



Report to the Ministry of Education

Intercultural Communicative Language Teaching: Implications for Effective Teaching and Learning

**A Literature Review and an Evidence-based
Framework for Effective Teaching**

**Jonathan Newton, Eric Yates, Sandra Shearn and
Werner Nowitzki**

School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies
and the
Jessie Hetherington Centre for Educational Research
Victoria University of Wellington

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Contents

Acknowledgements	v
Introduction	1
The structure of the report.....	2
A note on terms	3
Part I Intercultural Language Learning and Teaching – A Literature Review.....	6
1. The context of Aotearoa New Zealand.....	7
2. International trends in the practice of intercultural language learning.....	10
Europe.....	10
North America.....	12
Australia.....	12
China	14
A global trend.....	15
3. Language and its sociocultural context	16
Defining culture.....	16
Language and culture.....	18
4. Intercultural communicative competence	24
Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence	25
The interculturally competent teacher.....	30
Acquiring intercultural competence.....	30
Intercultural competence and the native speaker	34
5. Intercultural language teaching and learning.....	37
Two views of culture which inform language teaching	37
Four approaches to culture in language teaching and learning.....	40
An iCLT response to the first three approaches to culture	43
Culture as practice in the iCLT classroom	44
6. The effect of language learning on attitude change and the development of intercultural competence	51

Theoretical perspectives.....	51
Research evidence for the effect of language learning.....	53
7. Summary and conclusions	60
Part 2 An Evidence-Based Framework of Principles for Effective Intercultural Teaching and Learning	62
8. A framework of principles for intercultural communicative language teaching and learning	63
Principle 1: iCLT integrates language and culture from the beginning.....	64
Principle 2: iCLT engages learners in genuine social interaction	65
Principle 3: iCLT encourages and develops an exploratory and reflective approach to culture and culture-in-language.....	67
Principle 4: iCLT fosters explicit comparisons and connections between languages and cultures.	69
Principle 5: iCLT acknowledges and responds appropriately to diverse learners and learning contexts.....	71
Principle 6: iCLT emphasises intercultural communicative competence rather than native-speaker competence	73
References	77

List of tables

Table 1: The dimensions of language as a social/cultural phenomenon.....	19
Table 2: Phases of each blog-related task	58
Table 3. The six principles for intercultural communicative language teaching.....	63

List of figures

Figure 1: Interactions between culture and language	18
Figure 2: The hermeneutic circle of acquiring cultural knowledge	27
Figure 3: The developmental model of intercultural sensitivity	31
Figure 4: Development of intercultural sensitivity	32
Figure 5: Progression in developing intercultural competences.....	33
Figure 6: The cultural iceberg	39
Figure 7: A pathway for developing intercultural competence	46
Figure 8: Factors influencing the effect of new cultural information on attitude shift	51
Figure 9: Principles for effective intercultural communicative language teaching and learning (iCLT).....	64

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Introduction

The person who learns a language without learning a culture risks becoming a fluent fool. (J. Bennett, M. Bennett, & Allen, 2003, p. 237)

This report on intercultural communicative language teaching was commissioned by the Ministry of Education in the context of the development of the 2007 *New Zealand Curriculum*, with its new learning area of learning languages.

This new learning area has re-conceptualised the nature and focus of language learning; it draws on the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* in identifying communicative competence – the ability to communicate effectively in the chosen language or languages – as the key outcome. As stated in the *New Zealand Curriculum*, learning languages allows learners to move between languages and cultures, and so to 'equip them for living in a world of diverse peoples, languages, and cultures' (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 24). We see in this statement the foregrounding of culture within the communicative paradigm. Culture is no longer an invisible or incidental presence in language learning but instead is presented as a strand with equal status to that of language.

Approaches to culture in language learning are many and varied. A promising approach is what is termed 'intercultural language teaching', which Liddicoat (2004) defines as follows:

Intercultural language teaching places the need to communicate in the first place and seeks to teach culture in a way which develops intercultural communicative skills at the same time as developing language skills. This is an approach to the teaching of culture which sees language and culture as intimately linked and which recognises that culture is always present when we use language.

Therefore a report on intercultural language teaching and its implications for effective practice is timely.

Our report, which complements the Ministry-funded review of second language learning theory and pedagogy (Ellis, 2005), comprises two parts: a review of the literature on intercultural language teaching and learning, and the presentation of an evidence-based framework of principles for teaching languages effectively from an intercultural, communicative perspective.

The first part, the literature review, was to provide the evidence for the framework of principles developed in the second part of the report.

This evidence base warrants comment. Much of the literature on intercultural language teaching and learning theorizes extensively and presents proposals for curricula and classroom innovation without, we believe, an equally strong foundation in evidence-based research, at least in the empirical and scientific sense in which the word 'evidence' is used. This problem is not unusual in the area of educational policy and practice, as Alton-Lee (2004) points out. It is possible, however, to define 'evidence' more broadly,

as the United States Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences does: evidence-based education is 'the integration of professional wisdom with the best available empirical evidence in making decisions about how to deliver instruction' (cited in Comings, Beder, Reder, Bingman, & C. Smith, 2003). Taking this approach, an evidence base in an educational context is founded on insights from both researchers and practitioners. Comings et al. (p. 3)¹ propose a model of educational improvement that incorporates these two sources and involves the following steps:

1. basic and applied research provides evidence to build program models
2. program model evaluation tests the effectiveness of program models
3. practitioner knowledge improves implementation of program models
4. a feedback loop links practitioner knowledge back into research.

Step 1 is represented in our review of the literature and the evidence-based framework that follows. Because intercultural language teaching and learning has not been as extensively researched as it has been theorized, in taking this first step we have needed to draw on and attempt to integrate both research and the 'professional wisdom' available in the extensive and expanding literature in the field.

The structure of the report

Part 1, the literature review, begins with the context in Aotearoa New Zealand (chapter 1), followed by a discussion of international trends in the practice of intercultural language learning (chapter 2). The various statements about language teaching and learning from around the world, especially those reflecting government policy or the general attitudes of language teachers, and the emphasis they place on culture, provide an important source of professional wisdom. There appears to be broad consensus on the desirability of harnessing languages education for the purpose of fostering intercultural understanding.

Next we examine the conceptual foundations for intercultural language teaching and learning. Chapter 3 discusses what constitutes the complex construct of culture and examines the relationship between sociocultural meanings and language, while chapter 4 examines the concept of intercultural competence, particularly Byram's influential model, and discusses the developmental models for explaining the acquisition of intercultural competence.

Chapter 5 examines various views of, and approaches to, culture in language teaching, with a particular focus on 'culture as practice' and chapter 6 examines the evidence for attitudinal change and the development of intercultural competence. The final chapter, chapter 7, presents our summary and conclusions.

Part 2, comprising chapter 8, presents our framework of principles for guiding effective intercultural communicative language teaching in New Zealand schools.

¹ Note that Comings et al. are discussing the term 'evidence-based' in relation to adult education.

In educational contexts, a framework typically describes an interrelated series of content domains. For example, the previous New Zealand Curriculum Framework (1990) presented principles, essential learning areas, essential skills, and attitudes and values. For instance, Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino and Kohler (2003, p. 43) (whose substantial report on intercultural language teaching and learning was an important starting point for this report) propose a framework containing concepts, principles, curriculum development processes, and exemplars. By contrast, the Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* is a more substantial document which 'provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe' (2001, p. 1). It describes in detail the knowledge and skills which language learners require in order to communicate and act effectively, taking into account cultural context. It also defines levels of proficiency for assessment purposes.

We have opted for a simpler approach, reflecting the definition of a framework as 'a structure or frame supporting or containing something' (McLeod, 1987, p. 398). Our framework is a set of six principles designed to 'support' or guide the teaching of culture in languages education in New Zealand.

This is of course not the first time that specific principles of intercultural language teaching and learning have been proposed. Liddicoat et al. (2003), Liddicoat (2004), and Kohler (2005) all propose similar sets of core principles and we have drawn on these invaluable sources. Similar principles for languages education have also been presented by the Ministry of Education (2002). These principles, although not explicitly promoting an intercultural approach to language learning, reflect many of the themes emerging from the intercultural literature. The work of Mike Byram (1997, 2006a, 2006b) in the United Kingdom and Europe, Claire Kramsch's pan-European-North American scholarship (Kramsch, 1993, 2004, 2006), and Council of Europe resources (Council of Europe, 2001), together with J. K. Phillips (2003) and Lange and Paige (2003) in the United States, have also been important sources.

A note on terms

In its barest meaning, 'intercultural' refers to contact between people from different cultural backgrounds and the connections between cultures that these contacts represent. In communication theory it carries a further qualitative connotation. As Lahdenperä (2000, p. 202) notes, in these contexts:

[I]t is the quality of cultural encounters that determines whether an interaction is intercultural, i.e. encounters where different actors are conscious that their own cultures place limitations on communication, and thus influence the possibilities for an open and equal relationship.

This qualitative dimension is the essence of intercultural language learning as Liddicoat et al. (2003) explain, after their own extensive review of the relevant literature:

Intercultural language learning involves the fusing of language, culture and learning into a single educative approach. It begins with the idea that language, culture and learning are

fundamentally interrelated and places this interrelationship at the centre of the learning process. . . .

Intercultural language learning involves developing with learners an understanding of their own language(s) and culture(s) in relation to an additional language and culture. It is a dialogue that allows for reaching a common ground for negotiation to take place, and where variable points of view are recognised, mediated and accepted. (2003, p. 43)

Intercultural language teaching therefore differs from approaches to teaching language that focus on language without reference to culture, as well as approaches in which teaching about language and culture are separate, and which primarily transmit information about a culture.

We have coined the term ‘intercultural communicative language teaching’ (referred to in this report by its acronym ‘iCLT’) to describe the particular concept of language teaching developed in the framework of principles in Part 2; this term both reflects the New Zealand curriculum’s emphasis on communication as the core strand for learning languages *and* encompasses the concept of intercultural language learning as an effective means of approaching the supporting strand of cultural knowledge in the curriculum for learning languages.

Where the term ‘intercultural language learning’ is used in the literature reviewed in Part 1, it has been retained. However, we also use our term iCLT throughout the report when we are referring to the particular concept of intercultural and communicative language teaching promoted by our framework of principles.

In seeking to raise awareness of the pervasive presence of culture in language, iCLT uses learning processes such as interacting, exploring, comparing, and experiencing languages and cultures to develop in learners the competencies that allow them to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries; that is, to display *intercultural* communicative competence. It reflects, therefore, a social and dialogic perspective on learning (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978).

What does this mean for classroom practice? Dellit (2005, pp. 26–28) gives five principles for putting interculturally informed pedagogy into practice. Learners are:

- actively involved in constructing knowledge through exploring cultural practices
- making connections between cultures, and between existing knowledge of culture and language, and new learning
- involved in social interactions that involve communicating across cultural boundaries
- reflecting ‘critically and constructively on linguistic and cultural differences and similarities’
- taking responsibility for their intercultural growth, assisted by teachers who, for example, foster engagement with difference and awareness of stereotypes.

As this list shows, iCLT is much more than an approach; it is more than a new set of techniques or a method which can be applied in classrooms to produce intercultural learning.

It is important to situate iCLT within the broader field of educational research on multicultural and intercultural issues. iCLT shares much common ground with multicultural education (Banks, 1994; Banks et al., 2005) and diversity education (Sheets, 2005). All three are concerned with cultural understanding and the enhancement of intercultural communication and relations. However, the underlying ideologies differ. While the other two set out rather more deliberately to address differences in academic achievement between social groups and to progress equity agendas, iCLT is more connected to democracy education and global citizenship (Byram, 2006a, 2006b), although we believe that the overlap as well as the differences between these agendas offer fertile ground for cultivating growth in all these fields. In the review, our focus is primarily on the intercultural language learning literature, but we attempt to link this literature to multicultural and diversity literatures from New Zealand, to lessen the divisions between different areas of educational research (Alton-Lee, 2004) and enable this common ground to be cultivated.

Part I

Intercultural Language Learning and Teaching – A Literature Review

Jonathan Newton and Sandra Shearn

1. The context of Aotearoa New Zealand

In as much as intercultural language learning explores the relationship between the environment, peoples and cultures, in Aotearoa New Zealand it necessarily has its foundations in the Treaty of Waitangi signed in 1840 between Māori and the British Crown. The Treaty, as a foundation of New Zealand nationhood, promises partnership and equity for the co-signatories, and is referenced in legislation. Through the Treaty, those who arrived with, and subsequent to, the earlier settlers are now part of the relationship with the Crown and with Māori. It follows that careful consideration must be given to the implications of intercultural communicative language teaching (iCLT)² for indigenous peoples in New Zealand. Thirty years ago, Hohepa (1978) presented the intercultural challenge for Māori:

[I]t is true that Māori people have had to adapt to Western civilisation in terms of technology, education, housing, clothing and the like. The striving for the continuation of Māoritanga does not mean the automatic rejection of all which is not Māori. . . . A bicultural person can not merely switch languages if he (sic) is bilingual but is also able to handle different cultures in exactly the same way. . . . The conclusion one can reach is of a possible ideal New Zealander who has his (sic) feet firmly rooted in one cultural tradition but has an informed knowledge of and empathy with others. That there are already many people of this kind in New Zealand is worth noting. But that most of them are Māori or other Polynesians is regrettable.

Te reo Māori thus has a uniquely significant place alongside the learning languages area:

*The language is the life force of Māori
Through being spoken
the language lives
Through the survival of the language
Māori are enabled*

As outlined in *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* (the partner document to the *New Zealand Curriculum*, developed for Māori-medium settings), Māori language is the vehicle for Māori cultural practices and thought, enabling the manifestation of all aspects of the Māori world. The Māori language is an inherited treasure, a treasure supported by the Treaty of Waitangi. Language is the essence of culture. Each person, each tribal group, each region has its own language, mana, spirituality, beliefs and customs. Ultimately it is through Māori language that the full range of Māori customs can be expressed, practised, and explained. Through the learner knowing Māori language, they can access

² See the note on terms in the introduction for an explanation of the distinction between ‘intercultural language learning’ and ‘intercultural communicative language teaching’ or iCLT.

the Māori world and understand their role in it. Being immersed in Māori leads the learner to greater proficiency.

Ko te reo te manawapou o te Māori

Mā te kōrero te reo e ora ai

Mā te ora o te reo ka rangatira te tangata

Ko te reo te waka kawē i te wairua me te whakaaro, e whakatinanatia ai ngā āhuatanga katoa o te ao Māori. He taonga tuku iho te reo Māori, he taonga e tautokohia ana e te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ko te reo te iho o te ahurea. He reo, he mana, he wairua, he whakapono, he tikanga tō tēnā tangata, tō tēnā iwi, tō tēnā rohe. Mā te reo Māori rawa e whakahua, e kawē, e whakamārama te huhua noa o ngā tikanga Māori. Mā te mātau o te ākongā ki te reo Māori, ka mārāma tōna huarahi ki te ao Māori, me tana mahi hoki i roto i te ao Māori. Ko te rumaki te tino huarahi e matatau ai te ākongā ki te reo Māori.³

This unique place for te reo Māori is acknowledged in *Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i Te Reo Māori Kura Aurakii/Curriculum Guidelines for Teaching and Learning Te Reo Māori*, published in 2009 as a guide

to help every English-medium school in New Zealand to design and shape a curriculum that includes te reo Māori, alongside other learning areas, and acknowledges its value. . . . As a consequence, te reo Māori has a special place in the *New Zealand Curriculum*.⁴

The status of te reo Māori and the importance of its place alongside the learning languages area of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (2007) are further emphasised in the curriculum itself, which states that:

Te reo Māori is indigenous to Aotearoa New Zealand. It is a taonga recognised under the Treaty of Waitangi, a primary source of our nation's self-knowledge and identity, and an official language. By understanding and using te reo Māori, New Zealanders become more aware of the role played by the indigenous language and culture in defining and asserting our point of difference in the wider world.

Ko te reo Māori te kākahu o te whakaaro, te huarahi i te ao tūroa.

By learning te reo and becoming increasingly familiar with tikanga, Māori students strengthen their identities, while non-Māori journey towards shared cultural understandings. (p. 14)

In terms of New Zealand research relevant to intercultural language learning, there is a well established and rapidly growing New Zealand literature on multiculturalism (Education Review Office, 2000; Janeke, 1996; Reinders, Lewis, & Kirkness, 2006); on bilingual education, and particularly te reo Māori and Pasifika bilingual education (Harlow, 2003; May, R. Hill, & Sarah Tiakiwai, 2004; Ministry of Education, 2000;

³ *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*, 2008, p. 12.

⁴ *Te Aho Arataki Marau mō te Ako i Te Reo Māori/Curriculum Guidelines for Teaching and Learning Te Reo Māori*, 2009, p. 6.

Siilata & Barkhuizen, 2004; Te Kanawa & Whaanga, 2005); on immersion education (Bishop, Berryman, & Richardson, 2002); and on diversity and culturally responsive teaching (Alton-Lee, 2003; Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Education Review Office, 2001, 2002; May, 2002; Samu-Wendt, 2004, 2006; Tuuta, Bradnam, Hynds, Higgins, & Broughton, 2004).

Although only a small proportion of this literature specifically addresses the topic of our review, namely intercultural language learning, it nevertheless offers insights into culturally responsive pedagogy that are of considerable relevance. The work of the Te Kauhua (Tuuta et al., 2004) and Te Kotahitanga projects (Bishop & Berryman, 2006) are notable examples. Te Kauhua is a project that supports school-based action research projects. These projects help schools and whānau to work together in ways that improve outcomes for Māori learners.⁵ Te Kōtahitanga aims to improve teaching strategies and the effectiveness of teachers in increasing the engagement and academic achievement of Māori students within English-medium secondary schools.⁶

⁵ <http://tetereauraki.tki.org.nz/Te-Kauhua>.

⁶ <http://tetereauraki.tki.org.nz/Te-Kotahitanga>.

2. International trends in the practice of intercultural language learning

Interculturally informed language teaching and learning is becoming well established in education systems across the globe and has attracted increasing government and intergovernmental support, notably in Europe (e.g. Byram, 1992; Council of Europe, 2001; Finkbeiner, 2006; Kramersch, 1998), North America (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1996; Lange & Paige, 2003), and Australia (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000; Dellit, 2005; Liddicoat et al., 2003), and through intergovernmental agencies such as UNESCO⁷ and APEC.⁸ According to Byram (Byram, 2006a, 2006b), these policies reflect a growing awareness of the role that education, and languages education in particular, needs to play in developing tolerance and understanding between people from different cultural backgrounds who live together in increasingly multicultural and multilingual societies.

Europe

The principles of interculturally informed pedagogy find support in the Council of Europe's (2001) *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. The purpose of the Council's Framework of Reference is to provide common learning, teaching and assessment guidelines for language instruction across Europe. 'Intercultural awareness' and 'intercultural skills' are listed as learner competencies in the document, alongside references to intercultural experiences, intercultural communication and intercultural misunderstandings. The purpose for such an emphasis on culture is seen in the following quotations:

Learners need to develop an awareness of 'regional and social diversity in both worlds' and view these in the context of other cultures. (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 103)

This argues that competences in one language are enhanced by knowledge of another, thus generally increasing knowledge, skills and understanding. All of these acquired competences should lead to personal enrichment and 'an enhanced capacity for further language learning and greater openness to new cultural experiences'. (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 43)

The Council of Europe's Framework of Reference has been described by Australian researchers as 'immensely successful and influential' (Ingram & O'Neill, 2001, p. 12) for foreign language education policy worldwide. Gohard-Radenkovic et al. (2004), drawing on the European experience of language teaching, claim that:

⁷ <http://www.fipltv.org/documents/profileEN06.pdf>.

⁸ [http://hrd.apecwiki.org/index.php/Education_Network_\(EDNET\)](http://hrd.apecwiki.org/index.php/Education_Network_(EDNET)).

[T]he teaching/learning of modern languages seems to us to be the discipline *par excellence* for intensifying the openness to other cultures and the contact with otherness in the development of positive cultural representations associated with xenophile attitudes. (p. 53, cited in Rubinfeld, Clement, Denise Lussier, Lebrun, & Auger, 2006, p. 612)

Similarly drawing on a European perspective, Byram (1997) states that ‘FL [foreign language] teaching within an institution of general education has a responsibility to develop a critical awareness of the values and significance of cultural practices in the other and one’s own culture’ (p. 46). More recently, drawing on his research in England and Denmark, Byram (2006a, p. 1) has emphasised that ‘for both instrumental and educational reasons, language teaching must involve teaching both linguistic and cultural competence’. In the United Kingdom, for instance, one of the aims of foreign language teaching, as stated in the 1990 National Curriculum document, is ‘to encourage positive attitudes to . . . speakers of other languages and a sympathetic attitude to other cultures and civilizations’ (Secretary of State, 1990, cited in Morgan, 1993, p. 63).

