specify other syllabus strands that also contribute to aspects of intercultural learning (e.g., Read, 2019a, b, c; Read & Ormerod, 2015). These include values education and attitudes, such as openness, tolerance and respect for diversity, and content-based learning or CLIL, with a focus on global issues that affect and connect people everywhere, such as climate change. They also incorporate learning strategies and thinking skills, such as using prior knowledge, creative and critical thinking, social and emotional learning, such as developing empathy and kindness, and critical literacy, such as understanding the intended purpose of a text. A model for developing intercultural competence with children needs to ensure that syllabus strands and outcomes that contribute to the development of intercultural competence cover a balanced range of knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness. These should be fully integrated and specified in a similar level of detail to the linguistic strand.

Representation of Culture

The way that culture is frequently represented in foreign language classrooms and learning materials has been the subject of criticism (Driscoll & Holliday, 2019; Driscoll & Simpson, 2015). The notion of a homogeneous target culture which corresponds to the target language being taught is fallacious and misleading in the sense that any language encompasses and reflects multiple cultural realities (Driscoll & Holliday, 2019). The construct of a monolithic, national culture also gives rise to a teaching approach which principally focuses on the knowledge of superficial facts, such as those based on the 'F' topics—food, folklore, fashion, facts, festivals, famous people (e.g., Short, 2009; Woodgate-Jones & Grenfell, 2012). This reflects an 'iceberg' interpretation of culture with a focus on the visible, superficial aspects of culture (Woodgate-Jones & Grenfell, 2012). It also encourages a binary view which is just as likely to reinforce stereotypes and prejudices as it is to promote understanding, tolerance and respect (Driscoll, 2017; Driscoll & Holliday, 2019).

At the same time, however, as Byram and Wagner (2018) have highlighted, although it is misguided and misleading to represent culture in terms of information about a country, the concept of culture as referring to a national group is part of many foreign language educators' understanding of what culture is. As Byram and Wagner (2018) further maintain, this concept of culture also arguably has pedagogic usefulness in making accessible to learners aspects of culture that are complex in the same way that teachers simplify the understanding and learning of grammar.

Related to this, it is also important to consider the developmental ages and stages of children. For young children, initial learning input and activities need to be concrete, rather than abstract, and based on the 'here and now'. The issue seems to lie not so much in teaching child-friendly cultural facts but in the way these are presented, which emphasises polarisation and differences between two idealised and homogenised cultural groups (Driscoll, 2017; Driscoll & Holliday, 2019). This may be exacerbated by a lack of appropriate scaffolding and mediation to enable children to develop an awareness of multiple cultural realities, reflect on similarities and differences and make connections with their own

experiences and lives, and those of their peers who may share diverse cultural backgrounds too. A model for developing intercultural competence with children needs to ensure that culture is represented in a way that is concrete, accessible and appealing, yet without being simplistic. It also needs to provide the tools to gradually develop children's deeper awareness and understanding of complex cultural realities and ambiguities over time.

How Intercultural Competence Is Taught

Culture is rarely given much importance in primary language lessons (Driscoll, 2017). When it is taught, this is likely to be either through exposing children to traditional songs, stories and playground games (Driscoll et al., 2013) or through familiarising them with superficial knowledge and facts which underscore differences between cultures and may reinforce stereotypes (Short, 2009; Woodgate-Jones & Grenfell, 2012). In such approaches, the main emphasis is on knowledge and awareness about what is 'foreign' and different rather than developing children's skills and understanding of their own cultures and identities (Driscoll, 2017) and the connections they have with others.

The development of intercultural competence needs to move beyond a binary approach based on monolithic notions of culture and start with children themselves in the immediate, non-threatening environment of their classrooms (Driscoll et al., 2013; Driscoll & Simpson, 2015). Through exploring diversity and multilingualism in their everyday world, children can develop awareness, skills and attitudes that encourage them to be open, reflective and willing to see the world from other perspectives (Driscoll, 2017). This may be achieved, for example, through the use of picturebooks (Dolan, 2014; Leland et al., 2018) on issues such as exclusion or family differences, or through topic-based work on global issues, such as climate change or gender equality (Dolan, 2014; Leland et al., 2018; Short, 2009). Such an approach involves identifying intercultural threads, which encourage children to see similarities and connections between peoples, and developing skills such as discovery, inquiry, decentring, as well as attitudes, such as empathy, tolerance and respect (Holliday,

2018). A model for developing intercultural competence with children needs to ensure that the starting point for learning is the child and that scaffolding and mediation by the teacher identifies relevant intercultural threads and develops knowledge, skills, awareness and attitudes based on children's current, real life experiences. It also needs to avoid simplistic comparisons and contrasts between cultures misleadingly represented as homogeneous national groups.

