Unit 3 – Intercultural Competence Assessment Tools

Recommended duration: 6 hours

Description: In this unit, learners are introduced to intercultural competence assessment and the theories behind it, later on, the types of assessment tools, and finally, a few instruments for assessing intercultural competence.

Methods: For each topic, a variety of methods and tools are recommended to be used. To start, a warm-up activity is designed to set the context of the topic and test the learners' prior knowledge of that particular subject. After that, the main content of the topic is presented using text, diagrams, and illustrations. Comprehension and "Think and discuss" questions are recommended during parts of the main content and after it. Next follows the reflection in the form of discussion questions. Finally, each topic ends with references, recommended links to additional materials, resources, and videos that could be used according to adult educators' needs. The provided resources are merely a recommendation. Adult educators are encouraged to supplement this material with their own resources and additional sources of information.

At the end of the unit, learners may complete a self-evaluation form in order to reflect on their progress and comprehension of the material of the unit.

Intercultural competence assessment: implications and types of tools

◉ Warm-up

Look at these different quotes about culture and think about what they mean. Do you agree with them?

"To assess the quality of thoughts of people, don't listen to their words, but watch their actions." — Amit Kalantri	"Without proper self-evaluation, failure is inevitable." — John Wooden

◉ Learn

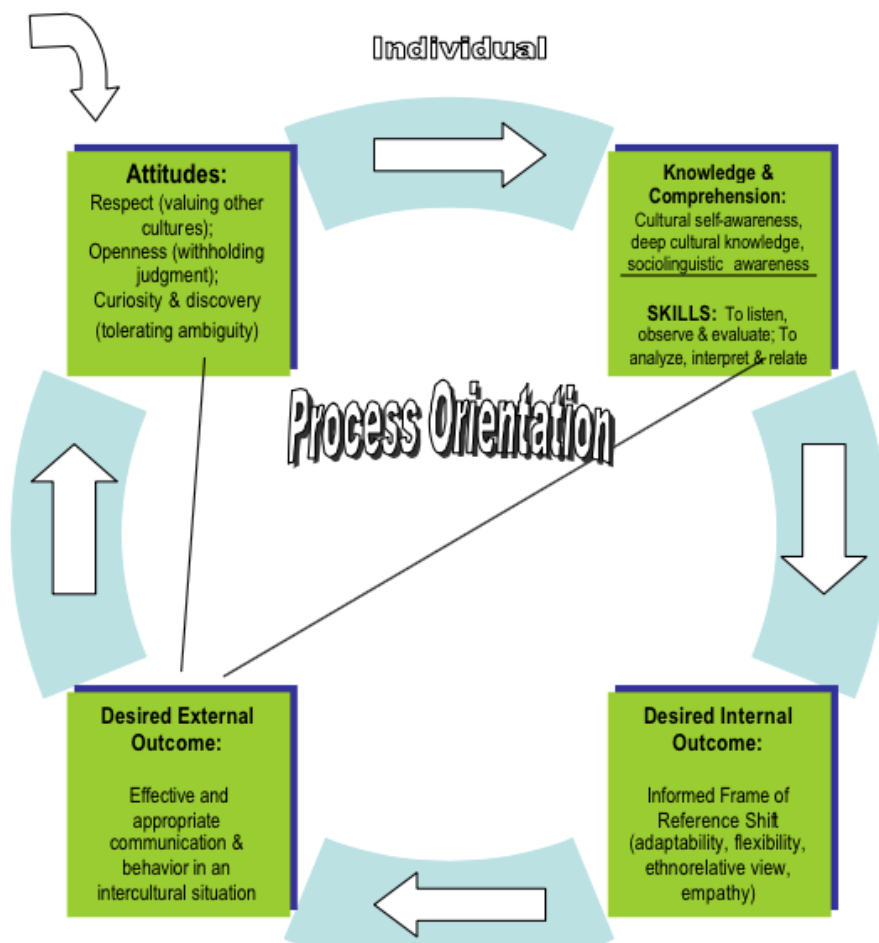*Implications of assessing intercultural competence*

No educational or training course is complete without a way to assess the learners' pre-existing knowledge and skills and the results achieved due to the training. Intercultural development is no different. However, given the complexity of developing intercultural competence, assessment must also be reflective of that – according to Deardorff, when assessing intercultural competence (IC), a multiperspective approach must be used because there is not one tool that would adequately assess intercultural learning.