More recently, the British Department for Education and Skills has emphasised the notion of intercultural understanding in its National Languages Strategy. British policy makers accept that developing cultural awareness is an essential component of education for all. The strategy states that:

In the knowledge society of the 21st century, language competence and intercultural understanding are not optional extras, they are an essential part of being a citizen. (Department for Education and Skills, 2002, p. 5)

Language skills are also vital in improving understanding between people here and in the wider world, and in supporting global citizenship by breaking down barriers of ignorance and suspicion between nations. Learning other languages gives us insight into the people, culture and traditions of other countries, and helps us to understand our own language and culture. (ibid., p. 13)

Various European countries such as Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom have recently introduced an even broader approach to intercultural teaching and learning. The German ‘Kultusministerkonferenz’,⁹ for example, recommended in 1996 that the principles of intercultural learning and education be a general requirement to be included in teaching of any subject at any level of schooling in the entire country. The various curricula for languages in Germany state that the development of intercultural communicative competence in the target language is the overarching achievement objective (as seen for example in the ‘Lehrplan Englisch’ of the German state of Schleswig-Holstein¹⁰ – the curriculum for the subject English, Years 11–13). In

⁹ Sekretariat der Ständigen Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Empfehlung ‘Interkulturelle Bildung und Erziehung in der Schule’, Beschluss der Kultusministerkonferenz vom 25.10.1996. The ‘Kultusministerkonferenz’ is a federal organisation which acts on behalf of the state Ministries of Education and coordinates the different state policies in the education sector. Their resolutions are expected to be implemented subsequently into the state policies. http://www.kmk.org/doc/beschl/671-1_Interkulturelle%20Bildung.pdf.

¹⁰ Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein: Lehrplan Englisch, Kiel, 2002, p. 38, <http://lehrplan.lernnetz.de/intranet1/links/materials/1107165>

Germany, for many years now, the strand of intercultural learning has been included in teacher education.

The European understanding of intercultural communication is twofold: the intercultural communication competencies require a focus on target language cultures that are largely *external* to a country and they also require a focus on cultural diversity *within* Europe and *within* a country. Thus, intercultural communication competencies are taught not only in international language subjects, but also in the first language subjects (e.g. German in Germany) and in subjects such as history.

Intercultural attitudes also find favour in recent language teaching policy for the Swiss General Education Commission (see Ingram & O'Neill, 2001, p. 13, for further details).

North America

In the United States, in 1996 the National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project published its *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century*. This framework for second language learning places 'culture learning at the forefront of language instruction' (J. K. Phillips, 2003, p. 162). Culture is one of the five goal areas of language learning alongside communication, communities, comparisons and connections). The culture standard specifies that:

Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied [as well as] an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied. (*National Standards*, 1999, pp. 50–51, cited in Schultz, 2007, p. 10)

Culture learning also has a prominent place in the communication and comparison strands (Schultz, 2007).

Australia

The role of languages education in promoting intercultural outcomes is well established in Australian education policy. The Australian language and literacy policy of 1991 states that

language proficiency improves social cohesion, communication, and understanding throughout the Australian community [and that it] . . . can promote . . . greater tolerance within the broader community of linguistic differences in Australia and internationally. (DEET, 1991, p. 63)

At the federal level, in 2003–04, the Australian government provided funding for the Asian Languages Professional Learning project, which offered a series of workshops and resources to support interculturally informed pedagogy among teachers of Asian languages across Australia. This project produced a number of valuable resources

including *Getting Started with Intercultural Language Learning* (Dellit, 2005), a document which outlines the principles of interculturally informed teaching and learning together with a series of case studies and examples from primary and secondary schools.

As an example of initiatives at the state level, the Tasmanian Department of Education elected to expand professional training in interculturally informed pedagogy to secondary school teachers of all languages (Department of Education, 2005). The department has implemented two projects to provide for language teachers: *Supporting Intercultural Language Learning in Secondary Schools*,¹¹ which includes the publication of a set of teaching exemplars, and a subsequent project, *The Tasmanian Intercultural Language Learning Project*.¹²

In 2005, the South Australian government produced the *National Statement of Languages Education in Australian Schools (2005–2008)*, which states that:

Learning languages:

- enriches our learners intellectually, educationally and culturally
- enables our learners to communicate across cultures
- contributes to social cohesiveness through better communication and understanding
- further develops the existing linguistic and cultural resources in our community
- contributes to our strategic, economic and international development
- enhances employment and career prospects for the individual.

(Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, 2005, p. 2)

The document goes on to make specific reference to the importance of intercultural language learning:

Intercultural language learning contributes to the overall education of learners, developing in them the capabilities to:

- communicate, interact and negotiate within and across languages and cultures
- understand their own and others' languages, thus extending their range of literacy skills, including skills in English literacy
- understand themselves and others, and to understand and use diverse ways of knowing, being and doing
- further develop their cognitive skills through thinking critically and analytically, solving problems, and making connections in their learning.

(Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2005, p. 3)

In 2006, Australia's Department of Education, Science and Training, through its Quality Teacher Programme, initiated the Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice project.¹³ This 2006–2008 project was a major national professional learning

¹¹ <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/school/educators/resources/lote/cultural/silliss>.

¹² <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/school/educators/resources/lote/cultural/ticll>.

¹³ www.iltlp.unisa.edu.au.

initiative to support languages education. Its aim was to develop collective understanding of intercultural language teaching and learning and to build on the Asian Languages Professional Learning project, while considering more closely issues of planning and assessment. A current project, the Professional Standards Project – Languages¹⁴ is a more broadly focused national professional learning programme for languages teachers initiated in 2008 and informed by intercultural perspectives.

China

Intercultural awareness in foreign language teaching and learning has drawn Chinese scholars' attention since the end of last century, and particularly after China entered the World Trade Organisation in 2001. The shift in foreign language teaching and learning from the focus on learning just the language itself to emphasising intercultural awareness as well has been introduced to China's academic research fields ever since. The test framework of *New Standards for English Course*,¹⁵ which is used as the guideline for elementary education in China, was published in 2006. The new standards emphasise that cultural awareness, which comprises cultural knowledge, cultural understanding, intercultural communication and cultural competency, is one of the five objectives that English teaching and learning should focus on. It is seen as a reform in English education in China.

This was followed by the publication in 2007 of the *New Standards for English Course, Standards for Teachers of Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages*¹⁶ and *Chinese Language Proficiency Scales for Speakers of Other Language*, published by the Office of Chinese Language Council International (Hanban). The *Standards for Teachers of Chinese to Speakers of Other Language* is a comprehensive description of knowledge, capacity and qualities that international Chinese language teachers should possess. The standards include 'Chinese culture and the contrast between Chinese culture and foreign cultures' and 'cross-cultural communication'. Teachers are required to have multicultural awareness, understand the Chinese and foreign cultures and their similarities and differences as well as master the basic principles governing cross-cultural communication. The *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education* was published in 2008. This curriculum 'serves as a practical guidance in international Chinese language education, elaborating in detail on different levels of linguistic skills, knowledge, strategies, and cultural awareness required by curriculum and the learners'.¹⁷

¹⁴ <http://www.pspl.unisa.edu.au/>.

¹⁵ <http://www.100875.com.cn/newsdetail.cfm?iCntno=9961>.

¹⁶ The Office of Chinese Language Council International, *Standards for Teachers of Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages*, Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2007.

¹⁷ The Office of Chinese Language Council International. *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education*: Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2008, p. 1.

A global trend

In addition to the country or continent-specific movements discussed above, the trend is also evident at a global level. The World Federation of Modern Language Teachers states as its first aim ‘to promote the teaching and learning of living languages in order to facilitate and improve communication, understanding, cooperation and friendly relations between all peoples of the world’ (<http://www.fiplv.org/>)

There appears, therefore, to be broad consensus on the role of languages education in fostering cross-cultural understanding. New Zealand is clearly on firm ground in developing an approach to language education which reflect this consensus.

3. Language and its sociocultural context

We have discussed the trend internationally towards the inclusion of interculturally informed pedagogy in education policy, particularly language teaching policy. In this chapter, we examine what the term ‘culture’ means and touch briefly on the way culture is being approached in fields such as communication and cultural studies, anthropology, and social psychology. We then examine the relationship between language and its sociocultural context.

Defining culture

Communications theorist, Jürgen Streeck, whose work informs this part of the review, sees culture as dynamic, ‘the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another’ (Webster’s College Dictionary, cited in Streeck, 2002, p. 300). Theorists in intercultural language teaching also emphasise the dynamic nature of culture. Kramsch, for example, describes culture as ‘membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings’ (1998, p. 10). Liddicoat et al. (2003) describe culture as:

a complex system of concepts, attitudes, values, beliefs, conventions, behaviours, practices, rituals, and lifestyle of the people who make up a cultural group, as well as the artefacts they produce and the institutions they create. (p. 45).

The Swedish educationalist, Lahdenperä (2000, p. 204), identifies seven dimensions of culture:

1. cultural artefacts, i.e. different cultural products and depictions, such as cuisine, art, architecture, music, costumes and dance;
2. repeated patterns of behaviour, such as different types of practices, traditions, rituals, celebrations, how one maps out one’s day, etc.;
3. collective religious conceptions and belief systems, i.e. different conceptions, values, virtues, opinion systems, norms and evaluations, what is right and wrong;
4. thinking, i.e. the way to think, abstractions, concepts, categories, metaphors, memory functions, etc;
5. emotions, i.e. frames of mind and emotional expressions and feelings;
6. the way to communicate and relate to one’s surroundings, such as family relations and the relationship between the sexes;
7. self concept, how one constructs one’s personal picture as a person.

The breadth of this description, capturing as it does our everyday lives, emotions and thought patterns, has its roots in a social-constructionist approach to culture (e.g. Shotter, 1993). Intercultural language learning is also rooted in this epistemological paradigm. This conception of culture stands in marked contrast to more rigid views found in early anthropology, for example, which defined cultures in relation to nation-states and fixed 'expanses of space' (Streeck, 2002, p. 301). As Streeck notes:

as soon as we begin to use *culture* as a count noun and divide the world into a finite set of cultures, and as soon as we take the convention by which nation-states are represented on maps as an equally valid representation of culture, we are deeply mired in stereotypical thinking. We assume discreteness and distinction where in reality there are only fuzzy boundaries; we inadvertently homogenize the entities that we call *cultures*; we abstract from history, notably histories of migration, as well as its effects, such as cultural borrowing and hybridization; and we massively underestimate the extent to which human beings share that stuff that is indexed by *culture*, the mass noun.

The danger of equating cultures with nations is also recognised by writers in the field of intercultural language learning. Ros i Solé (2003, p. 143) proposes that 'the fallacy of identifying cultures with nations should be demolished'. In its place she lists a range of cross-national influences, such as communities of work, social groups, ethnic origins and gender, that shape an individual's culture. Sen Gupta (2003) responds to similar issues by proposing a shift from the term 'cultures' to 'cultural systems' in order to emphasise plurality and avoid the assumption that individuals represent whole 'cultures' (p. 158). Contemporary cultural theorists reflect this shift away from more traditional, essentializing views of culture and towards recognition of cultural hybridity and the role human agency plays in shaping cultural differences (Barker, 2003; Bhabha, 1994). Streeck (2002) picks up this theme:

The old model of patchwork of cultures and cultural identities, which is to a large extent a product of late-19th century anthropology and its context, colonialism, has now begun to recede, giving way to a mode of thinking about culture and social life that, in the first place, regards cultural difference as a product of human agency, not as a part of a seemingly natural order of things, and is utterly aware of the contested and shifting nature of cultural identity and cultural borders. (pp.301–302)

He concludes that

the academic study of culture and communication is trying to catch up with a rapidly changing and deeply contradictory world in which ethnicity and cultural difference play multiple, incommensurable, and very unstable roles. (p. 302)

For prominent educational theorists such as Kramersch (1993) and Byram (1997), these themes of cultural hybridity and plurality, of the importance of human agency in shaping and reshaping culture, and of the contested nature of cultural identity underpin their proposals for intercultural approaches to language learning. Before examining how culture can or should be taught in language classes, we consider more closely the relationship between language and culture.

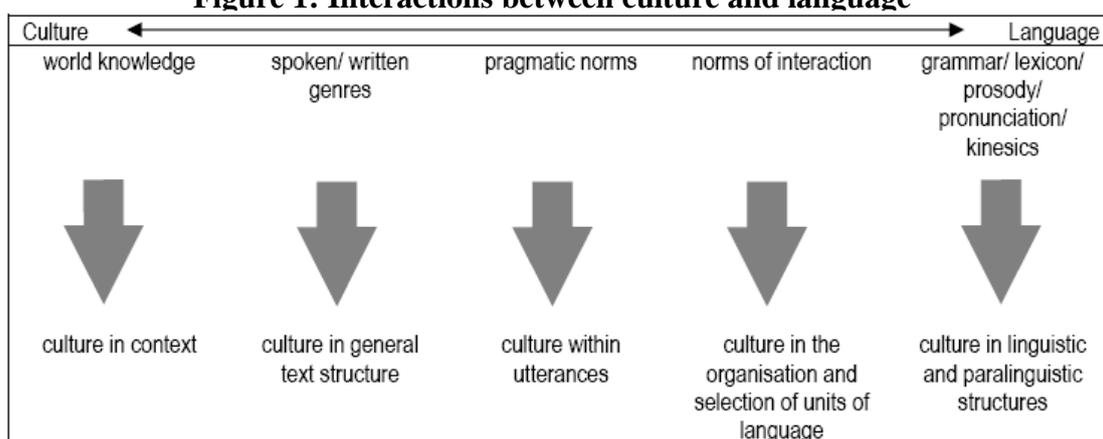
Language and culture

The relationship between language and its sociocultural context is the subject of a vast literature across a range of interrelated disciplines, including sociolinguistics (e.g. Holmes, 2007), social semiotics (e.g. Halliday, 1978), communication studies (e.g. Fiske, 1990) and cultural studies (e.g. Bourdieu, 1991). The core claim to which all these disciplines hold is summed up in the claim that ‘language does not function independently from the context in which it is used’ (Liddicoat et al., 2003, p. 8). Atkinson (2002) elaborates this idea:

Obviously but nontrivially, language is social – a social practice, a social accomplishment, a social tool. People use language to act in and on their social worlds: to convey, construct, and perform, among other things, ideas, feelings, actions, identities, and simple (but crucial) passing acknowledgments of the existence of other human beings. None of these activities makes sense apart from a fundamentally social environment – all language is language in use, to paraphrase M.A.K. Halliday. (2002, p. 526)¹⁸

Figure 1 (from Crozet et al., 1999) presents these ideas visually, showing how culture connects to all levels of language use and structure. At the far left of the model, culture informs understandings of the world, and knowledge types and sources that are valued within a particular cultural context. This knowledge in turn informs the shape and nature of genre within a culture. Culture also informs and constructs pragmatic and interactional norms, including, in particular, the ways in which politeness and appropriateness are realized through choice of communication strategies and speech acts. Finally, at the far right in the model, culture is realized at the pragmalinguistic level in linguistic signs, including both the body (i.e. non-verbal signs) and language – the words, expressions and grammar that realize particular speech acts or communication strategies.

Figure 1: Interactions between culture and language



Source: Crozet & Liddicoat, 1999.

At every level in Figure 1, cultural knowledge is needed to accurately interpret and understand verbal or non-verbal behaviours in particular contexts. Lack of awareness of

¹⁸ Appropriately for the purposes of this review, in this *Modern Language Journal* article, Atkinson argues for greater recognition of the social dimensions of language in the field of second language acquisition – for a ‘sociocognitive’ perspective to counterbalance what he sees as the ‘cognitivism pervading the field’ (p. 525).

the cultural dimensions of communication in interaction between native speaker and non-native speaker interlocutors can lead to communication breakdowns with more serious consequences than those caused by linguistic difficulties. While gaps in linguistic competence lead to problems of mutual intelligibility, sociocultural problems arising from a lack of awareness of appropriateness and politeness tend to result in unintended offence and insult, or in loss of face and, hence, authority or dignity on the part of the non-native speaker (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

For the purposes of this review, and in order to provide a finer grained understanding of some of the language–culture relationships discussed above, we will draw on Atkinson’s (2002, p. 527) summary of phenomena that reflect the inseparability of language and social and cultural context. This summary is presented in Table 1, and expanded in the text that follows.

Table 1: Some dimensions of language as a social/cultural phenomenon

Social dimensions of language
<p><i>1. Politeness, identity and presentation of self</i> How language “present[s] and perform[s] identities or socially expressive versions of the self” (p. 527).</p>
<p><i>2. Perspective taking and contextualization cueing</i> How markers such as intonation and voice quality signal how an utterance is to be interpreted.</p>
<p><i>3. Language-in-context</i> How context shapes interpretation of meaning: the “rich set of situational/ sociocultural/historical/existential correlates” (ibid.) that underpin interpretation of meaning.</p>
<p><i>4. Turn-taking, participation structures and opportunity structures</i> How the “mechanisms and ideologies by which participation in language activity is socially apportioned” are culturally realized (ibid.).</p>
<p><i>5. Speech as an interactional accomplishment</i> How interactional language is distributed across individuals.</p>
<p><i>6. Social indexicality</i> How language is used to orient oneself and others in the (socially-mediated) world; “social indexicality sees virtually all linguistic referrals as underspecified, and therefore, as taking their meaning as much from their contextual surrounds . . . as from their literal sense” (ibid.).</p>
<p><i>7. Social knowledge of and participation in speech events, and sociolinguistic (including register) variation</i> How language use in bounded everyday uses of language reflects understanding of roles, rights and responsibilities</p>
<p><i>8. The organization and addressivity of discourse</i> How messages are positioned in relation to addressees (e.g. reference to or omissions of second or third voice).</p>

Source: Adapted from D. Atkinson, 2002, p. 527.

To the extent that this list focuses on *social* dimensions of language, it is of course also addressing the *cultural* dimensions which are, after all, situated manifestations of the

social. There is extensive research relating to each of Atkinson's dimensions; a few examples are given below.

Dimension 1 – Politeness, identity and presentation of self

This is an important dimension, with implications for all the other dimensions. Politeness, especially in different sociocultural contexts, has attracted a great deal of research in the past 20 years. Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) provoked scholars to begin the challenging task of differentiating elements which might be universal in the ways we present ourselves and orient to others from what is likely to be very culture-specific. It immediately became clear that politeness is conceptualised and expressed very differently in different cultures (e.g. Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993; R. Scollon & S. Scollon, 1995; Sifianou, 1992; Spencer-Oatey, 2000; Ting-Toomey, 1994).

Using a unified theoretical framework and methodology involving discourse completion tasks, Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) provide information on contrasting patterns in the use of politeness strategies, such as apologies and requests. This influential approach has been applied and adapted for many different languages and with many different speech acts (e.g. Boxer, 1993; Hickey & Stewart, 2004; Márquez-Reiter, 2000).

It is apparent that the area of cross-cultural expression of linguistic politeness requires careful negotiation, and an avoidance of ethnocentric assumptions. Middle class British English culture, for example, has often functioned implicitly as the unacknowledged norm in politeness research. The burgeoning of research in this area in recent years suggests that better understandings of what is meant by linguistic politeness in different cultures are steadily being forged.

Researchers on Asian cultures, for instance, have pointed to the importance of recognising that, in some languages, a speaker's use of certain polite expressions is a matter of social convention ('discernment') or social indexing (Kasper, 1990), rather than strategic choice (e.g. Ide, B. Hill, Ogino, & Kawasaki, 1992; Mao, 1994; Matsumoto, 1989; Usami, 2002). These researchers point out that western conceptions of 'face' are very individualistic, and approaches to politeness based on such conceptions do not account satisfactorily for more socially based notions. In some languages for instance (e.g. Chinese, Japanese, Korean), politeness depends both on whether an appropriate degree of socially prescribed respect or deference has been expressed, and how well the addressee's 'face' needs have been addressed (Lee-Wong, 2000; Usami, 2002); for example, certain linguistic forms are required when talking to one's elders or those of higher status. Sociocultural values such as 'sincerity', 'respect' and 'consideration' are crucially involved in perceptions and conceptualisations of politeness (Lee-Wong, 2000). Moreover, in such societies the discursive expression of politeness generally involves the use of avoidance and mitigation strategies (i.e. Brown and Levinson's negative politeness strategies), and even address terms are extensively used in this way.

In communities where social relationships are not so formally marked or explicitly encoded in the grammar or lexicon, politeness is expressed somewhat differently. Bentahila and Davies (1989), for example, claim that Moroccan Arabic culture places greater weight on positive politeness than does the British English culture.

