

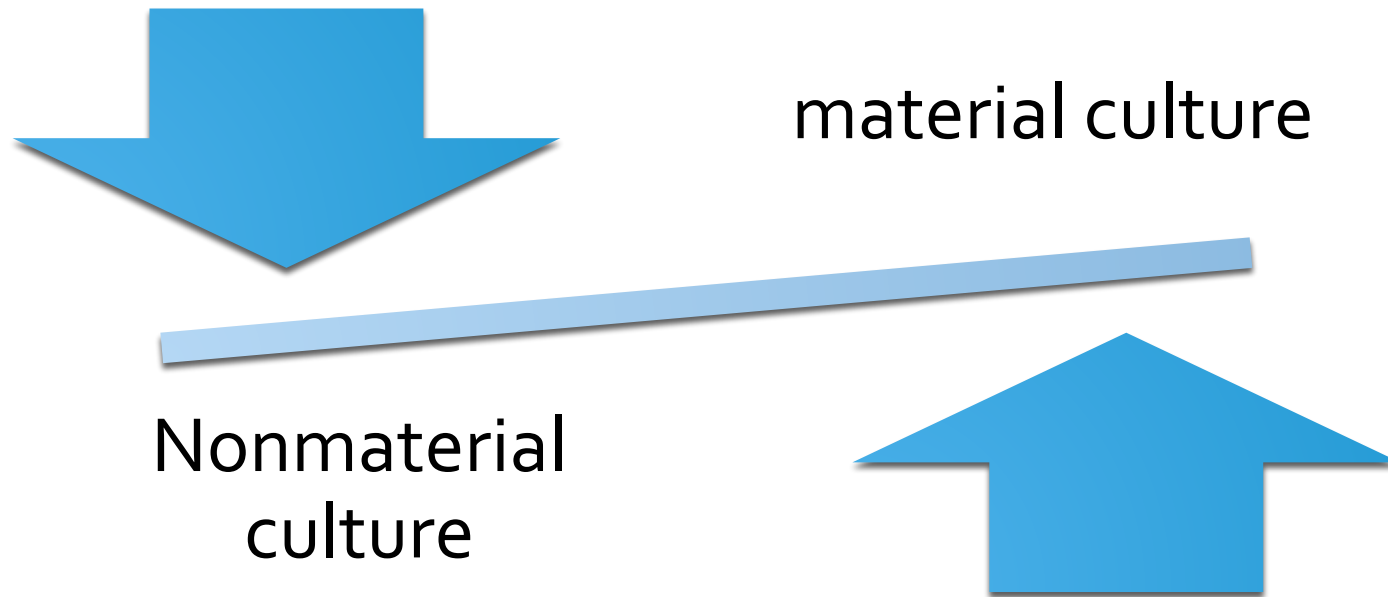


Intercultural mediation and social partnership

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What is the culture?

= the sum of a way of life, including expected behaviour, beliefs, values, language and living practices shared by members of a society. It consists of both explicit and implicit rules through which experience is interpreted (McKinnon, 2019)



What is mediation?

- ✓ a dynamic, structured, interactive process where a neutral third party assists disputing parties in resolving conflict through the use of specialized communication and negotiation techniques;
- ✓ a "party-centered" process in that it is focused primarily upon the needs, rights, and interests of the parties



MEDIATOR

A professional who use various Techniques to open, or improve, dialogue and empathy between disputants, aiming to help the parties reach an agreement.

Intercultural mediation?

- ✓ the current world is characterised by a growing "transculturalness": globalisation, Internet, modern methods of communication, each of these help to develop contacts, cross breeding, mixing, but also friction, rejection and sometimes conflict between cultures and civilisations.
- ✓ intercultural mediation is *a diverse concept, mixing the theories of communication, psychology, anthropology, linguistics and culture : in short, an interdisciplinary minefield*

Globalisation

= a force for change in all aspects of the contemporary world, and the importance for graduates to be able to engage and act globally



MEDIATOR: OTHER COMPETENCES OR NEW SKILLS?

= a valuable asset in an increasingly globalised world where we are more likely to interact with people from different cultures and countries who have been shaped by different values, beliefs and experiences;

= global citizenship, global employability skills, global competence, graduate attributes, education for sustainable development.