Teachers' Skills and Capabilities

Primary English language teachers may lack confidence in their ability to teach intercultural competence due to their limited experience of diverse cultural identities and little guidance during their training. Textbook syllabuses may offer little support (Porto, 2019) and cultural content may be presented in a way which focuses on superficial generalisations and differences (Driscoll & Simpson, 2015). Teachers themselves may have a narrow conception of culture as corresponding to homogeneous national groups. They may also perceive their identity predominantly as a language teacher responsible for the linguistic competence of their learners, rather than as an educator with a role to develop children's intercultural competence as well (Porto et al., 2017). Teachers may also feel under pressure to deliver the language syllabus (Porto, 2019) due to limited time and the demands of tests and, as intercultural competence does not usually form part of assessment (Porto, 2019), it is often only included as an extra.

Driscoll and Holliday (2019) refer to primary language teachers' limited intercultural expertise and Porto (2019) refers to the difficulty in educating teachers both to become interculturally competent themselves and to teach intercultural competence. In the case of PELT teachers, however, this negative assessment of teachers' skills and capabilities needs to be counterbalanced by looking at significant areas which have been identified for developing intercultural competence and in which PELT teachers do have real or potential expertise. One example is working with inclusion and diversity in a school setting. As Driscoll (2017) has suggested, the best place to start intercultural learning with children is learning about

'otherness' at school and preschool and primary teachers are frequently experts in creating a warm and caring classroom community based on holistic learning and values such as tolerance, openness and respect. A second example is using multimedia and technology which, as Driscoll and Holliday (2019) have said, offers a way to bring real cultural experiences into the classroom and is an area in which many PELT teachers are becoming increasingly proficient. A third example is CLIL, or content-based teaching, which is also often part of even generalist primary language teachers' core skills. Both Driscoll and Simpson (2015) and Byram and Wagner (2018) stress the importance of cross-curricular content as a way of engaging children in significant issues. Examples are topics, such as climate change, based on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, which add a global dimension to intercultural learning. Last but not least, a fourth example is the way that PELT teachers can draw on their training and skills in using communicative language teaching (CLT) methodology to integrate intercultural learning through experiential learning, communication and reflection (Byram & Wagner, 2018). Rather than seeing teachers' skills and capabilities as a deficit, a model for developing intercultural competence needs to build positively on the skills and competencies that primary English language teachers already have.

Children's Development

As soon as children start school, intercultural learning is a daily reality. This encompasses all aspects of their lives as they adapt to a new context, with different rules and codes of behaviour from ones they are familiar with at home, and learn to work and play with peers who may be more or less culturally similar or different to themselves. Even very young children are capable of understanding concepts such as fairness, equality and the values of tolerance and mutual respect when they are presented in age-appropriate ways (Walton et al., 2013). By integrating the development of intercultural skills and attitudes during English language lessons from the outset in a way that relates directly to their everyday lives, children develop a strong sense of their own emerging cultural identities as well as a sense of curiosity and acceptance of cultural diversity in others. In this way, as Driscoll and

Simpson (2015) have highlighted, developing intercultural competence in early foreign language learning contributes to broad educational goals that are immediately relevant as well as preparing children for the future.

The traditional Jesuit adage 'give me a child until they are seven' points to the flexibility of young minds and the fact that values and attitudes acquired in early childhood are likely to be long-lasting. These can also be a springboard for more mature intercultural understanding, skills and awareness in line with children's social, cognitive, psychological and emotional development as they become older. By about the age of six, children have already developed a simple concept of their dominant cultural identity or identities, often associated with a country, nationality and flag (Barrett, 2005). However, rather than focusing the intercultural strand of English language learning on knowledge about 'national cultures', which may be misleading, divisive and reinforce prejudices and stereotypes, it would be more effective to adopt an approach which simultaneously fosters individual children's multilingual and multicultural identities (Ibrahim, 2020), and develops intercultural skills and attitudes that relate to their everyday lives (Byram & Wagner, 2018). A prerequisite for achieving this is the creation of a trusting, supportive learning environment. The role of discussion and the provision of appropriate language support in order for children to be able to express their ideas and feelings, exchange personal views, and engage in imaginative and critical thinking is also crucial. A model for developing intercultural competence with children needs to be designed to reflect children's ages and stages of development and to provide input with a real-world focus and suitable language support.