Dimensions 2, 3 and 4 – Perspective taking and contextualization cueing; language-in-context; turn-taking, participation structures and opportunity structure

These dimensions derive from interactional sociolinguistics, the approach to analyzing language associated with John Gumperz (1982a, 1999). This pays particular attention to the cues people use to interpret conversational interaction, within its ethnographic context, and takes account of the wider sociocultural context in which interactions take place. It involves bringing knowledge of the community and its norms to bear in interpreting what is going on in an interaction (Holmes, 2007). For example, Gumperz (1982a) demonstrated how a feature as simple as falling rather than rising intonation, used by a London Indian canteen worker when offering food, led to cross-cultural miscommunication, resulting in the worker being perceived as churlish and unhelpful.

Non-verbal behaviours such as facial expressions, head nods, gestures, and silences also provide very important contextualization cues.¹⁹ A raised eyebrow, for example, may be ‘as relevant to what is said as the intonation contour of a sentence, or the length of the pause between one sentence and the next’ (Harris, 2003, p. 50, cited in Lantolf, 2007, p. 19). However, the precise meaning of such behaviour may differ between cultures. In Pasifika contexts, for instance, a raised eyebrow may serve as a greeting, whereas in British cultural contexts, it generally conveys surprise or even disbelief. Misinterpretation of such sociolinguistic ‘contextualisation cues’ on either side can lead to problems in, for example, employment-related situations, such as job interviews, that involve participants from different cultures (C. Roberts, E. Davies, & Jupp, 1992).

Dimension 5 – Speech as interactional accomplishment

This dimension involves the approach associated with the work of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1978) and Sacks (1984), and known as conversation analysis. This approach has its roots in sociology, viewing talk as action. Conversation analysis researchers approach communication as a jointly organised activity, similar to dancing, or a cooperative musical. For example, the frequency with which feedback is provided, and the exact positioning of the feedback, differs between social and cultural groups (Miller, 1995); Japanese conversational participants provide significantly more audible feedback than English participants, and they position it at junctures that English participants often find disconcerting (White, 1989).

¹⁹ In the context of sign language, visual expression and gesture are both fundamental parts of the grammar of the language.

Dimension 6 – Social indexicality

There is an enormous and growing literature on the ways in which language indexes aspects of social identity such as age and gender (e.g. P. A. Atkinson, 1985; Bailey, 2002; Benwell, 2006; Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; N. Coupland & J. Coupland, 1995; De Fina, Schiffrin, & Bamberg, 2006; Richards, 2006; Schilling-Estes, 2004; Stokes, 2006). Sociocultural context is crucial in this research; different identities are more salient in some contexts than others, and even in one context, different components of social identity will be more significant at one point than another.

Social constructionism is by far the most influential theoretical approach in this area (e.g. Cameron, 2005). This approach challenges given knowledge and taken-for-granted categories. Social constructionists argue that our knowledge of the world is determined not by empirical observation, but by the categories (linguistic and conceptual) we use to define it (Butler, 1999; Unger, 1989; Weedon, 1997). Social constructionism recognises the influence of perception on the interpretation of aspects of a person's behaviour. For example, being constructed (and/or constructing oneself) as 'elderly' is not an automatic shift on reaching any particular chronological age, but depends on perception of particular features of behaviour, including language (Ochs, 1993; Schiffrin, 1996). Perceived through an 'elderly' perceptual lens, activities in which everyone engages at some time, such as forgetting names, will contribute to the social construction of a person's identity as 'elderly'. Such categories are 'loaded' with social expectations developed from years of exposure to spoken and written discourse and social experience.

Clearly, the factors which contribute to the construction and indexing of different components of a person's social identity differ radically from one culture to another. Different conceptions of aspects of social identity can result in radically different ways of addressing and responding to people. As Eckert and McConnell-Ginet comment, (1995, p. 505) linguistic choices 'give a great deal of information about how people are actively constituting their own social identities and relations' (see also Holmes, 1997, 1998, 2003; Holmes, Stubbe, & Vine, 1999; Schiffrin, 1996).

Dimensions 7 and 8 – Social knowledge of and participation in speech events, and sociolinguistic variation; the organization and addressivity of discourse

Sociolinguists who have worked with people from different cultural backgrounds are very aware of the amount of cultural 'baggage' that we all carry around with us. We make assumptions about what is normal/usual/appropriate/correct, and we respond with surprise, or sometimes disapproval, when somebody 'breaks the rules' or behaves in a way that challenges our expectations. The seminal work of Hymes (1974) on the communicative event, which was subsequently developed by Saville-Troike (2003), provides the framework for much of the research in this area. The ethnography of speaking, the theoretical approach associated with Hymes, focuses on awareness of culture-bound assumptions, and of appropriate ways of contributing to communicative events. Analyses which adopt this approach highlight the complexities of a communicative event in an unfamiliar culture, including the different roles that participants play and the different rules for speaking which operate (e.g. Bauman &

Sherzer, 1974; Dillon, 2002; Foster, 1998; Lopez, 1999; Patrick, 2003; Sleurs, Jacobs, & Van Waes, 2003; Westmarland, 2001).

Because the framework was devised to highlight features of a communicative event that people tend to take for granted, it is particularly useful for comparing speech events between different social and cultural groups (Holmes, 2007). In many communities, for example, secondary school children are expected to speak only when given permission. At a traditional English wedding ceremony, most of those involved are expected to remain as silent auditors during the core ceremony, although they may contribute to the singing of hymns or songs.

Accommodation theory has also proved valuable in analyzing the influence of the addressee on the way we contribute to a speech event (Shepard, Giles, & Le Poire, 2001). This deals with the way in which features of people's speech tend to converge when the speakers like one another, or where one speaker has a vested interest in pleasing the other or putting them at ease. Converging towards the speech of another person is usually considered a polite speech strategy. It implies that the addressee's speech is acceptable and worth imitating. However, it is possible to overdo convergence and offend listeners. Over-convergent behaviour may be perceived as patronising and ingratiating, as sycophantic, or even as evidence that the speaker is making fun of others. We look for possible reasons for changes in other people's speech. If the reasons appear manipulative, we are less likely to feel positive about convergence (Holmes, 2007).

While theorists such as Atkinson have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that language and function are inseparable, most traditional language teaching methods have not drawn on sociolinguistic or cultural understanding to inform language learning. We pick up this theme again later in the review, when we discuss static and dynamic approaches to culture in language pedagogy. Awareness of issues such as these, and the skills required to successfully address them in communication across cultures, lies at the heart of what Byram (1997) refers to as 'intercultural communicative competence'. We look at this in the next chapter.

4. Intercultural communicative competence

Intercultural language teaching and learning refocuses the goal of learning by shifting away from a narrower focus on linguistic or communicative competence, and towards a more holistic goal of intercultural competence. In the words of one of the foremost theorists in the area, intercultural communicative competence²⁰ is ‘the ability to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries’ (Byram, 1997, p. 7). Echoing this definition, the Council of Europe’s *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* identifies the knowledge, skills and attitudes ‘which language users build up in the course of their experience of language use and which enable them to meet the challenges of communication across language and cultural boundaries’ (Council of Europe, 2001, p. xii). The Framework of Reference emphasises that language learning does not aim to change a person’s language and culture, nor to develop two completely separate ways of speaking and behaving. The aim is the development of ‘interculturality’, by which the ‘linguistic and cultural competences in respect of each language are modified by knowledge of the other and contribute to intercultural awareness, skills and know-how’ (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 43).

Byram (2006a) further elaborates on the competencies of ‘intercultural speakers’ as ‘competences which enable them to mediate/interpret the values, beliefs and behaviours (the “cultures”) of themselves and of others and to “stand on the bridge” or indeed “be the bridge” between people of different languages and cultures’ (p. 12). The ability to mediate is identified as one of the aims of intercultural language teaching by the Council of Europe (2001) and is explained by Byram as ‘being able to take an ‘external perspective on oneself as one interacts with others and to analyze and, where desirable, adapt one’s behaviour and underlying values and beliefs’ (2006a, p. 4). Somewhat controversially perhaps, Byram argues that the act of mediating distinguishes the ‘intercultural’ from the ‘bicultural’, since the latter does not intrinsically involve the act of mediating, although it may require it as an additional demand.

The goal of intercultural competence represents a marked shift from the goal of the idealized native speaker. We see this shift in, for example in the use of the term ‘plurilingual competence’ by the Council of Europe when it identifies the goals of language learning as:

²⁰ The terms intercultural communicative competence and intercultural competence are often used interchangeably in the literature. Byram’s 1997 book uses ‘intercultural communicative competence and this is the term we use when drawing on that work. Where authors (including Byram in his later work) use the term intercultural competence, we have followed their use of the term.

no longer . . . simply to achieve ‘mastery’ of one or two, or even three languages . . . with the ‘ideal native speaker’ as the ultimate model. Instead, the aim is to develop linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place. (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 5)

We take this to mean that students should be developing skills to cope with a range of cross-cultural situations, including those where interlocutors have little or no knowledge of each other’s language, but where they have sufficient good will, sensitivity and sociolinguistic competence to communicate successfully, even if this means using non-verbal means or an interpreter (Byram, 2006a).

Byram’s model of intercultural communicative competence

Byram (1997) proposes a model of intercultural communicative competence involving five components: attitudes, knowledge, skills (of two kinds) and awareness, each of which he translates into a set of objectives for teaching, learning and assessment, as follows:²¹

- attitudes
 - values and beliefs, curiosity and openness
 - relativising self and valuing others
- knowledge
 - of self and others in communication
 - of other cultures
 - of processes of interaction: individual and societal
- skills
 - for interpreting and relating
- skills
 - for discovering and interacting
- awareness
 - critical cultural awareness.

This model has been very influential in intercultural language learning and continues to be used in research into intercultural competence (e.g. Belz, 2003; L Sercu, 2004). It is not without its weaknesses, however. As Liddicoat et al. (2003, pp. 15–16) note, this

²¹ Byram (2006b) presents a revised version of the model in which critical cultural awareness is classified as a cognitive capacity and a new element is added – action orientation – described as ‘both critical reflection on the familiar and the unquestioned assumptions of one’s own culture/country and involvement and intervention in the world of practice with an intention to create social change, in cooperation with people of other cultures/countries’ (p. 28). (Note that at the time of writing our report, this 2006 conference paper was not available in published form. The 1997 model is elaborated in a book and continues to be widely cited in the field.)

model (and others that they review) describes the sociocultural component of language competence without linking it to other competencies (linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competencies) in a fully elaborated model. This weakness notwithstanding, the model contains the most thorough and clearly articulated model of intercultural competence within the field. The following section discusses the five components of the model in more detail.

Attitudes

Byram describes the attitudes required for effective intercultural communication and learning as ‘readiness to suspend disbelief and judgment with respect to others’ meanings, beliefs and behaviours’, and ‘a willingness to suspend belief in one’s own meanings and behaviors, and to analyze them from the viewpoint of the others with whom one is engaging’ (Byram, 1997, p. 34). Attitudes affect how language learners react to using a new language, and hence their ability to learn. According to the Council of Europe, ‘[t]he development of an “intercultural personality” involving both attitudes and awareness is seen by many as an important educational goal in its own right’ (2001, p. 106). Echoing Byram’s description, the Council of Europe (p. 105) identifies the following desirable intercultural attitudes:

- openness towards, and interest in, new experiences, other persons, ideas, peoples, societies and cultures;
- willingness to relativise one’s own cultural viewpoint and cultural value-system;
- willingness and ability to distance oneself from conventional attitudes to cultural differences.

In order for students to appreciate and understand a new culture, it is crucial for them to identify and voice their present thoughts and feelings about that culture and about their own culture, as for example in the research done by Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991, pp. 51–69). In so doing, it may be necessary for them to identify the sources for these thoughts and feelings, in order for their relativity to be recognized. Here also there can be some element of risk for teachers themselves. In a climate of relativity, it is difficult to adopt the position of expert, and it is likely that teachers too will be put in the position of examining and declaring their own biases and perceptions.

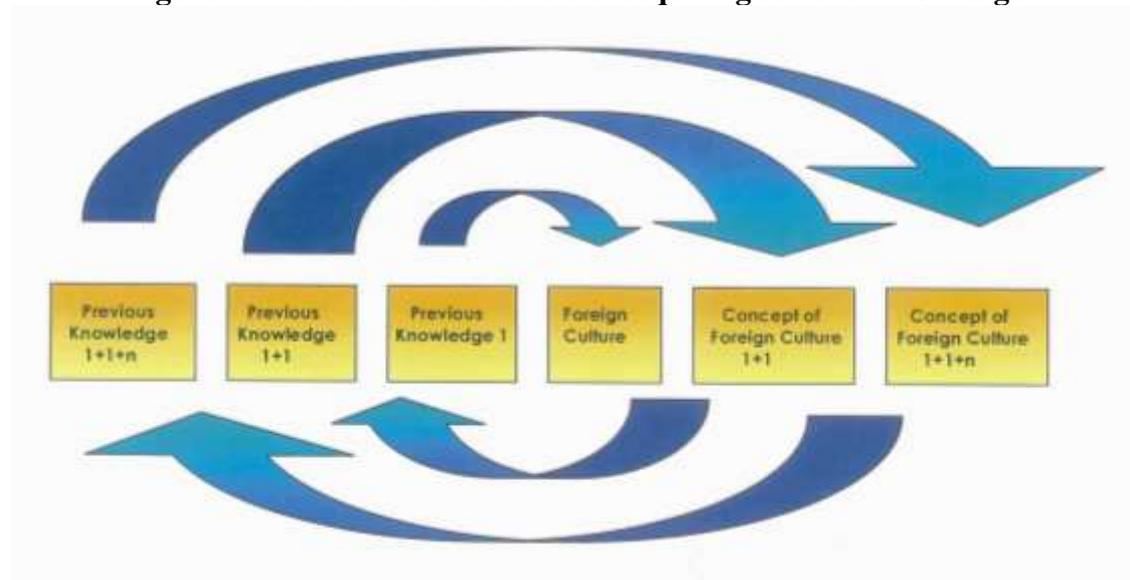
Knowledge

Knowledge about a culture, including sociocultural information about such things as everyday living, interpersonal relations, values and beliefs, body language and social conventions, is obviously important for language learners. As the Council of Europe points out, this culture-specific knowledge needs special attention, because it is ‘likely to lie outside the learner’s previous experience and may well be distorted by stereotypes’ (2001, p. 102). However, from an intercultural perspective, two other forms of knowledge, extending well beyond a traditional focus on facts and information about a target culture, are equally important. The first of these is *knowledge of self*; that, is knowledge about society and cultures in one’s own country (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 2003). This knowledge may very often be implicit, unanalyzed and taken-for-granted

(Kramsch, 1993); nevertheless it has a profound influence on the way in which cross-cultural encounters are handled and interpreted. The second is knowledge about *social and cultural processes*, such as processes of socialization, by which our identities are formed (Byram, 1997).²² This knowledge about culture in general and how it affects behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal communication, is a vital element of intercultural competence. Such knowledge provides learners with the conceptual tools to understand and explain problems in cross-cultural interaction and communication as derived from socialized difference, rather than misconstruing these problems on the basis of perceptions derived from the single cultural lens of their own unconscious socialization (Byram, 2006b; Kramsch, 1993). Language teachers may need to consciously acquire an appropriate metalanguage for discussing culture in precise terms, alongside appropriate descriptive terms for the classroom (Browett, 2003, p. 24). Browett (2003) presents a number of terms useful for discussing culture among non-specialists, including the term *culture* itself; *same* and *different*; *self*, *identity*, *group* and *individual*; and *invisible* and *observable*.

As seen in Figure 2, Finkbeiner and Koplín's (2002) hermeneutic circle of acquiring cultural knowledge presents visually the dynamic interplay between knowledge of self and cultural knowledge²³ which is gleaned from experiencing a target culture.

Figure 2: The hermeneutic circle of acquiring cultural knowledge



Source: Finkbeiner & Koplín, 2000, cited in Finkbeiner & Koplín, 2002.

In the model, previous knowledge – including all three dimensions of knowledge discussed above – informs our engagement with another culture. The experience of engagement in turn triggers (ideally speaking) restructuring of that existing knowledge.

²² The terms ‘culture-specific’ and ‘culture-general’ knowledge are often used to distinguish between knowledge about a particular culture, and knowledge about culture as a concept.

²³ Includes declarative, procedural and situational cultural knowledge – see Finkbeiner (2006).

This iterative process continues to enlarge understanding of other cultures, as well as knowledge of self and of cultural constructs. A weakness in this model is that it represents previous knowledge and knowledge of other cultures as not only expanding, but also moving away from each other.

Skills

Byram distinguishes two skills components. The first, *interpreting and relating*, involves ‘the ability to interpret a document or event [or visual materials] from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one’s own’ (p. 61). Objectives that relate to this skill include identifying ethnocentric orientations in a document; identifying and explaining misunderstandings in communication in terms of the relevant cultural frames; and mediating to resolve conflicting perspectives (p. 61). Similarly, the Council of Europe recommends a number of intercultural skills, including ‘cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures; the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships’ (2001, pp. 104–5).

The second skills component, *discovery and interaction*, is described by Byram as ‘the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction’ (p. 61). Byram highlights social interaction as an important mode of discovery, arguing that the processes of establishing relationships, managing dysfunctions and mediating are what distinguish an intercultural speaker from a native speaker (p. 38). Byram identifies seven objectives derived from this component, including ‘identify[ing] similar and dissimilar processes of interaction, verbal and non-verbal, and negotiat[ing] an appropriate use of them in specific circumstances’ and ‘interact[ing] with interlocutors from a different country and culture taking into consideration the degree of one’s existing familiarity with the country, culture and language and the extent of difference between one’s own and the other’ (ibid.).

Awareness

The notion of ‘awareness’ is central to intercultural communicative competence. Language awareness has been defined as ‘a person’s sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life’ (Donmall, 1985, p. 7; in Fehling, 2005). Given the inseparability of language and culture (Boas, 1940; Whorf, 1964), it is clear that an important dimension of language awareness will also involve awareness of how culture is realized and constructed in and through language. James and Garrett (1992) differentiate five different domains of language awareness: affective, social, political, cognitive and performative. The social and political domains are particularly useful for critically analyzing the relationships between majority languages and majority cultures, and minority languages and minority cultures. The political domain has been extensively developed and theorized in *Critical Language Awareness*, *Critical Language Study*, *Critical (Applied) Linguistics* and *Critical Discourse Analysis* (see, for example, Fairclough, 1995, 2000; Kramersch, 1993; Luke, 1997; Pennycook,

2001). It has also been applied to intercultural language learning in the Australian Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice project.

Fundamental to intercultural competence is awareness of one's own culture and language, as well as the language(s) and culture(s) of the target group (Kramsch, 1993). This includes an awareness of 'regional and social diversity in both worlds' (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 103). Moreover, sets of language and culture need to be seen in the context of more general knowledge of other cultures in the local society or wider world. In addition, this aspect of intercultural competence includes an awareness of how each community appears from the perspective of the other, thus undermining the ethnocentricity which typically underpins stereotypes (Kramsch, 2003).

The literature on culture and language teaching is unanimous on the role of culture teaching in fostering positive cross-cultural attitudes and awareness. Maley (1993, p. 3) for example, encourages teachers to use culture teaching to:

- sharpen observation
- encourage critical thinking about cultural stereotypes
- develop tolerance.

Similarly, Harkings (2006, p. 2) proposes the following goals of an intercultural approach to teaching:

- respect for self and others
- open-mindedness
- positive engagement and empathy;
- groundedness
- respectful engagement.

Byram (2006b, pp. 22–23) specifies that some desirable attitudes to foster are:

- respect for otherness
- tolerance for ambiguity
- empathy.

The above section has discussed the five components in Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence. The breadth of competencies captured in this model highlights the substantial reorientation that an intercultural perspective requires of more traditional linguistically focused approaches to language teaching and learning. It is a reorientation that parallels many of the values, principles and key competencies in the redevelopment of the *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007). It is also a reorientation that reflects exploratory approaches to learning used widely across educational contexts (e.g. Adshead, 1993; Snell, 2005), and that ties language learning inextricably to education for citizenship, and democracy learning (Byram, 2006b).

The interculturally competent teacher

So far we have seen intercultural competence as the goal of learning. However, it is also important to consider the interculturally competent teacher. Research into the cultural dimensions of education in New Zealand (Bishop & Glynn, 1999) has shown that not only do teachers have to manage the representation of and participation in culture(s) which are new to students, but also they (the teachers) need to have an appreciation of and respect for the culture(s) that students bring with them into the classroom. Russell Bishop from the University of Waikato, working on the Te Kōtahitanga project with the Ministry of Education, introduced this notion into teacher pedagogy and classroom management (Bishop, Berryman, S. Tiakiwai, & Richardson, 2003). Where a whole school is participating in this project, all teachers, including language teachers, are trained in the new kaupapa Māori-based pedagogy²⁴ which includes:

- strategies for personalizing learning (for example, the teacher spending more time away from the front of the classroom and engaging with students around the classroom)
- an emphasis on ‘ako’²⁵
- developing an oral rich environment
- nurturing class-whānau (family) relationships and collaboration (Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Bishop et al., 2002; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; G. H. Smith, 2003).