Competence

a complex combination of knowledge, skills, understanding, values, attitudes and desire which lead to effective, embodied human action in the world, in a particular domain (Deakin Crick, 2008)



dynamically evolved and **holistic components**

(knowledge, skills and dispositions/attitudes)



Intercultural mediation = the act of establishing social links between people from different cultures (*for the first term*) or between persons who do not live in the same territory (*for the second term*).

What are constituent elements of intercultural mediation competence?

Attitudes

- respect (valuing other cultures)
- openness (withholding judgement)
- curiosity (viewing difference as a learning opportunity)
- discovery (tolerance for ambiguity)

Skills

- listening, observing
- evaluating using patience and perseverance
- viewing the world from others' perspectives

Knowledge

- Grasp of global issues and trends
- Socio-linguistic awareness
- Culture specific knowledge
- Cultural self-awareness

Intercultural competence terminology

Intercultural mediation competence (or *intercultural mediation, transnational mediation*)

- ✓ proven ability to communicate with people from other cultures
- ✓ ability to develop targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to visible behaviour and effective and appropriate communication in intercultural interactions



- ✓ the basis for a successful intercultural mediation communication lies in **the emotional competence** and **intercultural sensitivity**.

Competency Ice-Berg Model

= a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes which is reflected in behavior and can be observed, measurement and evaluated

20% - the level of knowledge and skills

80% - thinking skills, motivation, values, traits etc.

- 1) **Knowledge** – field knowledge (*education and experience*)
- 2) **Skills** – ability to do something well/ to use right knowledge
- 3) **Values** – the importance, worth, or usefulness of something
- 4) **Self-image** – how people view themselves (identity, worth)
- 5) **Traits** – flexibility, self-control, good listener etc.
- 6) **Motives** – a reason for doing something

How to assist the intercultural mediation to be interculturally competent?

- ✓ ***internal outcomes*** - an individual who learns is flexible, adaptable, empathetic and adopts an ethno-relative perspective
- ✓ ***external outcomes*** - the observable behaviour and communication styles of the individual (an visible evidence)
 - management of complex situations, opening mind, flexible attitude, emotional stability, commitment and motivation, empathy, skills of meta-communication and polycentric capacity.

MEDIATION IN AN INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT:

Spoken word and communication

- The spoken word is the tool and basis for mediation. *To retain the true value of words spoken (or silence), the mediator should not act as a third voice. He/she should be a neutral part that mediate a discussion*
- In intercultural mediation, nuances, clarity, doubts, silence and empathy have far more importance than in traditional mediation.
- Communication and negotiation behaviour varies between cultures : i.e. the use of "No" instead of "Maybe", bluffing, humour, irony, eye contact (very impolite in Japan), interrupting, physical contact etc. The importance of the spoken word and silence varies (e.g. silence is rare in Brazil but frequent and acceptable in Japan).



MEDIATION IN AN INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT:

The choice of language and communication

- Must English be the international language for an intercultural mediation ?
- Is a multilingual mediation preferable and/or viable?
- If a common language is used in mediation (e.g. English) should the mediator meet with the parties separately in their own maternal language ?



MEDIATION IN AN INTERCULTURAL CONTEXT:

Specific ability to manage intercultural mediations

- bridging the gap, facilitating negotiations and settlement
- demonstrate intercultural experience, multilingualism, ability to communicate, emotional strength, cultural sensitivity, an open mind, polycentrism etc.
- observe the beauty of the world
- research each culture and the parties' values if he/she is not familiar with them

Questions to reflect

- Should there be a specific training programme for intercultural mediation?
- Should mediation centres put in place a panel of specialists for intercultural mediation ?
- Can mediation between parties who are unable to communicate in each other's language or speak a universal language like English ever be managed effectively?

3 Models

- **Multicultural** refers to a society that contains several cultural or ethnic groups. People live alongside one another, but each cultural group does not necessarily have engaging interactions with each other
- **Intercultural** describes communities in which there is a deep understanding and respect for all cultures.



3 Models

- **Cross-cultural** deals with the comparison of different cultures. In cross-cultural communication, differences are understood and acknowledged, and can bring about individual change, but not collective transformations. In cross-cultural societies, one culture is often considered “the norm” and all other cultures are compared or contrasted to the dominant culture.

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