3 Practical Applications

Model for Developing Intercultural Competence with Children

The proposed model (Fig. 4.1) is designed to provide a practical pedagogical framework for developing intercultural competence with children approximately four to twelve years of age.

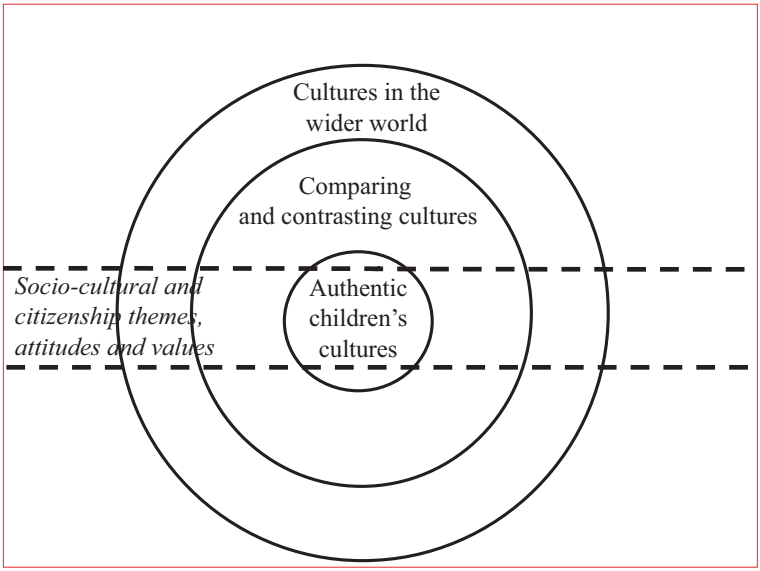

Fig. 4.1 Model for developing intercultural competence with children

The three phases of the model reflect different approximate ages and stages of children's development. The model takes the child's experience and capabilities as its starting point and moves outwards from the 'here and now' play orientation of the initial phase to building on children's capacity for extending their knowledge and skills and for more formal, abstract thinking in upper primary. However, the phases are not discrete and are intended to be built on and extended cumulatively as children develop and mature (Fig. 4.2). Transversal sociocultural themes, attitudes and values, such as autonomy, cooperation and respect for the environment are recycled and developed in ways that are appropriate to each phase. Each phase opens new windows onto children's intercultural awareness and understanding, mirrors reflect the development of their own cultural identities and intercultural threads ensure that topics and themes are continually linked to children's personal experience of language and culture and the real-world context of their lives.

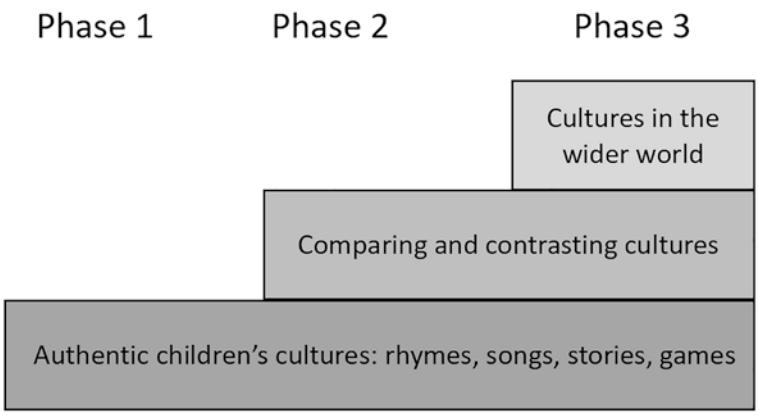

Fig. 4.2 Cumulative introduction of phases of the model

Phase 1: Authentic Children's Cultures

This phase uses the rich resources of authentic children's cultures, such as nursery rhymes, songs, picturebooks, stories and playground games to engage children in pleasurable activities that are likely to be similar to ones they know in their other language(s). These may also include songs from international contexts (Shin, 2017) and dual-language or multilingual picturebooks (Ibrahim, 2020) which reinforce and affirm children's diverse identities. The use of materials from authentic children's cultures fosters a positive home-school link and promotes children's willingness to participate. As Cook (2000) has speculated, the powerful 4/4 rhythm of nursery rhymes in English and other world languages may play a role in drawing children irresistibly into using language, and thereby also participating in its culture, and the repetitive refrains of well-known, traditional stories have a similar effect.