As a result of applying kaupapa Māori values, teachers have succeeded in achieving positive results across a range of indicators, including increased on-task engagement, reduction in absenteeism, increase in work completion rates, and, as a flow-on effect of these results, an increase in the cognitive levels of lessons (Bishop et al., 2003, p. 2). Tau’au (2003) and Samu (2004, 2006) report on similar approaches to culturally inclusive pedagogy in relation to the needs and backgrounds of Pasifika students in New Zealand schools.

Acquiring intercultural competence

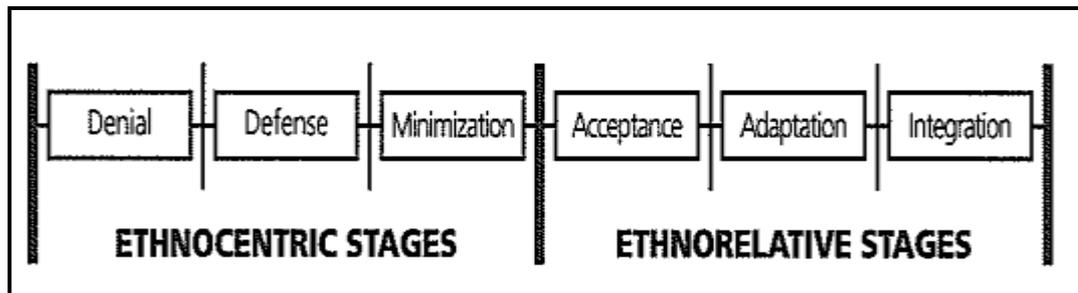
An important issue for iCLT is whether there are predictable trajectories of intercultural development. Relatively little research to date has provided substantive evidence on the nature of the acquisition of intercultural competence, or on developmental pathways for acquiring this competence in instructional contexts (Liddicoat et al., 2003, p. 100). One model of intercultural development that has been particularly influential in intercultural training is the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (see Figure 3), developed by Bennett in 1993 and which continues to receive attention in the literature (see J.

²⁴ ‘Māori philosophy, world view and cultural principles’ (G. H. Smith, 2003, p. 8).

²⁵ ‘The concept of ako describes a teaching and learning relationship, where the educator is also learning from the student and where educators’ practices are informed by the latest research and are both deliberate and reflective. Ako is grounded in the principle of reciprocity and also recognises that the learner and whānau cannot be separated.’ (Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 20).

Bennett et al., 2003; Liddicoat et al., 2003). This model identifies a series of stages that people move through in response to cross-cultural experiences.

Figure 3: The developmental model of intercultural sensitivity



Source: Bennett 1993, cited in J. Bennett et al., 2003, p. 248.

The model presents two sets of stages, ethnocentric and ethnorelative. In the ethnocentric stage, people's experience of their own cultural reality is subconscious. They avoid dealing with ideas of cultural difference since these threaten their reality. In the first ethnocentric substage of *denial*, cultural differences are seen as an inferior form of a person's own cultural experience. People remain isolated from other cultural groups, or seek to separate themselves from these groups. Learners at this substage may appear profoundly uninformed and unaware of other cultures and of the way their own cultural background influences the way they see others. In the second substage, *defence*, people have greater awareness of cultural difference but tend to divide the world into 'us and them', leading to the 'denigration of them and the superiority of us' (J. Bennett et al., 2003, p. 249). In the third substage, *minimization*, cultural differences are accepted, but not treated as important in the light of basic similarities between human beings. Learners at this substage still lack cultural self-awareness and are unaware that notions of similarity are usually derived from their own cultural values (ibid.).

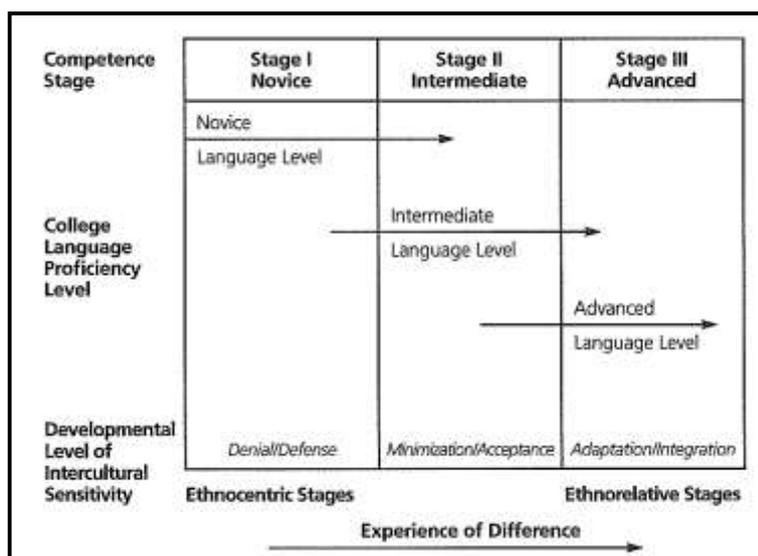
In the ethnorelative stage, learners have developed an awareness of cultural relativity and of the limitations of their own experience as the basis for generalizing about others. In the first ethnorelative substage, *acceptance*, learners develop respect for behavioural differences and, subsequently, for differences in values (ibid., p. 250). This is not to say that they agree with or accept these different behaviours or values as positive or appropriate attributes, but that they recognise the cultural context in which these things arise. In the second substage, *adaptation*, learners are able to shift cultural perspective so that they can see the world 'through different eyes' (ibid., p. 251), and, importantly, shift behaviour to accommodate to the communicative needs of others. Underlying this shift is what Bennett et al. (2003) refer to as 'intercultural empathy' (p. 251). In the third and final substage, *integration*, the learner's own cultural identity becomes more open to negotiation and more fluid. Their perceptions of cultural difference and definitions of self are typically complex and sophisticated.

Bennett et al. (2003, pp. 252–3) suggest that their model informs languages education in the following ways:

- It focuses not on learning discrete facts but on the development of an intercultural mindset, thus mapping easily on to models of communicative competence.
- It highlights generalizable intercultural skills and awareness that learners acquire from learning about culture in relation to a particular language.
- The centrality of cultural self-awareness in the model parallels the awareness of one's own language that emerges from studying a second language.
- The model emphasises the need for a sensitive approach on the part of the teacher to issues of cultural similarity and difference, which parallels decisions that language teachers already make with respect to how they deal with linguistic similarities and differences.

In Figure 4, Bennett et al. (2003) map levels of cultural sensitivity on to language proficiency levels. They note that the model is useful for the purpose of curriculum design, but not for individual assessment, since in any one class, learners will exhibit a wide range of levels of intercultural development.

Figure 4: Development of intercultural sensitivity



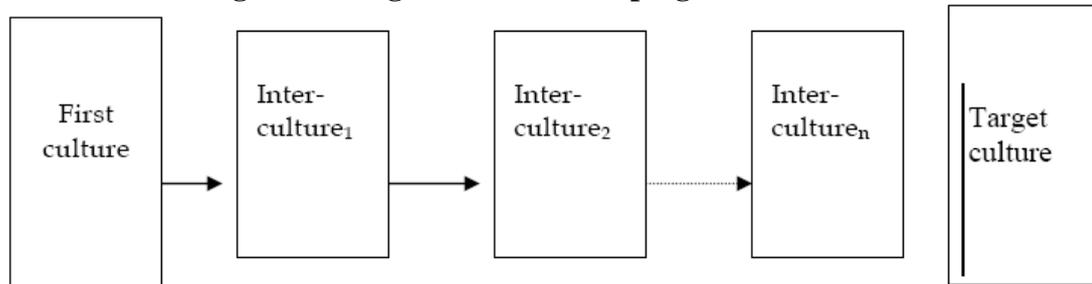
Source: Bennett & Ikeda, 1998, cited in Bennett et al., 2003, p. 257.

Liddicoat et al. (2003) argue that the linear nature of Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity assumes a 'progressive, scalar phenomenon' (p. 19) which may not be the case at lower levels of abstraction and shorter time periods than those assumed in the model. They also criticize the model for failing to adequately link interculturality and language. Liddicoat et al. also find that the mapping of the model on to levels of proficiency, as displayed in Figure 4, is deficient, because it assumes no prior starting point of exposure to cultural difference (p. 20).

Liddicoat et al. (2003) propose an alternative view of acquiring intercultural competence (Figure 5). In this model, the learner 'begins with a knowledge of the practices of their own first culture and gradually acquires an approximative system of practices . . . as a result of exposure to new input' (ibid., p. 21). Each 'interculture' (interculture_{1 2 n} ...) in

this progression includes elements from both the first and target cultures, as well as unique elements created by the learner in response to their role as a participant in both cultures. These intercultures represent movement within a ‘third place’, described by Kramsch (1993, p. 236) as ‘the interstices between cultures that the learner grew up with and the new cultures he or she is being introduced to’.

Figure 5: Progression in developing intercultures



Source: Liddicoat (2002b).

Although the model shows a linear progression towards the target culture, this may not consistently be the case for all learners. Liddicoat, (2002b) describe situations where a developing interculture may be less close to the target culture, such as when a learner feels uncomfortable with a new communicative practice that they have adopted, or where feedback from interlocutors (i.e. native speakers) indicates that a particular practice is unsuccessful. Experiential learning through communication, interaction, and opportunities for reflection is clearly crucial for this process.

It seems to us that this model, too, has a number of limitations. First, as with the Bennett model, it gives an impression of linearity and fails to represent the relationship between the target culture and intercultural positions. Secondly, the model assumes, as a starting point, a monocultural learner. In fact, in multicultural societies such as New Zealand, learners are increasingly entering the language classroom with a variety of pluralistic cultural and linguistic starting points. For some of these learners, language learning will be reconnecting them with a heritage culture. Thirdly, the model implies a movement away from a first culture or cultures. On the contrary, intercultural language learning offers opportunities to grow and expand – in Finkbeiner’s words, ‘to acquire without having to lose, to elaborate in a cultural win-win situation’ (2007, p. 7). Figure 2, the hermeneutic circle of acquiring cultural knowledge, addresses some of these limitations by representing, visually, the dynamic interplay between cultural knowledge (including declarative, procedural and situational cultural knowledge – see Finkbeiner, 2006) and experience/exposure to a target culture.

In the case of pre-adolescent learners, the introduction of intercultural approaches to culture needs to take account of the stage of psychological development (including moral development) of the learners, and maturational constraints on their capacity for self-reflection and abstraction (Byram, 1997, p. 54). As Byram notes, the literature on teaching languages in the primary years does not address the teaching of culture or the capacity of young learners to evaluate their culture-based attitudes. Byram does,

however, refer to research in the teaching of geography which suggests that ‘young children’s concepts of other countries, and therefore presumably of other cultures, does not develop as quickly as their ability to learn another linguistic code.’ (p. 46). Byram thus points to the need for ‘research in the language classroom to confirm or otherwise the conclusions from geography and provide a more systematic base for formulating the cultural learning aims of language teaching in the early years’ (ibid.). Despite Byram’s cautions, it is important not to overstate the limitations on what can be achieved with young learners, or to presuppose that intercultural learning begins after an awareness of the other culture or nation develops. With young learners, iCLT may be better directed to bringing the learners to recognise their own cultural assumptions and the diversity and variability inherent in their own society. Some of the example modules from the Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning in Practice project in Australia show early primary level programmes which reflect ways of teaching at this level (see <http://www.iltlp.unisa.edu.au/default.html>).

Intercultural competence and the native speaker

It is important to note that the movement towards the target culture does not imply that the ultimate goal is to develop native speaker-like abilities. The disjuncture in Figure 5 between the final interculture (interculture_n) and the target culture reinforces this point. Rather, the process remains dynamic: the learner constantly refines her or his position as an intercultural communicator, occupying a shifting ‘third place’ between their existing, familiar cultural practices and the cultural practices discovered through the experience of learning the target language (Kramsch, 1993).

The idea that interaction between speakers of a target language should be the ultimate model for learners, on all levels of communicative competence, has been vigorously and influentially critiqued by a number of scholars (Kramsch, 1997, 2006; Marx, 2002; Norton, 2000), who claim that such assumptions are limiting, unrealistic and unhelpful for the language learner. It is generally argued that native speaker-level communicative competence is an unrealistic target for most learners. Indeed, from an intercultural perspective, it is also an undesirable one for other reasons. It assumes that language learning leads to a form of assimilation, and/or an assumption that a change of sociocultural identity means only a change in ‘cultural allegiance’. However, the aim of iCLT is for learners to understand their own identity in relation to others, not to replace identities. Secondly, sociocultural identity is in fact changed by exposure to the other. Openness to diversity, willingness to engage with others and moving away from ethnocentrism in identity construction would all be valid and valued outcomes of iCLT (J. Bennett et al., 2003; Kramsch, 1993).

Furthermore, the native-speaker target implies the undesirable goal of encouraging the learner to separate from his/her own culture and to adopt a new sociocultural identity (Byram, 1997; Marx, 2002; cf. Siskin, 2003). Byram (2003), however, does not consider the risk of assimilation into the target culture a major problem, because language learning in the classroom ‘is not usually sufficient to create a desire to pass into another

national group' (2003, p. 63). Moreover, teachers may encounter resistance among students to any pressure to sound or behave like native speakers of the target language, depending on learners' attitudes towards a specific culture or to language learning in general. There is even the possibility that learners may interpret efforts to change their language behaviour as 'assertions of undue power on the part of institutions' (McGroarty, 1996, pp. 28–29). In fact, Byram makes a distinction between linguistic and other communicative competences: 'whereas linguistic competence *might* [author's italics] be modelled on a native speaker . . . cultural competence should be modelled differently' (2006a, p. 1). It is important at this point to distinguish between second language learning in immigrant contexts, where the learning of the new language, together with other social pressures, can lead to assimilation (Berry, 2001, 2005), and the foreign language, iCLT context, where the aim is to connect learners with their own identity and, from that perspective, to explore other identities, rather than any form of assimilation.

A further important argument against the 'native speaker' norm is that no native speaker can model what it means to be a non-native speaker of a particular language. The native speaker norm is usually predicated on a monolingual, monocultural experience. The experience of language learners is inevitably a plurilingual, pluricultural experience. The model needed for such learners is a model which involves negotiation and communication with and across languages and cultures, in which each interlocutor's linguistic and cultural history, socialisation and identity is equally and always present.

An even stronger position is taken by other intercultural theorists (e.g. Bhabha, 1996; P. R. Schmidt & Finkbeiner, 2006). They dismiss the dichotomy between native speaker competence and non-native speaker competence as unhelpful in contemporary multicultural societies, in which identity increasingly lies in-between these poles. As Bhabha (1996) points out, 'hybridity' is a rapidly growing phenomenon in both language and culture. As these theorists argue, societies and cultures are changing rapidly, not on a digital scale (native versus non-native), but rather on triple or quadruple scales which are multi-faceted and hybrid.

There are practical implications of this shift away from the goal of native speaker proficiency (linguistic and cultural). One is the need to distinguish between the appropriate levels of receptive and productive competence expected of learners (Liddicoat, 2004). That is to say, learners 'should be helped to understand the native speakers' communicative intentions but should not be expected to behave in a native-like manner' (Lange & Paige, 2003, p. xii). For example, European speakers of Japanese are not necessarily expected to master the subtleties of bowing conventions, although appropriate levels of polite language may be expected. In many cases, the aims and objectives of language teaching and learning in schools, and the assessment of student achievement, may have to be amended to reflect the goal of intercultural competence, as opposed to the more limited one of linguistic or even communicative competence. Moreover, given the current limited opportunities for, and the attrition rates from,²⁶

²⁶ Indicative of this attrition is the number of results gaining credits in French (one of the most widely

language learning in New Zealand schools, it cannot be expected that many students will develop high levels of proficiency. In these cases, it is hoped that the more profound result of languages education will be a deeper understanding of one's own culture and of cultural differences (Liddicoat, 2001, p. 54), including those present within New Zealand society. In fact, the aim of iCLT makes it of relevance to a much wider range of students than presently undertaking any sort of second or foreign language learning in New Zealand schools.

In summary, it is the aim of iCLT that learners should understand their own identity in relation to others, and not adopt new identities. However, sociocultural identity is in fact changed by exposure to new cultural ideas and practices. Openness to diversity, willingness to engage with others and moving away from ethnocentrism in identity construction would all be valid and valued outcomes of iCLT. This leads us to consider how the language classroom can provide a site for these profound reflections on and shifts in sociocultural identity.

learnt language in the languages area) from 2005 to 2007. The cohort at Level 1 in 2005, drops from 12,781 to 6,606 at Level 2 in 2006, and to 4, 064 at Level 3 in 2007 (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications/ssq/statistics/natl-nqf.do>, retrieved 4 December 2008).

5. Intercultural language teaching and learning

So far, we have focused on establishing a theoretical and conceptual basis for intercultural language teaching and learning. We now look more closely at how teaching from an intercultural perspective has been viewed in the literature.

Two views of culture which inform language teaching

The way culture is taught will depend on how it is viewed by society, teachers and learners. Earlier, dynamic definitions of culture were put forward. Liddicoat (2001) distinguishes two views of culture – static and dynamic – that have informed language teaching. The static view sees culture as distinguishable, homogenous, objectively describable or ‘essentialist’; the dynamic view sees culture as constantly developing and seized upon in merely momentary perceptions which ‘constitute themselves dynamically in discourse’ (Wendt, 2003, pp. 95–96). While there are clearly other ways to ‘cut the cultural cake’,²⁷ the static/dynamic dichotomy is highly congruent with the work of key intercultural language education theorists such as Byram (1997) and Kramsch (1993). The two views of culture are examined in detail below.

The static view of culture

This view treats culture as self-contained factual knowledge or cultural artefacts to be observed and learned about, rather than participated in – ‘knowledge-out-of-context’ rather than ‘knowledge-in-action’ (Applebee, 1996). Teaching focuses on topics such as the history, customs, institutions, arts, literature and geography of a country (Liddicoat et al., 2003, p. 7), and can all too easily fall prey to what E. Phillips (2003, p. 1) calls the ‘4-F approach’ – folk dances, festivals, fairs and food. A static view of culture offers no clear link between language and culture (Liddicoat, 2001, p. 48). The self-contained nature of the cultural component means that it could be taught just as effectively outside the language classroom. In fact, it often makes culture seem peripheral, simply consisting of ‘information to be transmitted’ (Crawford & McLaren, 2003, p. 133), disregarding the fact that culture, like language, is constantly developing. Examples of static culture in a German language textbook have been identified by Liddicoat (2001). These include a task where students are asked to look for North American cities of similar latitude to cities in Germany, and another where they are given a profile of an 18th century German politician. Neither task provides information that is

²⁷ For example, the influential cultural theorist Geert Hofstede distinguishes between ‘culture one’ (e.g. art and literature) and ‘culture two’ (e.g. thinking, feeling and potential acting) (Geert Hofstede & Gert Jan Hofstede, 2005).

communicatively useful to the learner. Such knowledge-out-of-context may or may not have some curiosity value, but fails to address the elements of culture that learners typically experience difficulty with and that provide the greatest challenge to effective and appropriate communication (Dellit, 2005). A further problem with static culture is that, for lower proficiency classes at least, cultural information has to be presented in the students' first language, which further separates culture from language learning.

Another danger in the traditional marginalisation of the teaching of culture is that differences may be represented as '*cute, quaint, and interesting*' (Crawford & McLaren, 2003, p. 146) (authors' italics), whereas similarities are interpreted as meaning that others are 'just like us', implying that somehow 'we', (the teachers and learners) are the superior model. At best, E. Phillips (2003) sees this as trivialization, which clearly does not lead to genuine engagement with another culture. According to Crawford and McLaren (2003), this approach stems from the lack of genuine comparisons, which would entail a critical evaluation of both cultures. They cite the example of white, middle-class language teachers in the United States who are unable to identify aspects of their own culture and who seem to feel 'cultureless' – a feeling that is sometimes said to exist among the dominant Pakeha (of European origin) in New Zealand. As a result of their investigations, Crawford and McLaren recommend that teachers, together with students, engage in 'cultural exploration' (2003, p. 153), and that appropriate language is taught to meet the needs of the students in such exploration, that is, their communicative needs, not necessarily the language which the textbooks tell them to learn and use.