Deardorff provides five important implications when it comes to the assessment of intercultural competence:

1. Intercultural competence must be defined. In order to assess something, first, it needs to be defined, i.e., *what* is being assessed should be clarified. Broadly speaking, IC is about behaviour and communication

that is **effective** and **appropriate** in intercultural contexts. Also, the definitions of IC vary, so one needs to ask not only what is being assessed, but also, according to whom.

2. According to research, IC *can* be assessed, however, among the existing 100+ tools the majority are self-reporting instruments. That means only one half of the picture is measured. So, the missing part is often the **appropriateness** of behaviour and communication, which can only be measured through other people's perspectives. That could be done by other people completing surveys after real-life situation observations.

3. Another drawback in most assessments of intercultural competence is that instead of focusing on **process**, which includes how a person approaches others, reflects, and thinks interculturally, they focus on **results**, in addition to relying only on indirect evidence, usually a survey instrument, which paints an incomplete picture of a person's IC development. Any good assessment instrument should measure not only direct evidence of intercultural learning but also be developed according to the specific learning objectives.

4. Therefore, a multimethod and multiperspective approach should be adopted in IC assessment, focusing on the process of IC development rather than on the end result.

5. According to Deardorff, it is extremely important to determine whether learners can **think and act interculturally**. As we have seen in the first two units, intercultural competence entails much more than just cultural knowledge and facts, therefore, IC assessment should reach beyond verbal measures. That means that evidence of successful interactions should be considered as the main part of assessing IC.

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References with more information:

– [*How to Assess Intercultural Competence. Darla K. Deardorff (8 chapter) Research Methods in Intercultural Communication – A Practical Guide.*](#)

Think and discuss:

Why should intercultural competence assessment begin with Attitudes, as seen in the diagram?

Categories of intercultural competence assessment tools

Let us take a look at the different categories of IC assessment tools. Each pair of these types shows a different way of categorization, and each separate type serves a different purpose.

- *Formative Assessment* refers to a range of approaches used by educators to conduct in-process learner evaluations – their understanding, learning needs, and academic progress during a lecture, unit, or course. The information collected is used to improve the students' learning.
- *Summative Assessment* refers to assessment data obtained at the end of a course or program, which is often used to demonstrate what has been learned – the results of the training. A final evaluation or presentation is often used for summative assessment. There is often no opportunity to provide students with direct feedback.

- *Quantitative Assessment* refers to the information that can be assigned a numerical value. It is often thought to provide insight into the scope of the assessment context.
- *Qualitative Assessment* refers to information that includes oral or written descriptions. Qualitative data often offers richer insights into the depth of the context of assessment.

- *Direct Assessment* refers to proof and actual evidence of what the students have learned. This information is usually gathered through student performance in a course or learning experience. Papers, tests, projects, and observations may all be included. Direct assessment is usually qualitative or observational.
- *Indirect Assessment* refers to how students perceive their own learning. What do they believe to have learned as a result of taking a class or participating in a course or in a learning experience? Self-report surveys, interviews, and focus groups are all popular ways to obtain an indirect assessment. Indirect evidence may be quantitative or qualitative.

It is important to understand and take into consideration the reliability and validity of the assessment tool. The level of these two criteria may impact the quality of the assessment results.

- *Reliability* is about consistency, which means that an assessment instrument should give similar results every time it is used in order to be called reliable.
- *Validity* is about hitting the mark, which means that an assessment instrument should measure precisely what it claims to be measuring and correspond with the intended use of the assessment results in order to be called valid.