Through engaging with authentic children's cultures from the English-speaking world and other global contexts, a window is opened onto the fact that children from diverse cultures enjoy similar activities to themselves, such as saying and acting out a counting rhyme, in other languages; a mirror reflects children's developing competence and positive self-esteem in participating in such activities; and an intercultural thread may include discovering traditional games classmates play, or songs they sing, with who, and in what languages in their cultural contexts at home.

Phase 2: Comparing and Contrasting Cultures

This phase reflects children's developing understanding of the concept of other nationalities, countries and cultures. Children begin to be able to relativise their own diverse cultural identities in relation to their peers and to make comparisons and contrasts. Children develop the ability to decentre and the emotional and psychological maturity to increase their capacity for empathy, as well as their conscious awareness of the role it has in building positive connections and relationships. They also begin to consciously value their own personal language and cultural backgrounds and are willing to accept or embrace the 'diverse diversities' (Dervin, 2010) of their peers. The use of picturebooks which focus on significant sociocultural themes such as exclusion, friendship, self-esteem, war, refugees, loneliness, family differences and gender issues, provide children with opportunities to deepen their intercultural understanding, develop critical and creative thinking, and learn more about the cultural identity of others and themselves through the non-threatening lens of fiction (Dolan, 2014; Leland et al., 2018; Read, 2008). Other multimodal texts, including video, can be used to engage interest in discovering the lives of other children and topic and project work provide opportunities for children to compare and contrast aspects of this, such as daily routines, free time activities, sport and food, with their own. Although children of this age frequently enjoy learning unusual, amusing or exotic facts about a 'foreign' culture, it is important to mediate these in a way that teaches children to critically question superficial generalisations and stereotypes. One effective way to do this is to make a superficial generalisation about the children's own country or culture which they will immediately recognise and reject as untrue. During this phase, a window is opened onto children's understanding of another culture and how it relates to their own. Through making direct comparisons and contrasts with their own lives, a mirror reflects and reinforces children's developing sense of their own cultural identities. Intercultural threads, mediated by effective questioning techniques, involve reflection on similarities and differences with peers leading to developing children's awareness that multiple cultural realities exist even within their own classroom spaces.

Phase 3: Cultures in the Wider World

This phase corresponds to upper primary when children have developed greater analytical and evaluative skills and begin to have a more questioning, critical attitude towards aspects of their own cultures. This phase is characterised by increased communicative language skills which, with appropriate scaffolding and support, enable children to exchange and discuss ideas, pose relevant questions, and interact in an intercultural context. It also reflects children's broadening interests and curiosity in the wider world as well as, in many contexts, their proficiency in using multimedia and digital technology, such as via child-safe search engines, to discover intercultural information for themselves. Intercultural learning input may include traditional stories, myths and legends from global cultures that develop children's understanding of different values and beliefs that can be compared with their own. It may also include a focus on social justice issues, which affect and connect everyone globally, for example, through topic or project-based work related to one or more of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and leading to an intercultural citizenship outcome such as organising a school-based campaign (Read, 2017). Alternatively, projects may include using technology, such as online collaborative exchanges, to establish regular, experiential, interactive encounters with children at school in other countries, thus providing opportunities to compare and contrast aspects of their lives with others across borders and interact in an authentic intercultural context. During this phase, a window is opened onto discovering global cultures and their different values through investigative inquiry; a mirror reflects children's developing self-awareness of themselves as citizens in a global context, their increasing competence and confidence in being able to acquire understanding about different cultures and their ability to interact in an intercultural context. Intercultural threads, mediated by a combination of encouragement, gently probing questions and child-friendly reflection activities, lead children to draw on their own knowledge and skills to understand other cultures and to use analytical and critical thinking skills to relativise and compare them to their own.

As outlined above and as Table 4.1 shows, the model provides a flexible template for developing intercultural knowledge, skills, attitudes and

Table 4.1 Sample intercultural competence syllabus objectives

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Knowledge	Songs, rhymes, stories and games	Comparative information about other cultures	World cultures and global issues in context
Skills	Ability to participate & interact in cultural activities verbally and non-verbally.	Ability to relativise and see own culture and behaviours in relation to others; Ability to compare and contrast own and other culture(s) Ability to 'decentre'; Ability to empathise.	Ability to discover and acquire new knowledge about cultures and cultural practices; Ability to interpret and understand simple cultural 'documents'; Ability to interact with a sympathetic interlocutor in an intercultural context.
Attitudes	Willingness to participate; Readiness to engage with cultural conventions embedded in cultural activities; Interest and pleasure in cultural activities.	Openness and curiosity towards similarities and differences; Respect and tolerance of others.	Interest in discovering other perspectives and cultures; Willingness to question assumptions in your own culture; Readiness to engage in verbal and non-verbal interaction in an intercultural context.
Awareness	Awareness of one or more languages different to your own; Awareness that similar kinds of songs, stories, etc. exist in other languages.	Awareness of a relational perspective; Awareness of own cultural identity and that of others.	Awareness of differing cultural assumptions and values; Awareness of being able to draw on your own knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to understand other cultures.