Static approaches tend to essentialize culture by focusing on a limited set of cultural generalizations and stereotypes, which function as a convenient but homogeneous proxy for cultural diversity. As Byram (1997) points out, this view overlooks the fact that people 'come into their shared worlds over time, and are constantly negotiating their common understandings just as these shared worlds are subject to flux' (p. 17). The cultural meanings which tend to dominate essentialist views of culture are typically those of a dominant and powerful minority (p. 18). Theorists in critical discourse analysis (e.g. Fairclough, 1992) examine the way discourse constructs versions of reality (i.e. cultural representations) to support the cultural values of powerful minorities and their hegemonic use of power.

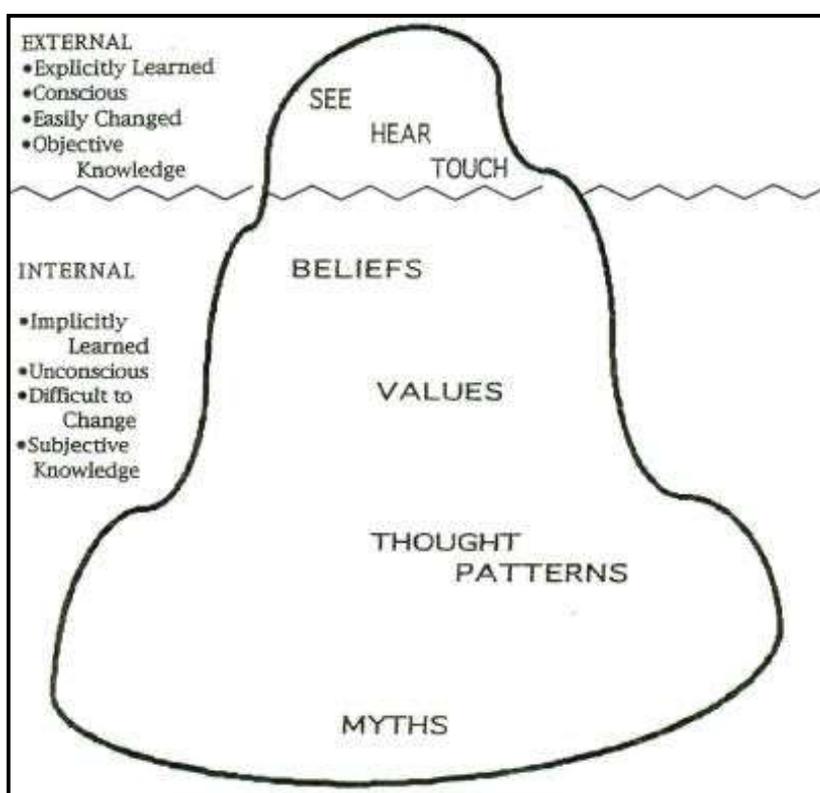
The dynamic view of culture

From this contrasting point of view, culture is seen as 'a daily lived phenomenon that is both patterned and shared . . . an undercurrent of values and beliefs [that] guides behaviour' (Browett, 2003, p. 20). Similarly, the process of acculturation is dynamic, reciprocal and never-ending. Culture, from this perspective, is constantly renegotiated through language, as language constructs, reinforces and reflects the cultural world in which it is used (Halliday, 1978). Reflecting these processes, an intercultural perspective on language learning encourages critical reflection on processes of cultural maintenance and shift. Learners are encouraged to view the cultural facts they learn as situated in time

and space, and thus variable across time, and within regions, classes, and generations (Crawford & McLaren, 2003).

One of the challenges in teaching culture is that knowledge of one's own culture is largely implicit, and so not easily available for conscious reflection. We are often unaware of the cultural values which allow us to communicate within our own culture, let alone those that underpin behaviour in another culture, with which we come in contact. This is captured in the metaphor of the cultural iceberg (see Figure 6) in which a large proportion of culturally shaped knowledge (behavioural expectations, expectations of appropriateness and politeness in verbal and non-verbal behaviour, and so on) lies below the surface of culture, and is mostly only subconsciously applied in our everyday interactions.

Figure 6: The cultural iceberg



Source: Weaver, 1993, from <http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/iceberg.htm>

Greeting routines, for example, can be realized in various observable ways including a handshake, raised eyebrows, a kiss, or a nod of the head. However, lying beneath these behaviours are non-observable values, attitudes and expectations to do with status, relationships and social distance, all of which are uniquely structured and perceived within different cultural contexts (Finkbeiner & Koplín, 2002). Similarly, as Finkbeiner (2007) notes, the iceberg model can also be applied to the language/culture relationship; choice of linguistic form is shaped by 'hidden values, attributions and interpretations of the world' (pp. 3–4). In iCLT, the focus thus moves from the visible tip of the cultural iceberg to the less easily observable, dynamic aspects of culture represented by the large

underwater segment of the iceberg. The applications of a dynamic view of culture are discussed later in the review in the sections on ‘culture as practice.

Four approaches to culture in language teaching and learning

Another way of examining how culture is viewed and taught is through the grouping of approaches identified by Liddicoat et al. (2003, pp. 5–7). They distinguish four main approaches: culture as *high culture*; culture as area studies; culture as societal norms; and culture as practice. The four approaches can be seen to broadly represent a range from static to more dynamic approaches to culture.

Culture as high culture

This ‘culture as high culture’ approach equates culture with ‘civilization’ and is often referred to as the ‘big C’ approach to culture.²⁸ As Liddicoat et al. (2003, pp. 5–6) note, *high culture* is the traditional focus of culture studies in language teaching, an emphasis seen particularly in foreign language programmes at university level, which focus on the literary canon and other expressions of ‘high art’ or valued cultural knowledge (as expressed in visual arts, music, and so on).

Culture as area studies

Area studies focuses on knowledge about a country or society, often presented as background knowledge to language learning, but only loosely linked to the language itself. Culture is something to be observed, with the learner external and excluded from the cultural focus. Topics include a country’s history, institutions, transport, famous figures, and geography. This view sees culture as distributed across a whole range of material artefacts, reflecting D’Andrade’s (1981) description of culture as:

a vast information pool, transmitted from generation to generation and increasing constantly in size for the past 50,000 years. But this pool is transmitted not only by symbols (language, graphic signs, and so on) but by the entire ‘culturally constituted reality’, which includes such things as ‘buildings, roads, vehicles, lawns, furniture, appliances’. (p. 180, cited in Streeck, 2002, p. 327)

An area studies approach to culture is very much aligned with static views of culture. It focuses on cultural knowledge that is self-contained and usually not related to language. Indeed, such knowledge could be taught just as effectively outside the language classroom (Liddicoat, 2001).

Culture as societal norms

The societal norms approach views culture as the practices and values which typify a society. This approach has its roots in the anthropological fieldwork by Gumperz (1982a, 1982b) and Hymes (1974, 1986) (cited in Liddicoat et al., 2003, p. 6), and in the earlier normative sociology of Durkheim (1956) and Parsons (1937) which became the dominant paradigm for sociologists in the 20th century (Streeck, 2002, p. 307).

²⁸ In contrast to the ‘little c’ approach which focuses on culture in its everyday manifestations (Herron, Dubreil, & Cole, 2000).

Ethnomethodologists (e.g. Garfinkel, 1967) subjected this paradigm to a penetrating methodological critique by showing that normative rules are always the product of a 'situated, interpretive, and open-ended process, not a mindless operation that automatically produces socially accepted behaviour' (ibid., p. 307). This critique is reflected in the notion of culture as practice, discussed below.

Within a societal norms approach, typical topics include the pragmatics of politeness and directness, respect, non-verbal communication, and speakers' religious and societal beliefs. Teaching culture involves, for example, teaching learners to consider the kinds of behaviour expected of users of a language in various contexts. Verbal examples include pronoun forms in European languages, and Japanese plain, neutral or honorific verb forms, while non-verbal behaviour, such as eye contact, physical distance and gestures also need careful attention. Where beliefs are concerned, it might be topics such as the cultural symbolism of colours (e.g. the colour red stands for luck in China, but it signifies danger in many other places, such as the United Kingdom and Germany) or numbers (e.g. good luck is represented by '888' in China, but by '7' in the United States; bad luck by '4' in Japan, and by '13' in many English speaking countries).

Culture as practice

While the area studies approach to culture emphasises the realisation of cultural meanings in and through material artefacts, the culture as practice approach emphasises the ways in which these materially derived meanings are shaped and interpreted in human action and interaction. This view of culture emerges out of the 'ethnomethodological turn' in the social sciences initiated by sociologists and ethnomethodologists, such as Garfinkel (1967), Goffman (1959), and Cohen and Taylor (1976). Their approach treats culture as an accumulation of individuals' lived experiences; it recognises that culture is constantly created and recreated through interaction, and can be highly variable.

Barro, Jordan and Roberts (1998) look to anthropology for a concept of culture in language learning, noting that this is a new focus because 'applied linguistics and language education generally have tended to look to linguistics and psychology for their theoretical and conceptual frames' (p. 77). Their research tracked students taking part in ethnography studies as part of university language instruction. The students were encouraged to focus on the 'ordinary and everyday' in their social and cultural worlds, and on 'verbal means of expressing consideration for others', since, 'it is precisely these everyday communicative experiences which are such an obvious target for the language learner' (p. 86). The ethnographic studies programme aimed to develop cultural skills and cultural awareness, rather than imparting cultural information. In the researchers' words:

Learners gain the cultural tools for making sense of new intercultural contexts and experiences rather than positivistic facts about other countries, structures and systems which are, despite the textbooks' attempts to freeze-dry them and turn them into fresh-looking digestible items of information, constantly in a process of contestation and change. (p. 86)

While the other three approaches are more focused on learning from books and materials, this approach encourages engagement with the lived experience of the target culture, rather than accumulation of facts about the culture. Students are offered a wide range of cultural experiences and interactions in order to develop a mature and realistic view of the target culture. Byram (2006b) proposes the tool of an autobiography of key intercultural experiences as a way to put these ideas into action. This project involves students recording and analyzing their intercultural experiences using a series of prompt questions and sentence starters, which tap into the core elements of intercultural competence that we examined earlier in the review. For example, the following extract has the potential to tune the students into the attitudinal capacity of *empathy*, and the behavioural element of *communicative awareness*:

Who else was involved? What kind of experience was it for them?

- The person/people was/were called...
- They belong to the following group(s) of people . . . [. . .]
- I noticed what they did and how they reacted . . .
- For them it was an everyday experience/an unusual experience/a surprising experience/a shocking experience/ . . .

(from Byram, 2006b, p. 32)

Such an approach addresses the concerns of Christensen (1993, cited in Byram, 1997, p. 18), who argues that ‘the quest for culture as essence and object has to be abandoned in favour of method, i.e. a process of investigation where every single social encounter potentially involves different values, opinions and world views’. The main tenet of Christensen’s argument is that the typical representation of a society’s culture is that of a powerful minority which has made the ‘national’ culture of the society its own, despite its inaccessibility to a less powerful majority. In responding to this idea, Byram (1997, p. 45) strikes a middle ground by arguing that teaching materials should introduce learners to a range of social groups, including those of low social status and disadvantage.

A ‘culture as practice’ approach is congruent with early attention to culture and interculturality in a language syllabus, since even ostensibly simple language, such as forms of greeting and attendant behaviour, which might be taught early in a programme, can contain rich sociocultural information. In other words, ‘quite simple language can often be bound up with quite complex culture’ (Liddicoat, 2004, p. 18). We see this in, for example, Japanese uses of plain, neutral or honorific verb forms or the uses of pronoun forms for ‘you’ in European languages. For both examples, the formal grammar is relatively straightforward; but learning to use these terms appropriately requires an understanding of sociocultural dimensions of language use (Liddicoat, 2004, p. 18). Similarly, we see culture-in-language in the following kinds of domains which are all suitable for early attention in a programme:

- coding of family relationships
- naming of rooms in a house

- transactional etiquette in everyday exchange of goods and services
- expressions of politeness, humility, respect, modesty, and so on
- conversational signals of attention. (Carr, 2007)

An iCLT response to the first three approaches to culture

So far, this chapter has described two views of culture – static and dynamic – and identified four approaches to the teaching and learning of culture in languages education: study of the arts and traditions of a culture, the study of society and history, the study of societal norms, and the study of people’s everyday lives. The last of these approaches, that is, ‘culture as practice’, most obviously aligns with the constructivist roots of interculturally informed pedagogy (Knoblauch, 2000; Liddicoat et al., 2003). The other three approaches, while tending to reflect a more static view of culture can nevertheless also be approached interculturally to allow for dynamic understandings of culture to emerge. In this next section we discuss options for taking an intercultural stance within these three approaches.

An intercultural stance on ‘high culture’ (i.e. study of arts and traditions) encourages students to reflect on the origins of and values associated with cultural artefacts, and to make explicit comparisons with arts in their own culture. It embraces a broad range of cultural expressions of literature, art, music, and performance, ensuring that the target culture remains accessible and relevant to all language learners. Students are encouraged to view culture as belonging to all people, and to consequently explore a wider range of cultural artefacts.

Historical and traditional high culture materials may particularly require re-evaluation in an iCLT classroom. Students can consider how myth and literature shape modern lives, and how written records and oral and visual traditions represent values and norms that persist. In te reo Māori, oral genealogies, speech-making traditions, and whakapapa introductions are salient instances of oral traditions which reflect important cultural values. Similarly in *Sāmoan in the New Zealand Curriculum* (1996), for example, an emphasis on the traditions and rituals of fa‘asamoa encourages sensitivity to formal uses of language as well as, in the case of Samoan children who may be learning Samoan at school, a deeper understanding of their identity:

Fa‘asamoa (which includes the cultural life and customs of the Samoan community in New Zealand) is often expressed through the language. Learning about fa‘asamoa is part of the way in which children and students learn Samoan. For Samoan children, learning Samoan is bound up with their sense of identity as Samoans. For non-Samoan children, learning Samoan and about fa‘asamoa in New Zealand will provide a deeper understanding of what it means to be a part of a multicultural society. (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 16)

Examples of fa‘asamoa topics in the document include: awareness of the behaviour appropriate to the events with respect to fa‘asamoa which follow a death (commemorative services, funerals, and unveilings of headstones), and to being a guest at a wedding; aso fa‘amanatu and lotu tausaga (special days and annual religious

ceremonies/days); faleaitu (literally means house of spirits – comedy, clowning, and comic theatre); fa‘afiafiaga (cultural festivals/performances) and ‘aiavā (evening presentation of food to visitors – often on night of their departure).

Second, an intercultural stance on ‘culture as area studies’ encourages attention to the particular alongside the general. For example, in learning about the education system in a target language culture, learners can be encouraged to find out about a particular learner’s experience of the system, as well as general facts about the school day, national examinations, class sizes and so on. This approach shifts the focus from what learners ‘should’ know about a country to considering the historical, social and geographical knowledge that will support learners’ growing respect and understanding of the cultural experience of others. This focus on the lived experience of individuals within a culture reflects a shift to viewing culture as practice, as discussed above.

Thirdly, an intercultural stance on ‘culture as societal norms’ can be used to challenge cultural assumptions. A criticism of the societal norms approach is that it too easily presents learners with stereotypes of the target culture and individuals within that culture. To address this problem, learners can be encouraged to focus first on stereotypes of their own culture, and thus gain insights into the constructed and subjective nature of stereotypes. This reflective process aligns with the ‘thinking’ key competency in the *New Zealand Curriculum* (2007):

Students who are competence thinkers . . . reflect on their own learning, draw on personal knowledge and intuitions, ask questions, and challenge the basis of assumptions and perceptions. (p. 12)

An intercultural view also addresses the problem of the societal norms approach positioning both native speakers and language learners as observers of culture who are passive and subject to external rules of behaviour. iCLT views culture as negotiated by – and belonging to – the individuals who participate in it, and so embraces the dialectic relationship between group cultural membership on the one hand, and the diversity of individual experience within cultures on the other.

An intercultural stance thus goes beyond description and surface comprehension of information, and to pursue questions such as ‘So what’, and ‘Why?’ These kinds of questions dig beneath the surface of culture in order to develop critical awareness and cultural adaptability and understanding (Carr, 2007).

Culture as practice in the iCLT classroom

We now look more closely at three ways in which ‘culture as practice’ is approached in iCLT: exploring self; exploring culture; and comparing cultures.

Culture as practice: Exploring self

Language learning can play an important role in the development of the individual identity of young learners. As Kramsch (2006, p. 98) points out:

At an age when they [adolescents and young adults] are seeking to define their linguistic identity and their position in the world, the language class is often the first time they are

consciously and explicitly confronted with the relationship between their language, their thoughts and their bodies.

In addition, the opportunity to learn and use a new language can address the typical adolescent need to ‘rebel against the limitations imposed on it [their age] by the constraints of their social environment’ (Kramersch, 2006, p. 101). In other words, a new language offers a new means of expression, often one that their parents cannot use, to demonstrate their individuality and independence, similar to the way in which teenage slang establishes both separation from and challenge to accepted adult norms.

iCLT thus encourages learners to discover these less visible cultural dimensions of their own lives, and to use this self-awareness as the basis for being able to understand cultural otherness, and for navigating and making sense of intercultural interactions. This notion was effectively expressed by Proust (cited in J. K. Phillips, 2003) when he wrote: ‘The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes’. One of the aims of iCLT is therefore the development of cultural awareness, that is, ‘a gradually developing inner sense of the equality of cultures, an increased understanding of your own and other people’s cultures, and a positive interest in how cultures both connect and differ’ (Tomlinson & Matsuhara, 2004, p. 7).

Learners need to become aware of what is meant by culture, and what aspects of their behaviour and language use are culturally specific. Thus intercultural teaching and learning require self-reflection, through which learners come to understand how their culture influences their use of language, and how their communicative interactions reflect their culture. This is a crucial starting point for becoming interculturally competent (Kramersch, 1993, 2006). It applies equally to teachers. It is echoed in a 1990 report into Māori achievement in schools in which the author, former Race Relations Conciliator, Walter Hirsh, argues that:

[An] exercise in cultural awareness must NOT be a brief and shallow entry into Taha Māori. Rather, for most teachers, i.e., Pakeha teachers, it should begin with an investigation into Pakeha culture. Such investigations should lead to positive findings and to enhance (sic) cultural awareness and self-esteem. (Cited in Bishop & Glynn, 1999, p. 135)

Bishop and Glynn (1999) are critical of an approach that assumes that ‘individual human endeavour and reflection is [sic] sufficient to address and promote desired changes in our society’ (p. 135). They argue that understanding must involve awareness of how power is distributed and how control is exercised by a dominant culture. This then provides a starting point for teachers to critically reflect on how power is distributed and maintained in their classrooms, and to take action in response to these reflections. Such an approach is entirely congruent with the critical dimensions of intercultural awareness, as discussed in the section on intercultural competence. It also reflects the new element of ‘action orientation’ in Byram’s updated model of intercultural competence (2006b, p. 28), which he defines as:

both critical reflection on the familiar and the unquestioned assumptions of one's own culture/country and involvement and intervention in the world of practice with an intention to create social change, in cooperation with people of other cultures/countries.

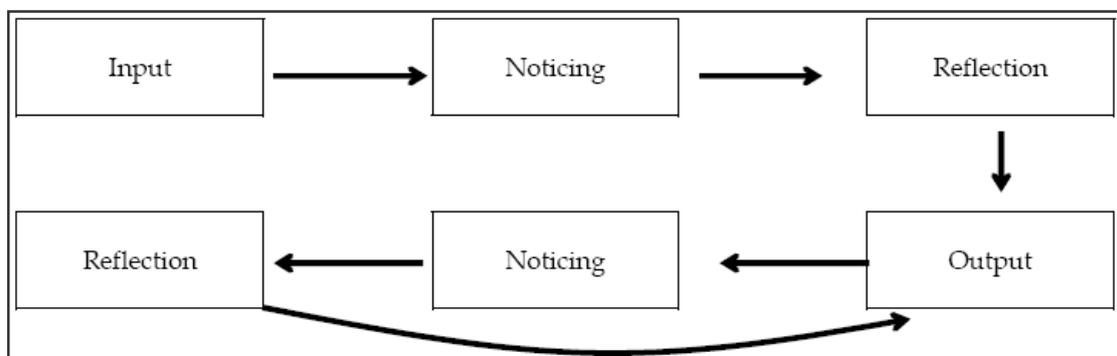
As we discussed earlier, research by Bishop, Berryman and Richardson (2002) into the experience of Māori students in mainstream education showed the need for teachers to reflect on their own cultural practices, and be willing to align their pedagogy more closely with the cultural values of students from different cultural backgrounds, thus developing 'culturally responsive contexts for learning' (p. 58).