> **Think and discuss:**
>
> What are the advantages and disadvantages of each type of assessment in every category?

References with more information:
- *How to Assess Intercultural Competence. Darla K. Deardorff (8 chapter) Research Methods in Intercultural Communication – A Practical Guide.*
- *The 6 Types of Assessment [+ How to Use Them] | Prodigy Education (prodigygame.com)*
- *Assessing Intercultural Competence in Higher Education: Existing Research and Future Directions - Griffith - 2016 - ETS Research Report Series - Wiley Online Library*
- *Tools for Assessing Intercultural and Global Competence | CRLT (umich.edu)*

▣ Answer questions

1. What are some of the most important things to remember when assessing intercultural competence and when choosing an assessment instrument?
2. How does Deardorff suggest assessing IC (according to the diagram)?
3. Why is it important that the chosen assessment tool is reliable and valid?

▣ Reflect

- Think about your experience with assessing or being assess in the context of learning. In what ways is assessment of intercultural competence different?
- Have you ever had to conduct assessment of intercultural competence? Describe your experience: what kind of instrument did you choose and why? How accurate do you think it was?

▣ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *How to Assess Intercultural Competence. Darla K. Deardorff (8 chapter) Research Methods in Intercultural Communication – A Practical Guide.*
- *The 6 Types of Assessment [+ How to Use Them] | Prodigy Education (prodigygame.com)*
- *Assessing Intercultural Competence in Higher Education: Existing Research and Future Directions - Griffith - 2016 - ETS Research Report Series - Wiley Online Library*
- *Tools for Assessing Intercultural and Global Competence | CRLT (umich.edu)*

Videos:

- *Assessing Intercultural Competence - YouTube*
- *Developing and Assessing Intercultural Competence - YouTube*

Specific tools for IC assessment

◉ Warm-up

Look at these different quotes about culture and think about what they mean. Do you agree with them?

"When you travel overseas, the locals see you as a foreigner, and when you return, you see the locals as foreigners." — Robert Black	**"It is only other people's ridiculous beliefs or customs that seem ridiculous to us."** — Mokokoma Mokhonoana

◉ Learn

The aim of assessing intercultural competence (IC) is to understand at what level a person is at one given moment and what their knowledge and abilities are. Here we provide an overview of ten available tools that were developed to assess IC.

Source: https://www.aq5.com/4-popular-employee-self-assessment-tools/
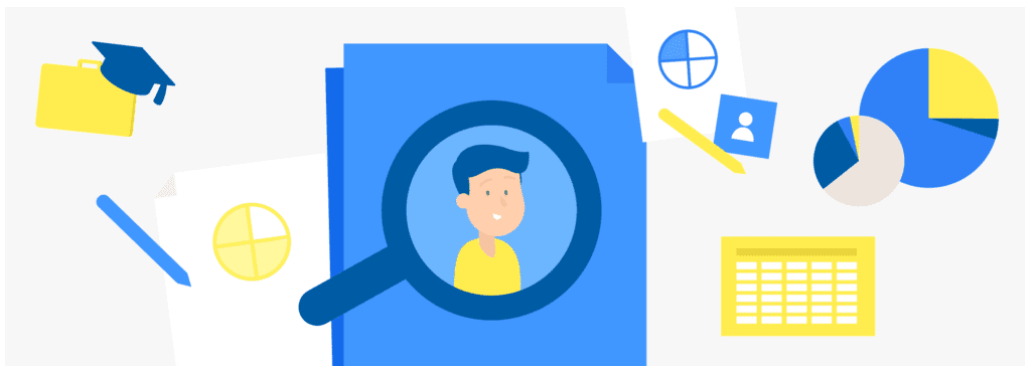
Intercultural Development Inventory