awareness in a systematically progressive way that corresponds to children's ages and stages of development. Through maintaining a balance between windows, mirrors (Short, 2009) and intercultural threads (Driscoll & Holliday, 2019), there is recognition that intercultural

learning is a complex, dynamic process and that learning outcomes are likely to be different for every class and every child. For teachers, the principle of extending language activities whenever relevant to build on children's intercultural knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness is a way of ensuring that developing intercultural competence is a truly integrated part of children's language learning rather than an add-on with no logical coherence or structure.

Benefits of the Proposed Model

The proposed model shares an advantage of Byram's (1997, 2020b) model in that it is concrete (Hoff, 2020) and feasible for practitioners to implement. It also builds on categories of knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness based on Byram's five *'savoirs'* to define syllabus objectives. However, the proposed model goes beyond Byram's (1997, 2020b) model in that it provides a specifically age-appropriate guide for developing intercultural competence with early years and primary children and is designed for use in the global context of the twenty-first century where multilingualism and complex, shifting cultural identities are increasingly the norm (Hoff, 2020; Holliday, 2011; Ibrahim, 2020). The model also addresses the six issues previously identified as problematic in developing intercultural competence with children effectively in the following way:

1. It offers a pathway for implementing policy guidelines and positive institutional and teacher beliefs about the value of teaching intercultural competence, thereby closing the gap identified by Woodgate-Jones (2009) and Driscoll et al. (2013).
2. It provides a framework for syllabus design that allows for the planned progression of intercultural knowledge, skills, attitudes, awareness in early language learning that is complementary to, and functions in tandem with, the development of language competence, rather than being dominated by it (Parker & Valente, 2019).
3. Culture is represented in a way which directly links learning about different cultures to children's personal experience of language and culture with their families at home and peers at school (Driscoll, 2017; Driscoll & Holliday, 2019).

4. Intercultural competence is developed with a balanced focus on knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness appropriate to each phase of the model. The metaphors of windows, mirrors (Short 2009; Sims Bishop, 1990) and threads (Driscoll & Holliday, 2019) underline the importance of children gaining new intercultural understanding, becoming increasingly self-aware of their own cultural identities, and establishing personal links with their home and school environments. This gives immediate relevance to intercultural learning and promotes values and attitudes, such as openness, cooperation and tolerance. The use of picturebooks and topics on global issues, such as climate change, also promote critical thinking and global intercultural awareness (Dolan, 2014; Leland et al., 2018).
5. The model takes as its starting point the needs, experience and realities of children (Driscoll et al., 2013; Driscoll & Simpson, 2015) and does not require deep knowledge and experience of diverse cultures. In this way, it builds on professional skills and competencies that primary English language teachers already have (Byram & Wagner, 2018). Together with the pedagogical support of planning lessons to meet clearly specified learning objectives, this gives teachers confidence in their ability to deliver the intercultural competence strand of their syllabus effectively.
6. The model is designed to reflect children's stages of social, emotional, cognitive, conceptual and psychological development and lead them to systematically build up intercultural competence knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness in age-appropriate ways (e.g., Barrett, 2005; Walton et al., 2013). As well as meeting primary education goals (Driscoll & Simpson, 2015), such as inclusion and belonging, it also lays the foundations for children to become responsible global citizens in the future.

4 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the value of integrating intercultural education in preschool and primary English language programmes. It has also considered varied perspectives focusing on teaching culture, intercultural

understanding, intercultural communicative competence and intercultural citizenship in order to identify six key issues that an effective model for developing intercultural competence with children needs to address. The model proposed aims to provide an innovative pedagogical framework to enable policy makers, school directors and teachers to feel confident in planning and delivering age-appropriate intercultural learning as an integral part of English language programmes in preschool and primary school. The model is flexible and can be adapted to suit different educational and cultural contexts. It is hoped that it will be a useful tool which will support the teaching and learning of intercultural competence in early English language learning in a fast-changing, global world that arguably needs it more than ever.

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