Culture as practice: Exploring culture

One way in which learners can be guided to discover the less visible aspects of culture in language is seen in the pathway for developing intercultural competence proposed by Liddicoat et al. (2003, p. 20) and displayed in Figure 7. The model presupposes a starting point of exposure to a wide range of authentic texts and sources (including oral, performative, visual and written texts/sources) and/or opportunities for interaction with speakers of the target language. Working from this starting point, learners are encouraged to notice features of the communicative event that are unfamiliar (*noticing*). Noticing requires learners to draw on their culture-general knowledge, as well as make comparisons between the observed communication and their own. They then discuss the reasons for these features as well as their personal response to them (*reflection*). Opportunities for communication follow, allowing them to experiment with new forms, expressions or strategies derived from the earlier input (*output*). Learners then attend to how 'comfortable' these feel and how successful the communication was interpersonally (*noticing again*). A final reflection involves deciding on whether material from the input is worth adopting. As the authors explain it:

It is important for the student who has noticed a difference in the input to reflect on the nature of the difference and to decide how to respond to that difference; that is, how far the learner will modify his/her practices to accommodate this new input. (Liddicoat, 2002b)

Figure 7: A pathway for developing intercultural competence



Source: Liddicoat, 2002b.

Underlying the pathway are four key learning and teaching processes:

1. *Awareness raising:* Students are introduced to new input about language and culture, using authentic texts wherever possible. They are encouraged to notice differences between the input and their own practices, and to talk about what they notice.
2. *Experimentation:* Students begin working with their new knowledge. This involves short, supported communicative tasks, often with a specific focus on students' language and cultural needs.
3. *Production:* Students integrate the information they have acquired in actual language use through role play and communication with native speakers of the language.
4. *Feedback:* Students discuss how they felt about speaking and acting in a particular way. Feedback from the teacher should allow students to work towards discovering a 'third place'.

This third place is an intercultural position between cultures, a position from which the learner can negotiate differences and interact comfortably across cultures by drawing on 'a reflective capacity to deal with cultural differences and to modify behaviour when needed' (Dellit, 2005, p. 17). The goal of intercultural language teaching is to facilitate this shift in the positioning of learners, so that they are no longer rooted only in the experiences and identity derived from their existing cultures and languages. Neither, however, do they reposition themselves within the target culture. As Kramsch (1993) describes it, 'the goal is not a balance of opposites, or a moderate pluralism of opinions but a paradoxical, irreducible confrontation that may change one in the process' (p. 231). The changes referred to here as the learner enters a third place are personal and unique:

[T]he major task of language learners is to define for themselves what this 'third place' . . . will look like. . . . Nobody, least of all the teacher, can tell them where that very personal place is; for each learner it will be differently located, and will make different sense at different times. (Kramsch, 1993, p. 257)

Thus, the steps in the pathway proposed by Liddicoat et al. require learners to interpret and construct their own models of culture rather than have these models presented by the teacher. As Byram advises, the teacher 'should not attempt to provide representations of other cultures, but should concentrate on equipping learners with the means of accessing and analyzing any cultural practices and meanings they encounter, whatever their status in a society' (Byram, 1997, pp. 18–19).

This process of exploring culture is addressed in a collaborative French/English research project (Byram & Cain, 1998) in which language teachers in France and Britain worked together to develop curriculum materials to help secondary teachers and students explore and compare various cultural aspects in each country. The overall aims were:

- to foster the acquisition of a cultural competence, that is the ability to interpret social phenomena which the students may encounter in the course of their contacts with another culture . . . ;
- to develop such flexibility in the students that they can accept other interpretative systems and relate them to their own. (1998, p. 37)

The very fact that the two teams worked in different educational and social contexts, and had themselves to communicate cross-culturally, meant that they chose mostly different topic areas and took different approaches to the materials development. (The French took a mainly historical approach, while the English team focused on ethnography.) However, both involved compiling a variety of documents, providing students with a variety of tasks entailing a range of skills, all involving the use of the target language, to explore the ‘new’ culture. Both teams realised the benefit of cross-curricular learning.

This research project also led Byram and Cain (1998) to the conclusion that teachers themselves are learning at the same time as their students. As they note, ‘the scope of the project and of the topics being taught made teachers realise that they should accept that they are no longer the only sources of knowledge’ (p. 44). This point is also emphasised by Byram and Fleming who believe that teachers are always learning and need ‘constantly to review their own understanding of the foreign and of their own language and culture’ (1998, p. 222). They add that even native speakers cannot assume that they are perfect models for students simply to imitate. They too have to continually revise what they believe about their own language and culture in relation to the culture of their students. Similarly, J. K. Phillips (2003, p. 170) and Crawford and McLaren (2003, p. 153) believe that teachers need to acknowledge that they do not know everything but can learn, along with students, to observe, analyse, and suspend judgement in order to gain insight. This notion of mutuality corresponds with the concept of ‘ako’ – to learn as well as to teach – in kaupapa Māori (Bishop & Berryman, 2006, p. 273).

In developing an exploratory approach to culture learning, teachers and curriculum developers need to understand what aspects of culture and language are appropriate for exploration by learners of different ages and at different stages of language and cognitive development. The extent to which the abstract reasoning and analysis, and the reflective processes required in exploration and comparison, can be carried out by learners, and in the target language, is an important issue to consider. The research literature provides only sketchy evidence to guide these decisions. For example, Byram’s (1989) position (as summarised by Lange in 2003) is that ‘full integration of language and culture only comes in advanced classes with the examination (description, analysis) of literature’ (p. 280). Lange (2003) clearly supports this, sceptically commenting on Kramsch’s focus on the integration of language and culture: ‘her ideas may work at the college [i.e. tertiary] level, but not the elementary and secondary schools’ (p. 282). Lange therefore suggests that younger learners will mostly use their first language and/or the language of instruction to explore cultural ideas and practices, and that they will only gradually develop the linguistic competence to discuss aspects of culture in the target language.

Culture as practice: Comparing cultures

iCLT emphasises understanding not only one's own cultural world but also how it relates to the cultural worlds of others. The Council of Europe's *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001) discusses the need for the development of general (as opposed to linguistic) competences, including 'intercultural skills and know-how', which comprise:

- the ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation with each other;
- cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures;
- the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one's own culture and the foreign culture and to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstanding and conflict situations;
- the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships. (pp. 104–5)

Thus, iCLT encourages learners to look for similarities and differences between their own and another culture, using their own culture as the starting point. As Byram (1997) states, 'awareness that one is a product of one's own socialisation is a pre-condition for understanding one's reactions to otherness' (p. 52). Similarly, Metge (1990) writing on culture and heritage in New Zealand education, argues that 'if Pakeha students are to learn about and develop respect for other cultures, they need to be helped to understand and be proud of their own cultural heritage' (p. 15, cited in Bishop & Glynn, 1999, p. 135).

Alton-Lee (2004, p. 6) reports on an unpublished teacher action research study based in a senior secondary school classical studies class that is relevant here. In this study, by McNeight (1998), a school-home link was set up which required Samoan students to engage in planned discussions with family or community members that explored links between ancient Rome and traditional Samoan culture and to report back to class on what they had learned. In effect, students were using their cultural heritage as a resource. The effects were dramatic, with reported achievement levels doubling. Alton-Lee adds the important caveat that this was a small-scale study which was not sufficiently rigorous to meet the criteria for evaluating evidence-based research for policy within a best evidence synthesis framework.

Nevertheless she also notes that the study had all the hallmarks of quality teaching derived from a best evidence synthesis of quality teaching for diverse students (Alton-Lee, 2003). Situated teaching practice of this type also aligns well with the following characteristic of quality teaching for diverse students identified by Alton-Lee (2003, p. 3) in the best evidence synthesis:

- Effective links are created between school and other cultural contexts in which students are socialized to facilitate learning.

The action research study referred to above is a particularly attractive and inspirational model for all language classrooms including those in which students are learning a heritage or community language.

Comparing cultures is a practical focus for language teaching which allows learners to develop more sophisticated concepts of culture, by ‘conveying the understanding that one’s own as well as the foreign culture are constructs’ (Wendt, 2003, p. 97). This is what Wendt refers to as ‘construction awareness’. Gradually, learners ‘decentre’ from their own culture, viewing it from the perspective of members of other cultures. Similarly, as Byram (1997) argues, an intercultural approach leads to ‘the relativization of what seems to the learner to be the natural language of their own identities, and the realization that these are cultural and socially constructed’ (Byram, 1997, p. 22). As Pufahl, Rhodes & Christian (2001, p. 2) note:

successful approaches consider students' first languages as a foundation upon which to build second language proficiency. In Luxembourg, several projects demonstrate that acknowledging the sociocultural context and the already developed competences of children in their first language will boost learning of subsequent languages.

Instruction focused on cultural awareness makes use of probing, exploring, reflecting and comparing, with the ultimate goal of raising sensitivity to cultural differences and producing learners more able to navigate intercultural encounters. In this regard, Kramsch (1993) emphasizes the need to focus on differences rather than on common ground between cultures, arguing that ‘[w]hat we should seek in cross-cultural education are less bridges than a deep understanding of the boundaries’ (p.288). For example, a prayer is often used to open meetings in Māori and Pasifika cultural contexts in New Zealand, but not in Pakeha contexts. Encouraging learning to explore the origins and reasons for such differences offers opportunities to deepen cultural understanding as Kramsch suggests. By making connections, it is intended that language learners become what Byram (2006a, p. 4) calls ‘intercultural speakers’, the best of whom:

have an understanding of the relationship between, on the one hand, their own language and language varieties and their own culture and cultures of different social groups in their society, and, on the other hand, the language (varieties) and culture(s) of others.

Of course, for learners to make connections between cultures, they need opportunities for experiential learning and for interactions on which to base these connections. Communication via electronic means is one of the most accessible ways that learners separated geographically from target language speech communities can do this. This topic is not only attracting a lot of interest from teachers, but is also being reported extensively in the research literature; for this reason, we address it in a separate section in the next chapter, which looks at the effect of language learning on attitude change and the development of intercultural competence.

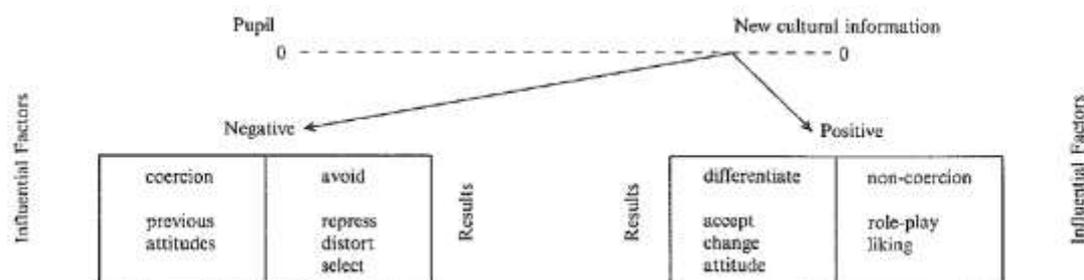
6. The effect of language learning on attitude change and the development of intercultural competence

In the previous chapter we discussed the ways in which culture has been represented in language teaching, focusing on the view of *culture as practice* which is central to iCLT. We now consider the effect of language learning on attitudes toward a target culture. The development of positive attitudes towards other cultures is an important outcome of iCLT, and is a major component of intercultural competence (see Chapter 4). We begin by examining theoretical perspectives on language learning and attitudes.

Theoretical perspectives

In a landmark review of research into attitude change and ‘foreign’ language culture learning, Morgan (1993) explored the issue of how we reconcile dissonance in a cultural encounter, or in learning new cultural knowledge, and how this shapes attitude reinforcement or change. Drawing extensively on psychological studies into factors that influence attitude change and motivation, she distinguishes between negative responses (avoidance, repression, distortion and selective processing) and positive responses (cognitive differentiation, acceptance, openness to attitude change). This is shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Factors influencing the effect of new cultural information on attitude shift



Source: Morgan, 1993, p. 69.

Drawing on Heider’s theory of balance (Heider, 1958),²⁹ Morgan suggests that positive responses (listed on the right hand side of the diagram) will be more likely when an

²⁹ This theory of balance is based on the premise that ‘we expect preferred associates to share our own preferred ideas and behaviour patterns, thus creating a sense of “balance”. Where unacceptable ideas are professed by those we like, a variety of strategies can be used to correct the sensation of ‘imbalance’

affective bond is established between learners and their teacher, or between learners from different cultures (a particularly relevant aim for the increasingly multicultural classrooms in New Zealand).

Teachers need to understand that the pre-formed ideas that learners bring to cultural encounters are likely to influence the sense they make of the encounters (in or outside the classroom) and the attitudes that emerge from the encounters. Thus learners need help to overcome any resistance to, or prejudice against, different cultural ideas and practices. Morgan (1993) suggests that teachers can anticipate the problems by encouraging learners to consciously reflect on attitudes, to examine them critically, and, with the teachers' guidance, to come to an understanding of the relativity of their cultural preconceptions.

Ideas about how to help learners cope with communicating with people from different cultures have been developed by Byram. He sees a number of advantages in 'providing learners with the means to analyze and thereby understand and relate to, whatever social world their interlocutors might inhabit' (1997, p. 20). These include: undermining representations of society that reflect only dominant elite culture; preparing learners for encounters beyond those presented in class; developing a critical awareness of culture and identity, including the construction of one's own sociocultural identity; and 'allowing learners to see their role not as imitators of native speakers but as social actors engaging with other social actors in a particular kind of communication and interaction which is different from that between native speakers' (pp.20–21). This is clearly related to the notions of 'interculture' and the 'third place', discussed earlier.

Role plays are one form of interaction that has been shown to positively affect cross-cultural attitudes. Morgan (1993) discusses research which shows that playing out a role 'encouraged people to shift their attitudes to accommodate the new stance' and concludes that 'active participation helps to focus attention and the dissonance experienced internally may be accommodated by change in attitude' (p. 68). Furthermore, when learners are encouraged to reverse roles, that is to adopt positions contrary to their own, they are forced to deal with cognitive dissonance. It is likely that these effects will be enhanced when learners are encouraged to work through the sequence of output–noticing–reflection proposed by Liddicoat et al. (2003) and shown in Figure 7. Drawing on research in social psychology, Morgan describes how research that introduced participants to radical, controversial material and material involving different perspectives or points of view deepened engagement and produced longer-lasting learning effects (p. 73). For the language teacher, she suggests that these findings imply the need to involve learners with 'more radical, controversial and difficult material' (ibid.) in order to encourage deeper engagement with learning.

(Morgan, 1993, p. 68).

Research evidence for the effect of language learning

As we have seen, intercultural approaches to language learning and teaching are founded on the belief that languages education can have a positive influence on students' attitudes towards other cultures, and more broadly on their intercultural competence. In intercultural training in business and workplace settings, such influences are well substantiated by empirical research (e.g. Blake, Heslin, & Curtis, 1996; Cushner & Brislin, 1996; Korhonen, 2004; Neto, 2006; Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2007). The evidence is less compelling for language learning. Ingram (2004) and Liddicoat et al. (2003) both note that the evidential support for a causal relationship between language learning and attitude change is relatively sparse (see also Sinicrope et al., 2007; and Schultz, 2007 for similar conclusions). However, a growing body of research on the effect of computer-mediated communication in an instructional setting on attitudinal change, and a recent large scale study by Sercu (2005) add to the evidential base (both are discussed below). In the remainder of this chapter we look at three influences on the development of intercultural competence that have received attention in the research literature: direct intercultural instruction, contact with the target language speech community, and, a specific form of contact – intercultural computer-mediated communication.

The effect of direct intercultural instruction

One of the most important issues for curriculum planners and teachers is the extent to which interculturality needs to be addressed explicitly and openly in the classroom. Typically, it is largely left to take care of itself, to be imbibed indirectly through exposure and experience alone, when and if the learner visits or engages with the second language community. Evidence suggests however, that, without guidance, language learning and cross-cultural interactions can have an inconclusive, or worse, a negative effect on cross-cultural attitudes (Ingram & O'Neill, 2002, 2001; see also Kramsch & Thorne, 2001; O'Dowd, 2003; Ware, 2005). Notably, a study by Mantle-Bromley (1995, cited in Ingram & O'Neill, 2001, p. 15) concluded that:

students' attitudes do not (as we might hope) become more positive merely by being in a language class. Mounting evidence suggests, in fact, that without teacher intervention, students become not more, but less positive about other languages and cultures after initial exposure to language study.

Results from two studies reported in Ingram (2004) support this point. These studies surveyed the effect of language learning on cross-cultural attitudes in Year 10 classrooms in Australian schools and in similar classrooms in Japan. Neither study provided evidence that students learning a language showed more positive cross-cultural attitudes than those who were not. Interestingly, Ingram notes that the likely reason for this lack of effect is the nature of the programmes and the kinds of activities used by the teachers in the language classes which were not conducive to developing positive cross-cultural attitudes (p. 8). In other words without an interculturally informed pedagogy, language learning does not in itself guarantee positive intercultural outcomes. Ingram

and O'Neill (2002, p. 21) sum up the need for explicit attention to culture in the following way:

If language teaching is to play an effective role in generating more positive cross-cultural attitudes conducive to life in multicultural societies and to global citizenship, it must be **structured specifically to do so, incorporating in the normal methods applied in language classrooms those activities that, on the best evidence available, are most conducive to effecting positive change**. Such activities are not in fact, contrary to those needed to maximise proficiency development, language teachers' traditional principal goal, but are identical to the best of them. (**emphasis added**)

The use of role play as described by Morgan (1993) (see the earlier discussion in this chapter), is an example of a kind of activity that meets these requirements, providing plentiful opportunities for meaningful communication, and being supported by evidence from research. Interactive activities, particularly those which include offering and exploring opinions may also support the development of language proficiency as well as intercultural competence.

The effect of contact with a target language speech community

Sercu (2005) describes one of the most substantial empirical studies into intercultural language teaching available to date. Questionnaire data on teachers' perceptions and reported practices were collected from 424 secondary school teachers across seven countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Poland, Mexico, Greece, Spain, and Sweden). The teachers filled out electronic (web-based) questionnaires on professional self-concepts, current practices, and the extent to which they were willing to interculturalise their teaching practices. In one part of this multifaceted study, Sercu studied the relationship between teachers' perceptions of secondary school students' familiarity with a target language culture, contact with the culture, and *attitudes* toward the culture (García & L Sercu, 2005). The results are complex because of the seven countries involved, and the different languages being learnt. However, the authors use the contrasting data from Bulgaria and Spain to tease out an important trend in the data. The Bulgarian teachers reported their students to be more motivated, more positively disposed, more knowledgeable, and to have more contact with the foreign culture than all the other countries (apart from Sweden). The Spanish teachers, in contrast, reported their students to be the least motivated, least positively disposed, least knowledgeable about the foreign culture, and to have the least cultural contact. In summary, there appears to be a correlation between these three factors: knowledge, contact and attitudes. However, a correlation is not causal, and the reported results do not indicate the strength of correlations among the three factors. Clearly, also, the use of self-report data requires the data to be treated with caution. Finally, because the study focuses primarily on teachers' attitudes and experience, it does not provide the kind of rigorous evidence of factors that influence learner outcomes that is sought within a best evidence approach to educational improvement (Alton-Lee, 2004).

Studies carried out in the bilingual setting of Quebec by Richard Clément and colleagues, provide much clearer empirical support for the positive effect of contact with the target

language community on the attitudinal dimensions of interculturality (e.g. Clément, 1980; Noels & Clément, 1996). More recently, Rubinfeld, Clément, Lussier, Lebrun, and Auger (2006) carried out an empirical study on the effect of direct, personal contact experienced by Francophone and Anglophone language learners in Canada with the target language community on cultural representations of, and corresponding attitudes towards, the other community. The study found that for both groups, contact and the opportunity to communicate with other language communities led learners to identify with the target language communities, which in turn encouraged individuals to construct more positive representations of the target language community (*ibid.*, p. 627).

Contact is not always a guarantee of development of positive attitudes in foreign language settings. As Morgan (1993) points out, pre-existing attitudes act as a filter for new cultural information obtained through exposure to the target culture, so that learners can often filter out information that does not conform to existing preconceptions. Bochner (1982, cited in Morgan, 1993), for example, showed that learners not infrequently returned from exchanges or cultural encounters with their prejudices intact. Thus, there is reason for caution in assuming that cross-cultural encounters outside the classroom, even time spent in direct contact with native speakers on their own territory, will inevitably lead to greater understanding and empathy with a different culture.

The effect of computer-mediated communication

Computer-mediated communication opens up a wealth of opportunities for intercultural interaction and learning, and educators world-wide are turning to it with increasing frequency. As Ware (2005) notes, in language learning contexts, computer-mediated communication offers two obvious opportunities to focus on intercultural skills. First, through on-line exchanges, students can explore the social histories, beliefs and values of peers in a distant target language community, and second, they experience first hand the linguistic features and discourse pragmatics of the language they are studying.