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) measures individuals' attitude toward cultural differences. It was created using the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity as a theoretical structure. DMIS was designed to learn how people interpret cultural differences. It tracks the evolution of a person's attitude toward another culture through six stages: three ethno-centric stages (denial, defence, minimization) and three ethno-relative stages (acceptance, adaptation, integration). When a person's culture is seen as fundamental to reality, ethno-centric orientations are used. When a person'' culture is experienced in the light of other cultures, however, ethno-relative orientations are used. According to the DMIS, construing cultural differences can become an active part of one's worldview, resulting in an enhanced understanding of one's own and other cultures, as well as improved competence in intercultural relations. Prior research has used the IDI to assess intercultural competence and sensitivity in a variety of settings, including education, study abroad programs, healthcare, businesses, and government agencies.

Multicultural Personality Questionnaire

Another tool for assessing IC is the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ). The MPQ was created to evaluate multicultural efficacy without focusing on communication skills. Seven dimensions were identified that are important for international trainees' performance. A revised scale of 78 items and five dimensions was later released, including cultural empathy, open-mindedness, social initiative, emotional stability, and versatility.

Arasaratnam's ICCI

Arasaratnam's ICC instrument was developed based on the idea of cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions that encompass communication competence. It was also an attempt to build an instrument that would perform well in culturally diverse participant groups. Empathy, motivation, attitude toward other cultures, and interaction engagement (experience and listening) were established as essential elements of intercultural communication competence (ICC). The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) was modified to test cultural empathy in Arasaratnam's Intercultural Communication Competence Instrument (ICCI). Participants' measure of experience was determined by whether they had studied or lived abroad for more than three months, had formal intercultural communication training, and had close personal friends from other cultures. Arasaratnam discovered a connection between interaction involvement and cultural empathy, as well as between interaction involvement and attitudes toward other cultures. The research also discovered a positive relationship between cultural empathy and attitude toward other cultures, as well as a positive relationship between attitude toward other cultures and experience, motivation and experience, ICC and interaction involvement, ICC and motivation, and ICC and empathy.

Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale

The Intercultural Adjustment Potential Scale (ICAPS) is a tool that assesses a person's ability to adapt to a foreign culture. Emotion regulation, versatility, openness, and critical thinking are the four dimensions on the scale that are needed for intercultural adjustment.

Communication acculturation, uncertainty management, and cultural learning may all be used to assess intercultural adjustment. In fact, people's actual adjustment may have both positive and negative consequences (e.g., self-awareness vs. culture shock). Individuals' potential adjustment, on the other hand, refers to their ability to cope with or adapt to life in a different culture before leaving their home culture. Personal characteristics also influence one's ability to adjust.

Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory

The Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) assesses an individual's preparedness to interact with people from other cultures and his or her ability to adapt to other cultures. The CCAI helps in the comprehension of attributes that improve cross-cultural effectiveness. There are four dimensions in the CCAI: emotional resilience, perceptual acuity, flexibility and openness, and personal autonomy. The CCAI has been used to foster cultural understanding in the classroom, resident life, student affairs, and community programs in school, industry, and other settings.

Culture Shock Inventory

The Culture Shock Inventory (CSI) is a scale that assesses intercultural sensitivity by measuring particular human characteristics. People are more likely to encounter various forms of culture shock in unfamiliar cultural environments as communities become more multicultural. Culture shock is caused by a number of factors, including prior contact with other cultures and cross-cultural adaptation, the degree of disparity between one's own and the host culture, extent of readiness, social support networks, and individual psychological qualities. The Culture Shock Inventory is a self-report tool that predicts how difficult it will be to cope with culture shock. It evaluates individuals' interactions with people from other countries, including language skills, openness to new ideas and values, and culture-specific knowledge.