A rapidly growing body of research has investigated the effect of cross-cultural computer-mediated communication on the development of intercultural competence, and on intercultural attitudes in particular (e.g. Belz, 2003; Bretag, 2006; Kramsch & Thorne, 2001; O'Dowd, 2003, 2007; Ware, 2005). One limitation of this research in relation to our report is that many of the studies were situated in tertiary learning contexts. However, the themes that emerge provide a useful starting point for educators dealing with school contexts. We will briefly discuss a number of these studies to highlight these themes.

O'Dowd (2007) studied the effects of telecollaboration between students in three German EFL [English as a foreign language] classes and partner classes in Ireland and America on the development of intercultural communicative competence by the German students. He found that the skills of analysis and comparison of cultural perspectives through intercultural telecollaboration did not come naturally to the students, nor emerge from general information gathering interactions. Instead, cultural awareness developed more consistently when explicit comparison between two cultures was a required component of the telecommunication (p. 147). O'Dowd concludes that, in order to fully

benefit from intercultural exchanges, students need guidance in developing an appropriate ethnographic perspective on culture (one involving an understanding of the meanings that members of a target culture attribute to their own behaviour) as well as explicit training in intercultural communication (p. 148). Thus modern technology does not eliminate the need for teachers to develop the desired attitudes along with skills.

Belz (2003) presents case study data from e-mail interactions between two German and one American student studying each other's language at tertiary institutions in their respective countries. Belz found that a number of communication problems emerged over the two years of e-mail communications between the students, some of which appeared to arise from different cultural patterns of communication such as categorical assertions and intensifications by the German students, and self-deprecating judgements by the American student. This data reveals how, in the absence of the paralinguistic meaning signals available in face to face talk, the potential for misunderstanding in computer-mediated talk is considerable. These results, Belz argues, suggest that teachers assisting with telecollaboration between students need to be educated to discern identify and explain target language patterns of communication and to model intercultural communicative practices. In conclusion, she claims that in computer-mediated talk, the importance (but not necessarily prominence) of the teacher increases rather than decreases (p. 29).

Kramsch and Thorne (2001) investigated interactions between intermediate level French language students in America, and French students in Paris as they carried out a web-based project involving investigation of an aspect of popular culture. The interactions between students produced a number of communication problems from which the authors concluded that:

Neither the French nor the American students were aware that the global medium only exacerbated the discrepancies in social and cultural genres of communication. Without a knowledge and understanding of these genres, no 'understanding' and no reconfiguration of one's own is possible. (p. 14)

These and other studies (e.g. Ware, 2005) show the potential for tensions and misunderstandings in student-student intercultural interactions through computer-mediated communication. But they also show its potential to enrich intercultural learning, not least through the way in which such misunderstandings are resolved and/or learnt from. Intercultural language learning via computer-mediated communication is no doubt a topic that will receive increasing attention in the future from educators and researchers alike. At least one international journal, *Language Learning and Technology*, is devoted to the role of technology in language learning, and many other technology-related journals such as *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology* and *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* publish on related topics.

Discussion: A review of the evidence on the effect of language learning on cross-cultural attitudes

In a recent review of research on language learning and its effect on cross-cultural attitudes, Ingram (2004) proposes that the following conclusions find general support in the research literature (presented here in paraphrased form):

1. Many studies have shown a favourable relationship between language learning and positive attitudes towards other cultures.
2. The relationship is not automatic and a range of factors and background variables (e.g. parental attitudes, socioeconomic class) have a significant influence on determining whether the effects are positive, negative or non-existent.
3. Interaction with native speakers (managed appropriately) is one of the most important factors.
4. ‘‘Cerebration’, giving learners the opportunity to externalise their own intuitive responses and attitudes for examination and rational modification, seems to be a vital factor if attitudes are to change in a positive direction’ (Ingram, 2004, p. 6).
5. Knowledge of another culture is not enough to bring about positive attitudinal change; interventions involving, for example, reflection on attitudinal predispositions are an essential component.
6. Learners need to develop an awareness of both the diversity that exists within cultures, and the universal features that underlie diverse cultures.
7. ‘Culture shock’ is a valuable part of the learning experience because it forces learners to confront their preconceptions and prejudices, and thus subject these prejudices to careful scrutiny.

Although there is a reasonably robust evidential base for conclusions 2, 3, 4 and 5, and a strong theoretical argument for 6, both conclusions 1 and 7 require scrutiny. Ingram cites only three published empirical studies in support of the first conclusion, the most recent of which is dated 1975. Indeed his own research as reported in the same article (and discussed above) does not support this claim. We would argue that the evidence supports a revised version of conclusion 1 which incorporates as an inseparable part, the qualifying statement in conclusion 2:

Although many studies have shown a favourable relationship between language learning and positive attitudes towards other cultures, the relationship is not automatic. A range of factors and background variables (e.g. parental attitudes, socioeconomic class) have a significant influence on determining whether the effects are positive, negative or non-existent.

In other words, the important research question is not whether language learning per se leads to positive intercultural outcomes, but what kinds of language learning programmes and experiences lead to what kinds of intercultural outcomes. In this regard, conclusions 2 to 5 are of much greater importance and provide useful evidence-based directions for pedagogy.

Conclusion 3 is supported by research into the effect of study abroad on intercultural competence. Sinicrope et al. (2007) review a number of research studies on this topic. Although the results are somewhat mixed, overall, the studies show study abroad to produce positive effects on a range of dimensions of intercultural competence. Where results were less conclusive, the authors note weaknesses in the instruments used to measure intercultural competence.

Conclusions 4, 5 and 6 echo the earlier discussion in this report on the importance of opportunities for observing, noticing, and reflection. A recent study by Elola & Oskoz (2008) on the use of blogs in a North American university Spanish language class lends support to these conclusions. In the study, students studying at home (i.e. on site at the university) used blogs to communicate with peers on a study-abroad programme in Spain. The blog-related tasks that they performed are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Phases of each blog-related task

Phases	Activities
Phase I	At home students, together with the instructor, discussed a specific topic.
Phase II	At home students, researched (books, journals, Web sites, etc.) about a topic.
Phase III	At home students, contacted their study abroad counterparts presenting their findings, reflections and questions about the specific topic. Study abroad students thought about the questions, observed and reflected on the cultural topic and sometimes would ask the questions of their families, friends, and teachers.
Phase IV	At home students, and study abroad, students engaged in a dialogue.
Phase V	At home students presented and discussed findings with the entire class.

Source: Elola & Oskoz, 2008, p. 462.

These blogs allowed for both set of learners to engage in the kinds of reflections on experience that Ingram refers to as ‘cerebration’. The results show both sets of students displaying active engagement in intercultural exploration in their blogs. Similarly, for both groups the blog interactions led to development of aspects of intercultural competence, although, not surprisingly, the positive outcomes were more pronounced for the study-abroad group.

Ingram’s final conclusion (7) is problematic. It suggests that culture shock is a viable educational tool but fails to address its potentially damaging effects, not least being the negative cultural attitudes it can foster. The conclusion appears to blur the distinction between the practice of psychological therapy and a supportive and facilitative learning environment in a school setting. It also appears to imply a ‘no pain no gain’ maxim to intercultural learning which we do not support.

There is clearly need for a more robust body of research to substantiate these claims. As Sinicrope et al. (2007) note, ‘there are few comprehensive treatments of the assessment of ICC [intercultural communicative competence] outcomes in tertiary foreign language

programmes' (p. 32), and our review suggests that this is no less true for primary and secondary programmes. Research is needed that explores the effects of language learning across a range of dimensions of intercultural competence in addition to attitudes. Fantini (2006) is an example of a study that extends its focus to cover the four dimensions proposed by Byram (1997); skills, attitudes, knowledge and awareness. Secondly, research need to extend its focus across a range of teaching and learning settings and contexts. For instance, as we noted above, the Rubinfeld et al. (2006, p. 610) study was carried out in an immersion education setting in the sociohistorical context of Anglophone-Francophone relations in Quebec. Its generalizability to other non-immersion settings, in which languages exist in different sociohistorical spaces in relation to one another, must be treated with some caution. Similarly, caution is needed in generalizing from research carried out in particular educational sectors (i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary) and in different geographical contexts.

7. Summary and conclusions

In this review, we examined themes that inform intercultural language teaching and learning. We began by reviewing the particular context of Aotearoa New Zealand in relation to intercultural language learning, and the status of intercultural language teaching and learning as expressed in education policy worldwide. It is evident that many Western countries at least, have developed policy based on the conviction that the development of intercultural competencies is an essential feature of school education, and that the responsibility for this falls to some extent on languages education.

We discussed the complex construct of culture itself, as well as the equally complex relationship between culture and language. We examined the notion of intercultural competence with particular focus on Michael Byram's (1997) influential theorizing in this area. We also discussed developmental models which attempt to explain the acquisition of intercultural competence. On the basis of this theoretical background, we examined the way in which culture has been addressed in interculturally-informed language pedagogy. We concluded by reviewing the research evidence for positive intercultural outcomes related to language teaching.

We saw that intercultural language learning and teaching differs from approaches to language teaching that focus on language with little reference to culture, as well as approaches in which teaching about culture is secondary to teaching language or is treated as a largely autonomous strand alongside language. As we noted in the introduction, there is also a problem with the word 'approach' being used in relation to intercultural teaching since this implies a technique or method. Such an interpretation misses the essence of intercultural teaching which is derived from a stance on the integrated nature of language and culture, and involves a commitment to language learning as a site for developing an understanding of culture-in-language and of one's own cultural identity, as it accommodates growing awareness of cultural otherness. We saw that intercultural teaching is most emphatically not about transmitting information about culture. Instead, it focuses on raising awareness of culture and culture-in-language in the lived experience of the students and people from the target language culture(s) as well as other cultures present in a classroom or community. The desired outcome of this approach is interculturally competent learners who can confidently navigate intercultural interactions and relationships.

The literature on intercultural language learning and teaching is not strongly evidential although a small but growing body of research evidence is emerging in the field – see, for example, Sercu (2005) and Sinicropo et al. (2007). The evidence, such as it is, offers qualified support for positive outcomes from interculturally informed pedagogy, especially outcomes concerning attitudes towards other cultures, and, to a lesser extent, intercultural skill development. We believe that a number of generalizations can be

tentatively proposed based on the currently available research and literature. Part 2 presents these generalizations in the form of six principles for intercultural communicative language teaching. These principles constitute a starting point for developing a more robustly evidence-based intercultural pedagogy.

Part 2

An Evidence-Based Framework of Principles for Effective Intercultural Teaching and Learning

Jonathan Newton and Sandra Shearn

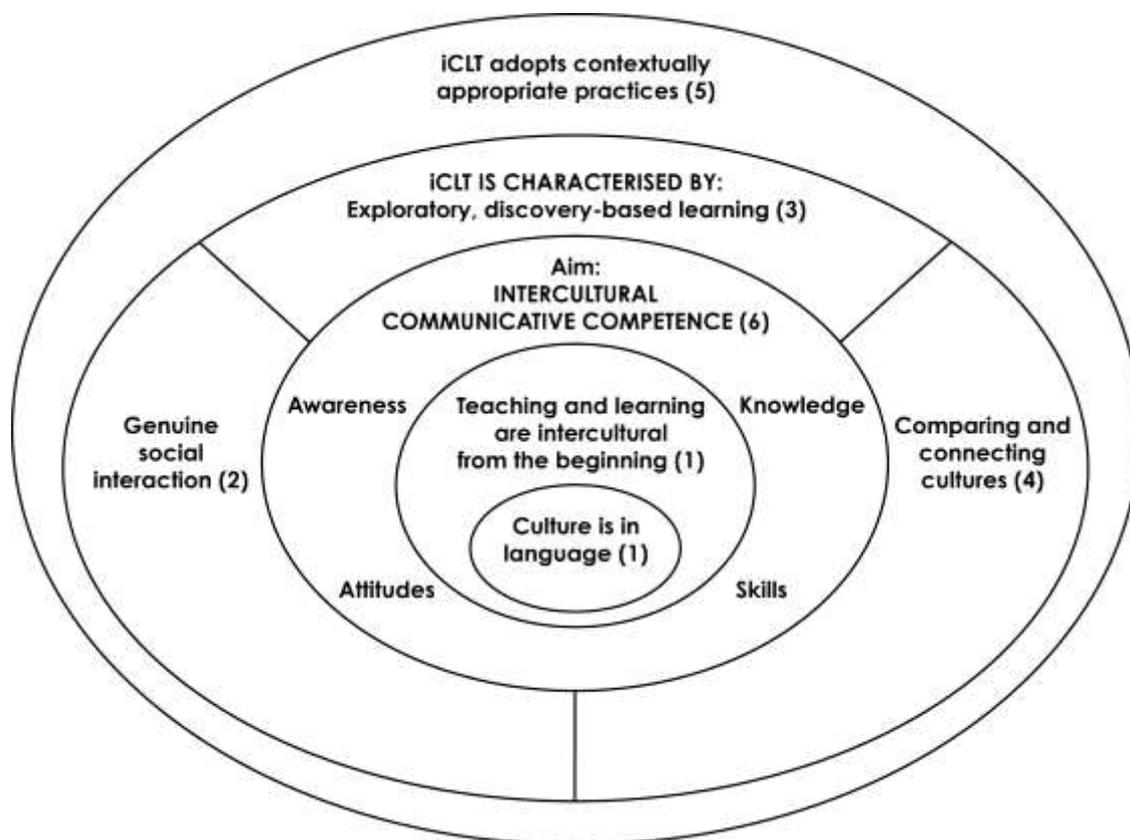
8. A framework of principles for intercultural communicative language teaching and learning

As we noted in our concluding comments in the review of the literature on intercultural language learning and teaching, the research literature in this field lacks a strong evidential base. However, this base is growing rapidly and we can expect a much more substantive body of evidence to emerge over the next decade as interculturally informed programmes are bedded in and their effects on learning researched and reported. We noted that the evidence, limited as it is, indicates that positive intercultural outcomes can be expected from interculturally informed pedagogy that meets certain standards (see chapter 6). We believe that a number of generalizations can be drawn from the currently available research and literature. These generalizations are presented in this Part in the form of six principles for intercultural communicative language teaching (iCLT) (see Table 3). In the discussion that follows we present a rationale for each principle based on the research and theorizing presented in our literature review. The principles are presented visually in Figure 9 in a way that highlights the relationships between them.

Table 3. The six principles for intercultural communicative language teaching

Intercultural communicative language teaching and learning (iCLT):
1. integrates language and culture from the beginning
2. engages learners in genuine social interaction
3. encourages and develops an exploratory and reflective approach to culture and culture-in-language
4. fosters explicit comparisons and connections between languages and cultures
5. acknowledges and responds appropriately to diverse learners and learning contexts
6. emphasises intercultural communicative competence rather than native-speaker competence.

Figure 9: Principles for effective intercultural communicative language teaching and learning (iCLT)



Principle 1: iCLT integrates language and culture from the beginning

Intercultural communicative language teaching (iCLT) emphasizes the connectedness of culture and language, and prioritizes the goal of developing interculturally competent³⁰ communicators. The language–culture nexus is seen in the intricate ways that language and culture co-construct each other (Kramsch, 2004). A simple example of co-construction can be seen in the terms ‘mate’ or ‘bro’ in New Zealand English. On the one hand, these terms *reflect* cultural values of camaraderie and egalitarianism located in New Zealand’s sociocultural history. On the other hand, to the extent that the terms remain in common parlance, they *reconstruct* and *maintain* the cultural values with which they are associated. As Kramsch (1993) expresses it, ‘Every time we speak we perform a cultural act’. The term ‘culture-in-language’ (Carr, 2007) captures this idea and we will use it throughout this section. Culture, from this viewpoint, is dynamic, and in dynamic interplay with language. The implications of this point for language learning are well summed up by Liddicoat (2004, p. 17):

Every message a human being communicates through language is communicated in a cultural context. Cultures shape the ways language is structured and the ways in which

³⁰ Intercultural competence is discussed extensively in the literature review and is briefly elaborated in the discussion of Principle 2 below.

language is used. A language learner who has learnt only the grammar and vocabulary of a language is, therefore, not well equipped to communicate in that language.

Intercultural language learning seeks to address this gap by highlighting the permeation of culture through our everyday lives and interactions. It does this by integrating learning about culture and language, rather than treating them as separate strands. Thus, culture becomes a salient dimension of the teaching of all language macroskills (reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and presenting), rather than forming a separate macroskill (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000). The way teachers can apply this principle to teaching practice is seen in principles 3 to 5: teachers encourage learners to be experientially involved with other languages and cultures through *communication* and *interaction* (principle 2); to *explore* culture-in-language (principle 3); and to discover connections with other cultural worlds through *comparison* (principle 4). The integration of culture and language is more easily achieved in classrooms informed by communicative language teaching and task-based language teaching (Ellis, 2003, 2005) since these approaches require active participation and experiential learning. In fact, the adoption of intercultural language teaching promotes a fuller realization of communication by focusing learners' attention on the effects of the implicit messages conveyed in their choice of linguistic forms and communication strategies.

The first principle concludes with the phrase 'from the beginning'. This emphasises the point made in the extant literature that teachers should be guiding learners' conceptualisations of culture from the beginning of the language learning process. As Liddicoat et al. (2003) have pointed out, delaying attention to interculturality simply opens up space for uninformed cultural learning. In Dellit's (2005, p. 7) words:

[I]gnoring culture does not leave a vacant cultural space which can be filled in later. Rather, it leads to a cultural space which is filled in by uninformed and unanalysed assumptions.

Separating language and culture, therefore, can lead to stereotyping and prejudice. Attention to culture and interculturality in the beginning stages of language learning is easily achievable, because of the rich cultural content found in ostensibly simple language, such as forms of greeting and attendant behaviour. Similarly, aspects of culture such as the coding of family relationships, the naming of rooms in a house and expressions of politeness and respect are all appropriate topics for the beginning stages of learning, while also being equally rich topics for intercultural exploration (Carr, 2007).

Principle 2: iCLT engages learners in genuine social interaction

We have presented a view of culture as dynamic and constructed in people's lives, practices, and interactions. We have also seen how language is fundamentally social – 'a social practice, a social accomplishment, a social tool' (D. Atkinson, 2002, p. 526). In as much as our social lives are culturally shaped, so also is language. As discussed in regard to principle 1, we use the term 'culture-in-language' (Carr, 2007) to capture this relationship. For language teaching to adequately respond to these views of language

and culture, it must provide learning opportunities that are themselves dynamic, experiential and interactive. Language learning is a social process (Vygotsky, 1978) that flourishes when learners not only observe cultural representations and behaviour, linguistic or visual, but also experience them first hand (see chapter 5 and Figure 7). Such opportunities, layered with guided analysis and reflection, are the necessary basis for exploring and comparing cultures (principles 3 and 4) as exemplified in the two intercultural activities – Byram’s autobiography of key intercultural experiences (2006b) discussed earlier and Finkbeiner and Schmidt’s ABCs model of cultural understanding and communication, discussed in principle 4 (Finkbeiner, 2006; R. Schmidt, 1998). This approach implies a necessary departure from traditional, linguistically focused language teaching, although its emphasis on interaction both complements and embraces the communicative approach which informs language teaching in New Zealand schools. More fundamentally, it mirrors one of the five key competencies identified in the *New Zealand Curriculum* (2007), that of ‘relating to others’: ‘relating to others is about interacting effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts.’ (p. 12)

Intercultural language teaching approaches interaction in two ways. First it treats any interaction involving the target language and/or culture as an opportunity to explore linguistic and cultural boundaries, and to engender awareness of one’s own as well as the other’s ways of communicating and maintaining relationships, and of dealing with cross-cultural misunderstandings and communication breakdowns. Secondly, as seen in the ABCs model, interactions are used to directly explore the cultural worlds, beliefs, values and attitudes of others through topics which provide opportunities for explicit discussion of cultural comparisons. Thus, learners experience culture first through the way communication proceeds, and secondly through the content of what is discussed or written about. From an intercultural perspective, interaction is not simply a tool for developing fluency; it provides opportunities for learners to confront their culturally constructed worlds and cultural assumptions, and so to learn more about themselves. The *New Zealand Curriculum* (2007) makes a similar point, noting that ‘though their learning experiences, students will learn about [among other things] their own values and those of others’ (p. 10).

The richest interactions are likely to be with native speakers of the target language, because the process by which interculturality is acquired is greatly enhanced by opportunities for contact and interaction with such speakers. The success of such interactions depends to a large extent on the culturally appropriate behaviour, verbal and non-verbal, expected by a target language speaker. A focus on effective communication must therefore take into account the way target language speakers live, speak, write and portray themselves, with particular attention to the strategies and features of language and discourse that convey politeness and appropriateness (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Byram, 1997). Research has shown that contact with a target language community can have positive effects on student attitudes (e.g. Clément, 1980; Noels & Clément, 1996; Rubinfeld et al., 2006), and interaction with target language speakers is desirable (Dellit, 2005, p. 24). Research by Ingram and O’Neill (2001, 2002) in Australian schools also found that students showed a strong preference for interactional modes of learning and

for more interaction with native speakers, both face-to-face and over the internet. However, interaction and exploratory talk with teachers and others, particularly talk that involves tasks (Ellis, 2003) and role plays (Morgan, 1993), also provides important opportunities for learners to notice and explore culture-in-language and to develop flexibility and communicative awareness, two elements of intercultural competence identified by Byram (2006b).