Source: https://www.slideshare.net/KatieEnglishTutoring/mega-goals-culture-shock
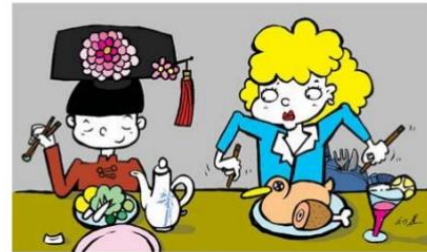
Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory

The Intercultural Sensitivity Inventory (ICSI) is an important element in assessing intercultural competence. In intercultural experiences, intercultural sensitivity refers to a person's ability to react to, understand, and consider cultural differences. Importantly, higher cultural sensitivity is linked to a greater likelihood of exercising intercultural competence. ICSI is a valuable instrument for examining people's understanding of their effective behaviour when interacting with people who have an individualistic versus collectivistic orientation, their openness to cultural differences in intercultural interactions, and their flexibility in adopting unfamiliar ways that mirror other people's cultures and norms.

The ICSI assesses an individual's ability to successfully change their actions in a culturally acceptable manner while transitioning from one culture to another. That is, the more culturally sensitive an individual is, the more likely he or she is to be able to change their behaviour in another culture.

A few other tools, briefly:

- *Intercultural Competence Profiler*: a multifunctional instrument that evaluates a person's qualification for foreign assignments. The ICP aims to characterize and measure modes of thinking, sensitivities, intellectual abilities, and explanatory capacities that can help shape intercultural competence in some way.
- *Intercultural Readiness Check*: assesses an individual's ability to form and maintain effective working relationships with people from various cultural backgrounds. Intercultural sensitivity, intercultural communication, intercultural relationship building, conflict management, leadership, and ambiguity tolerance are the six dimensions assessed.
- *Intercultural Competence Questionnaire*: lists four dimensions of intercultural competence: interpersonal skills, team effectiveness, intercultural uncertainty, intercultural empathy.

References with more information:

- *[Intercultural Competence Assessment: What Are Its Key Dimensions Across Assessment Tools? (gvsu.edu)](gvsu.edu)*
- *[The Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI®) | Intercultural Development Inventory | IDI, LLC (idiinventory.com)](idiinventory.com)*
- *["Exploring and Assessing Intercultural Competence" by Alvino Fantini and Aqeel Tirmizi (sit.edu)](sit.edu)*
- *[CCAI: Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (ccaiassess.com)](ccaiassess.com)*
- *[Tools for Assessing Intercultural and Global Competence | CRLT (umich.edu)](umich.edu)*

▣ Answer questions

1. How are the mentioned assessment tools different and what does each of them measure?
2. What factors are measured to predict culture shock?
3. What is intercultural sensitivity?

▣ Reflect

- Have you ever used these or any other IC assessment tools? Do you think the results were reflective of the actual situation? What were the advantages and disadvantages of those tools?
- Do you have a preference for any of the assessment tools? If yes, why?

▣ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *[Intercultural Competence Assessment: What Are Its Key Dimensions Across Assessment Tools? (gvsu.edu)](gvsu.edu)*
- *[The Intercultural Development Inventory® (IDI®) | Intercultural Development Inventory | IDI, LLC (idiinventory.com)](idiinventory.com)*
- *["Exploring and Assessing Intercultural Competence" by Alvino Fantini and Aqeel Tirmizi (sit.edu)](sit.edu)*
- *[CCAI: Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (ccaiassess.com)](ccaiassess.com)*
- *[Tools for Assessing Intercultural and Global Competence | CRLT (umich.edu)](umich.edu)*

Videos:

- *[Why we need to embrace culture shock | Kristofer Gilmour | TEDxTownsville - YouTube](#)*
- *[Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity - YouTube](#)*
- *[Intercultural Sensitivity - YouTube](#)*

◉ **Self-evaluation questionnaire**

1. What are the three things you have learned in this unit?
2. What are other learners doing in discussions that you like and would like to incorporate in your own discussion responses?
3. When you were feeling challenged in understanding a new concept, what did you do to get "unstuck"?
4. What did you find easy about learning the material in this unit?
5. What did you find most difficult about learning the material in this unit?
6. What is one thing you were doing really well while learning the material in this unit?
7. What is one thing you need to improve? What is your plan for making that improvement?