To this point we have used the term ‘interaction’ in its most obvious sense, meaning ‘social interaction’, both oral and written (including modes that merge this distinction such as SMS language or txtspk). However, it is possible to extend the notion of interaction to encompass the way the learner engages with a text, or visual/performative form of cultural expression. Interaction here refers to the way the reader/observer/listener actively constructs knowledge through their interpretation and interrogation of cultural input (Crichton, Paige, Papadematre, & A. Scarino, 2004). Intercultural language teaching encourages learners to explore the values, beliefs and thought processes as well as the sociocultural and historical contexts reflected in cultural input (Finkbeiner & Koplín, 2002). Thus, one of four cognitive capacities that define intercultural competence according to Byram (2006b) is ‘interpreting and relating’, defined as ‘an ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one’s own’ (p. 25).

Principle 3: iCLT encourages and develops an exploratory and reflective approach to culture and culture-in-language

We have seen that culture encompasses much more than the traditional arts, conventional practices, institutions and objectively describable, visible manifestations of people’s lives. Using the metaphor of an iceberg (Weaver, 1993), these dimensions of culture make up the small, visible segment of the iceberg above the surface. Beneath the surface lies a much larger, less visible part of culture made up of values, beliefs, and thought patterns. Much of the work of Russell Bishop and his colleagues in the Te Kōtahitanga project involves teachers coming to understand the invisible culture of Māori children in mainstream classrooms – what they refer to as ‘Māori sense-making processes (ways of knowing)’ (Bishop & Glynn, 1999, p. 131) – and shaping pedagogy to embrace these culturally specific processes (Bishop & Berryman, 2006). Kramsch (1993) gives the very tangible example from an international context of the practice of keeping an office door closed in Germany, but open in America. As she explains, underlying this visible display of culture lie less visible values of friendliness (open door) and order and respect (closed door). But without an intercultural perspective in play, to an American visitor, the closed door to a German office might well be interpreted as a sign of unfriendliness, while a German visitor to America could interpret the open door as a sign of disorder and lack of respect (p. 209). In these cases, what is needed is intercultural understanding of how our cultural identity provides a lens through which we view and interpret other cultures.

The iceberg metaphor can be applied equally to culture-in-language. Culture is manifest in language in obvious ways, such as in overt politeness forms (e.g. Japanese forms of

address) and in culturally distinct genres such as *karakia*, an ‘ava ceremony, or a wedding speech. But it is also deeply embedded in language in less obvious ways such as the requirements for polite and formal language, the patterns and extent of conversational feedback, the degree of tolerance for overlapping speech and interruptions, the degree of indirectness in speech acts such as requests and refusals, and a vast number of other communicative subtleties displayed in the everyday use of language.

Culture defies easy description and involves much more than ‘facts’. Teaching that focuses largely on learning about visible culture thus misses a large portion of cultural experience. As Ingram and O’Neill (2001) point out: ‘[K]nowledge alone leaves learners ensconced in their own culture looking out at the other culture and observing its differences (often judgementally) – rather like walking through a museum’ (p. 14). iCLT responds to this issue by shifting focus from *transmission* of objective cultural knowledge to *exploration* by learners of both visible and invisible culture, and, most importantly, to exploration of ‘culture-in-language’. Exploring culture involves learners in constructing knowledge from experience and reflection. Factual information has its place, but this information is interrogated by learners so as to reveal insights and understanding about the lived culture experience of others. Active construction of meaning, and critical enquiry are both essential components of this approach (Carr, 2007).

Exploratory learning is used widely across educational contexts (e.g. Adshead, 1993; Snell, 2005), and is encapsulated in the vision expressed in the *New Zealand Curriculum* (2007) for a curriculum that will produce young people who are ‘critical and creative thinkers’, and ‘active seekers, users and creators of knowledge’ (p. 8). Exploratory learning involves a process of discovery that allows learners to develop their individual conceptualizations of culture and to decentre from their taken-for-granted cultural world. The starting point is usually learners’ exploration of their own culture and cultural identity, and through this lens of self-awareness, examination of their attitudes towards the target language and culture, looking at what they already know or believe, before gaining new insights (Byram, 2006a; Byram et al., 1991; Finkbeiner, 2006; Kramersch, 2006).

As learners begin to understand the concept of culture and cultural differences, they should begin to understand that culture learning is not simply a matter of accruing information and facts. Instead, it involves observing and analyzing what Byram (1997, p. 19) calls ‘social processes and their outcomes’. In other words, they develop ‘critical understanding of their own and other societies’ (ibid.), an awareness of what constitutes culture, and how it affects everybody’s behaviour and use of language. In this way, learners can challenge and replace cultural stereotypes which ‘exoticise and essentialize’ members of another culture with more empathetic and self-aware perceptions and attitudes (Kramersch, 2006, p. 107). This exploratory approach to iCLT is supported and exemplified in particular by Byram and Cain (1998), and Liddicoat et al. (2003). Byram’s autobiography of key intercultural experiences (2006b) is a teaching and learning tool that shows how learners can be guided to explore and reflect on an

interaction with someone from another culture or country. Through these processes they can cultivate aspects of intercultural competence, such as empathy and communicative awareness.

An additional aspect of this principle is that it involves the teacher as well as the learners in the process of exploration. Research by Byram and Cain (1998) led them to the conclusion that teachers themselves are learning, as they allow students to explore and discover new facts and ideas and make comparisons with what they already know. The idea that teachers themselves have to remain open to new ideas and admit that they are not the founts of all knowledge is also stressed by Byram and Fleming (1998) and J. K. Phillips (2003). This is congruent with the concept of ‘ako’ (to learn as well as to teach) in kaupapa Māori (Bishop et al., 2002).

It is important to note that this principle does not preclude traditional approaches to culture, which involve information about a country, its institutions, society and history. Indeed, Byram (1997) argues that ideally, the teacher would combine the two approaches, provided that learners are encouraged to see cultural information as subjective and dynamic (*ibid.*). It is also recognised that the age of learners will govern the extent to which critical self-reflection and ‘decentring’ from one’s taken-for-granted cultural world are feasible (Byram, 2006b; Lange, 2003). Similarly, the level of linguistic skills development will govern the amount of exploration which can occur in the target language. An exploratory approach to culture opens up many opportunities for learners to make connections between their cultures. This is discussed in relation to the next principle.

Principle 4: iCLT fosters explicit comparisons and connections between languages and cultures

Comparing languages and cultures is a fundamental process in intercultural language learning, and is widely discussed in the literature. Both Michael Byram and Claire Kramsch, two leading international scholars in intercultural language learning who are referred to frequently in this report, have written extensively on the insights into self and others that can be achieved through guided comparisons between cultures (Byram, 2003, 2006a; Kramsch, 1993, 2006). In increasingly multicultural classrooms, these comparisons and connections can be multi-faceted, as learners explore and share each other’s cultures, while cooperatively exploring a new culture and learning a new language. The development of cultural awareness through exploration aims to gradually promote an ‘inner sense of the equality of cultures, an increased understanding of [one’s] own and other people’s cultures, and a positive interest in how cultures both connect and differ’ (Tomlinson, 2001). In a practical guide to integrating culture in language instruction, Tomlinson and Matsuhara (2004, p. 4) suggest that teachers begin and end each activity ‘in the minds of the learners’, through such activities as encouraging them to think about an experience in their own culture, before providing them with a similar one in another culture, or ‘getting [learners] to “translate” a new experience in another

culture into an equivalent experience in their own culture' (ibid.). Maintaining this kind of awareness of culture is a primary goal of intercultural language learning.

If comparison is to be effective as learning for iCLT, it needs to be a reflective, interpretive comparison which draws on the learners' current knowledge as well as the new knowledge they are encountering. This is captured in the ABC model of cultural understanding and communication (Finkbeiner, 2006; R. Schmidt, 1998). This learning tool involves three steps:

The three steps of the ABCs

A as in *Autobiography*

Each learner writes or narrates relevant aspects and/or key events from his or her autobiography.

B as in *Biography*

Learners cooperate with a partner from a different cultural background. Each of them conducts an in-depth, audio or videotaped interview with a partner from a culture different from his or her own. The interviewer will then construct a biography describing the key events in that person's life.

C as in *Cross-Cultural Analysis and Appreciation of Differences*

Learners study their autobiographies and compare them to the biographies they have written. They write down a list of the similarities and differences. (Finkbeiner, 2006)

The third step touches on Kramsch's statement of the well known truth that 'it is through the eyes of others that we get to know ourselves and others' (1993, p. 222). It is important to emphasise that comparison of a target culture with one's own culture is *not* an end in itself. Instead, it is a process which is designed to facilitate movement by the learner into what is referred to in the intercultural literature as 'a third place' (Kramsch, 1993). This third place is an intercultural position between cultures, a position from which the learner can negotiate differences and interact comfortably across cultures by drawing on 'a reflective capacity to deal with cultural differences and to modify behaviour when needed' (Dellit, 2005, p. 17).

Comparing cultures is a practical focus for language teaching which aims to allow learners to develop more sophisticated concepts of culture, and helps to undermine notions of the immutability of cultural values and cross-cultural prejudices. Instruction focused on raising cultural awareness and making connections has the ultimate goal of producing what Byram (2006a, p. 4) calls 'intercultural speakers' – that is, people who have 'the ability to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries' (Byram, 1997, p. 7) (see chapter 5).

Finally, a brief comment on the word 'explicit' as it occurs in this principle. Evidence from the literature makes it clear that intercultural issues need to be addressed explicitly and openly rather than being left to take care of themselves, on the assumption that they will be imbibed indirectly through exposure and experience alone. Indeed, some research evidence suggests that, without guidance, language teaching can have an inconclusive, or worse, a negative effect on cross-cultural attitudes (Ingram & O'Neill, 2001, 2002;

Mantle-Bromley, 1995; see also Kramsch & Thorne, 2001; O'Dowd, 2003; Ware, 2005 on cultural misunderstandings in computer-mediated cross-cultural encounters between language students).

Principle 5: iCLT acknowledges and responds appropriately to diverse learners and learning contexts

Teaching a language interculturally entails recognising and embracing diversity in the classroom, especially as it relates to learners' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, a crucial consideration for New Zealand teachers facing ever more culturally diverse classes (e.g. Alton-Lee, 2003, 2005; Bishop & Berryman, 2006; Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Samu-Wendt, 2004, 2006; Tuuta et al., 2004). This growing body of New Zealand research on teaching for diverse learners, and culturally responsive teaching highlights the effectiveness of instructional practices that match the culturally shaped ways of knowing that learners bring to the classroom. Thus, one of the characteristics of quality teaching for diverse students identified by Alton-Lee (2003) in a recent best evidence synthesis on education for diverse learners in schooling states that:

Effective links are created between school and other cultural contexts in which students are socialized, to facilitate learning. (p. 3)

Alton-Lee identifies a set of research-based features related to this characteristic, two of which closely align with intercultural language teaching:

Student diversity is utilized effectively as a pedagogical resource.

Quality teaching respects and affirms cultural identity (including gender identity) and optimises educational opportunities. (ibid.)

As discussed in an earlier section, these characteristics have been put into practice in the Te Kōtahitanga project, in which all teachers in the participating schools, including language teachers, are trained in kaupapa Māori based pedagogy (Bishop et al., 2003). As a result of the implementation of this culturally responsive teaching, the attitudes and values of students towards school have shifted and there has been greater engagement in learning activities and improved levels of achievement. Applying similar ideas to language classes, a teacher at James Cook High School in Auckland taught Japanese to a class of diverse students including a proportion of Māori. Instead of focussing solely on the target language, multicultural classes participated in exploring many cultures, thus developing intercultural competence alongside Japanese communicative skills (personal communication, Gail Spence, April 2007). Teachers clearly have a responsibility to manage the representation of and participation in culture(s) which are new to students, and to show an appreciation of and respect for the culture(s) that students bring with them into the classroom. Our earlier discussion of the importance of fostering comparisons and connections between languages and cultures (principle 4) provides a way of doing this.

The importance of acknowledging diversity is also implied in one of the 10 principles for successful instructed learning proposed by Ellis (2005, p. 41), namely that:

Instruction needs to take account of individual differences in learners.

However, here Ellis discusses only individual differences in two cognitive variables: aptitude and motivation. Indeed, this list of 10 principles is overwhelmingly cognitive in orientation; nowhere is the sociocultural context of language learning addressed. We see the current report as providing an important sociocultural balance to the set of principles proposed by Ellis.

Motivation warrants further discussion since the extent to which each individual is willing and able to learn a new language in the classroom is influenced by motivational dispositions developed through their family, community upbringing and schooling (Dörnyei, 2001a, pp. 30-41). As Dörnyei notes, ‘setting-specific sociocultural values [for example, the value placed in education, cultural beliefs about learning, and social support for learning from family and peers] mediate achievement cognition, cognition and behaviour’ (p. 32). In other words, diversity will be reflected in a range of motivational dispositions. Motivation has been extensively researched in educational psychology and second language acquisition. Evidence shows the importance of specific teaching strategies for creating motivating learning conditions and for maintaining and protecting motivation. Dörnyei (2001b) presents 35 of these practical strategies for motivating learners in the language classroom.³¹ Social context is foregrounded in the following three:

- develop a collaborative relationship with the student’s parents
- promote the developments of group cohesiveness
- promote ‘integrative’ values by encouraging a positive and open-minded disposition towards the L2 [second language] and its speakers, and towards foreignness in general.

The third of these strategies hints at another aspect of diversity. Just as each learner has a unique set of attributes and learning experiences, so also each of the 14 languages taught in New Zealand schools is uniquely positioned, by virtue of the relationship between the communities for whom the language is a native tongue or lingua franca, and communities within the wider New Zealand environment, as well as in schools and classrooms. Intercultural language teaching responds to these relationships in two ways.

The first way intercultural language teaching responds to relationships between cultures and languages is through seeking to connect learners to the target language culture, and thereby to facilitate learning opportunities through interaction and cultural experience. How these connections are made depends on the aspects of setting described in this principle.

³¹ Dörnyei (2001b) presents these 35 strategies in a useful summary table (pp. 135–144) which includes additional practical applications of each strategy as well as a checklist to guide teachers in their application of these strategies to their classrooms.

For New Zealand's two legislated official languages, te reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language³², the connections and opportunities are shaped not only by proximity to speech communities for these languages, but also by the political momentum that their status as official languages of New Zealand provides and, in the case of te reo, by Treaty of Waitangi and the status of the Māori people as tangata whenua. Pasifika languages in the curriculum (gagana Sāmoa, Tongan, vagahau Niue, Cook Islands Māori and gagana Tokelau) also have the benefit of substantial speech communities located within New Zealand, and the added dimension of a substantial number of Pasifika learners in the classrooms learning these languages as heritage languages.

One of the features of the setting of Chinese and to a lesser extent, Japanese and Korean is the number of native speakers of these languages studying as international students or recently arrived residents. For certain languages, especially languages associated with more typically distant speech communities such as French, German and Spanish, telecollaboration³³ opens up a wealth of opportunities for intercultural communication (Kramsch & Thorne, 2001; O'Dowd, 2003, 2007; Ware, 2005).

The second way that intercultural language teaching responds to relationships between cultures and languages is by treating these relationships as topics to be explored and learnt about as part of language learning. Thus, one of the cognitive capacities that underlies intercultural competence, according to Byram (2006b), is '[k]nowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction' (p. 24). Similarly, the *New Zealand Curriculum* (2007) states that the interactions and learning experiences that take place in a school should encourage students to learn about, 'the values on which New Zealand's cultural and institutional traditions are based', and 'the values of other groups and cultures (p. 10). An intercultural stance on learning in the language classroom provides many opportunities for these values to find expression.

Principle 5 has addressed two types of diversity in relation to language learning: cultural and linguistic diversity among learners and diversity in the ways that different languages are present in the New Zealand learning context. Both are a source of intercultural learning opportunities through which learners come to value 'diversity, as found in our different cultures, languages and heritages' (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 10).

Principle 6: iCLT emphasises intercultural communicative competence rather than native-speaker competence

The final principle addresses the goal of language teaching and learning. It challenges the often implicit benchmarking of learner proficiency or progress against notional

³² Although English is a lingua franca in New Zealand, it is not an official language by statute.

³³ Telecollaboration is defined by Belz (2003) as 'the use of internet communication tools by internationally dispersed students of language in institutionalized settings in order to promote the development of (a) foreign language linguistic competence, and (b) intercultural competence' (p. 69).

native-speaker competence, and proposes instead that intercultural competence provides a more realistic goal of instruction.

One of the more obvious and intractable problems with the model of native speaker competence is that it is an impossible target for most language learners (Kramersch, 1997, 2006; Marx, 2002; Norton, 2000). Furthermore, the goal of native speaker competence may assume an undesirable assimilationist goal, encouraging the learner to separate from his/her own culture and to adopt a new sociocultural identity (Byram, 1997; Marx, 2002; cf. Siskin, 2003).

One of the reasons for the pervasive influence of the native-speaker model is that it is an invisible but nevertheless strongly present influence in the influential concept of 'communicative competence'. However, from an intercultural perspective, communicative competence is itself still incomplete, since it is concerned only with speakers *within* a speech community. It thereby fundamentally fails to identify the competencies required to communicate interculturally, or across cultural boundaries (Byram, 1997, 2003). The assumption that native speakers are models for cultural competence is also misguided, according to Byram (2003), because no native speaker is an authority on their culture, in the same way that no individual is a perfect linguistic model (because of variations in class, region, register, and so on). The implication of these points is that language learners should be encouraged to critically analyze whatever they observe in native-speaker interactions, as proposed in principle 3, and to make informed choices about what behaviour is an appropriate model for imitation.

Another reason for not taking native-speaker norms (linguistic or cultural) as preferred models is that there is always more to learn, because cultures and languages are always changing. This reinforces the notion that schools need to prepare learners for change and life-long learning, a central part of the vision for education in New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2007). The Council of Europe also recognises that 'language learning is a lifelong task [and therefore] the development of a young person's motivation, skill and confidence in facing new language experience out of school comes to be of central importance' (2001, p. 5).

A shift in emphasis from native-speaker competence to intercultural competence broadens the goals of instruction to include the knowledge, skills, awareness and attitudes which enable learners to 'meet the challenges of communication across language and cultural boundaries' (Council of Europe, 2001, p. xii). Thus, intercultural learning focuses not only on knowledge *about* a second language culture, but also on other less tangible, more subjective competencies. These are captured in Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence (discussed in chapter 4 of the literature review, and summarized below) which continues to be widely used in the literature (e.g. Belz, 2003; L Sercu, 2004) and provides a concise and tangible starting point for understanding the multifaceted construct of intercultural competence.

The components of intercultural communicative competence as presented by Byram (1997) are:

- attitudes
 - values and beliefs, curiosity and openness
 - relativising self and valuing others
- knowledge
 - of self and others in communication
 - of other cultures
 - of processes of interaction: individual and societal
- skills
 - for interpreting and relating
- skills
 - for discovering and interacting
- awareness
 - critical cultural awareness

If intercultural communicative competence is to be the goal of language learning, then this will have far-reaching consequences for pedagogy. It requires, for instance, that classroom tasks and communicative opportunities are used for intercultural learning. This is achieved by including activities and finding opportunities to guide learners' attention to the various elements in the model such as their own values and beliefs, knowledge of self, the ability to interpret indirectness in discourse, critical awareness of the power of language, and so on.

Byram (2006b, pp. 17–18) translates the model of intercultural communicative competence above into a set of four overall aims of intercultural language learning:

1. The acquisition of the linguistic and cultural skills of intercultural communication;
2. The development of an aptitude for critical thinking, questioning and challenging assumptions;
3. A change from exclusive identification with familiar communities and in particular, the nation state and national identity, to inclusive identification with others with related interests in other societies; the acquisition of new international identities, which complement national and local identities;
4. Taking action through involvement with people of other societies and liberating oneself and others from assumptions and ways of being and doing which are oppressive or constraining.

In these aims we see the overall agenda for iCLT presented clearly and powerfully.

Thus, the evidence-based framework of six principles for effective intercultural communicative teaching and learning (iCLT) presented in Part 2 identify and describe a

set of core claims concerning intercultural language learning that emerge from and find support in the extensive and rapidly growing research literature in this field.

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