

# Identity in Multicultural and Multilingual Contexts

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## Introduction

*We live in a world where identity matters. It matters both as a concept, theoretically and as a contested fact of contemporary world.* Gilroy, 1987, p 301

Identity is a concept that connects individual and social spheres of life in societies. The European Union recognizes different cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious groups both at the level of the EU and of member states. Population changes influence, modify and mix the identities of people, providing opportunities for loosening ties with traditions and localities and promising more freedom of choice. Higher education teachers face the challenge of supporting the capacity of their students to develop identity with a clientele and colleagues who are increasingly overtly or latently multicultural and multilingual.

This booklet offers higher education teachers basic theoretical views on identity and cultural citizenship, followed by practical ideas about pedagogy in multicultural/multilingual contexts.

## The current social and cultural context

Two distinctive features of our era are globalisation and multiculturalism. *Globalisation* is a multidimensional process involving economic, political, legal, military, technological, environmental, ethical and societal domains. Globalisation facilitates contacts and mutual enrichment of cultures based on sharing universal human values. But globalisation produces side effects such as the uniformity of culture, threatening the cohesion of specific cultures and cultural identities.

Population and cultural migration creates the phenomenon of *multiculturalism*, which brings with it the dilemma of balancing acceptance, tolerance and openness to cultural pluralism with fear that traditional ways of life will be eroded. The more open to cultural diversity, the less cohesive identity may be. Multi-ethnicity and cultural diversity raise questions of 'uncertainty and diversity and about the ways in which people have the possibility, or not, of constructing their own identities.' (Woodward, 2000, p 1).

Europe is now a multicultural continent, and this phenomena will increase. Multiculturalism allows individuals to belong to several cultures and still retain authentic membership of their own culture. The European Union as a supra-national entity is based on respect for national identities of its member states, which are not 'dissolved' into the EU, but rather contribute their own particular qualities, inevitably creating a multicultural entity. But multicultural societies face the potential problem of clashes of members' civic and cultural identities. EU integration challenges indigenous Europeans and the many non-Europeans living in EU territory. Not all of these

'newcomers' are citizens of the EU, nor will all become citizens. An important issue is the possible tension between cultural and civic identities.

The challenge is to protect cultural variety for future development and mutual enrichment, and to build on the new concept of European identity, based on acceptance of cultural differences and mutual respect. Each culture should, in theory, overcome its barriers, through self-reflection, openness towards the world and reformulating its own cultural system.

Educational institutions have a key role in the transmission, reproduction and development of cultural reality. They reflect the system of social relations in any given society, and can influence and change these. They are important socialising agents, forming and developing the personality according to the demands of the society – which is based on historical experience, anticipated future and desired ideals.

Universities are an interesting example: since its beginnings, university education has been assumed to be a tool for the cultivation of universal human values (initially faith-based), later as tools for the cultivation of national consciousness. As the seedbeds of the intelligentsia, universities have generally tried to lead social, cultural, and political change. Now universities need to transform to meet the changes of a globalised and multicultural world. In a culturally heterogeneous society, educational institutions and curricula need to accept the cultural specifics of each stakeholder in the educational process: they should prepare students for a multicultural world. Multicultural/multilingual identities are the precondition for integration, based on respect for cultural and lingual differences, on tolerance and on solidarity.

## **Culture and Language as a grounding for Human Identity(ies)**

Identity is part of the problem of being human. Self-realisation formulates questions about self-identity. Identity is a process, neither a *priori* nor *natural*, but the current result of interaction between individuals and their surroundings – but also a relatively constant, integrated unity.

Individual identity arises from the execution of an individual's social roles and functions within society. Identity is shaped in the process of changing personal relationships with others, to attain a structured personal integrity by self-identification and self-assessment – deciding what matters in one's life and suppressing the nonessential. At the same time, being a social phenomenon, our personal identity changes as part of a lifelong self-construction process.

Theories of social roles complicate the problem of identity. Should we accept identity as the sum of social roles or as numerous and

diverse identities of the same person? How is it possible to achieve identity as a cohesive unit?

### **Cultural Identity**

The relation between human identity and culture can be both interconnection and interaction. Identity is a relatively stable element of objective cultural reality, and at the same time it is a defining element of subjective reality.

Culture is not a mere embellishment of human nature, but a fundamental condition of human existence (Geertz, 1973). It is a vision of reality (a possible definition of culture) between an individual and the world. This vision guides, regulates, stimulates and co-ordinates human relations. Representatives of a culture share latent common elements of consciousness: systems of cognisance, symbols, values, patterns of behaviour, etc.

Awareness of 'self' is based on awareness of being part of a social/cultural group (ethnic, national, linguistic, etc). Defining 'self' is to be aware of 'we', and to be accepted as 'us'. As individuals may see themselves as members of more than one group, identity may be contingent on the group identified with at a particular time (Spinthourakis & Katsillis, 2003). Each identity has its own beliefs, expectations and behaviours, and is defined by reference to the norms of a particular group. Identification (1) with a group is one of the three basic ideas of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), the other two being categorisation (2) and comparison (3).

- (1) **Identification** from self-reflection and experience of interaction with surrounding social/cultural groups.
- (2) **Categorisation**: created using racial, ethnic, religious, occupational and other existing social categories. Specific constructs based on historical experiences: cultural identity arises from the consciousness of a common, shared present and past.
- (3) **Social comparison** allows evaluation of our group by comparing it with others. We need 'otherness' to realise 'ourselves' and 'myself'.

Generally cultures tend to make comparisons that reflect positively on themselves, using dimensions favourable to their group as the basis for comparison (McGarty *et al.*, 1994). This positive self-evaluation improves the group self-awareness, solidarity and integrity – but is also the basis for positive and negative stereotypes (resulting in prejudices). In the past many collective cultural/social identities were constructed on the basis of ethnocentric social exclusion of 'otherness'.

### ***Language as a basic sign of culture.***

In terms of the three facets of social identity theory, language serves as a basic tool. Wittgenstein (1963, p 5) states that 'the limits of my language are the limits of my world'. The world of culture is given as a sum of our narration regarding our world, its parts and senses.

Sloterdijk (1994, p 40) writes about '*mythmotic*' as a system of identifying stories, which are necessary for the cohesion of culture. The real world is built on the linguistic norms of the hegemonic group. Linguistically competent speakers can talk, express feelings and thoughts and in this way share them with others. Simultaneously, though, inner linguistic order forces them to express feelings and thoughts in a linguistically pre-specified way (Barthes, 1964). Mutual comprehension results from activating this *de facto* inner linguistic order as a criterion for what is acceptable and what is not. Members of a local culture share common contents of consciousness and codes of thoughts as a part of their cognitive maps. These codes and maps are the basis for perception and interpretation of the world; in which both to carry and construct these interpretations.

No two people share an absolutely identical model of culture. Living in diverse cultural realities, individuals' models of the world are systems of cognitive maps, influenced by individual psyche, dispositions, aspirations and values as much as by being 'on the edge' of different sub-cultures. Being on the edge is like finding oneself in a maze (Wallace, 1961).

To speak a given language means to embrace a given vision of reality, because languages differ not just in signs and phonemes, but in worldviews (von Humboldt, 1822, 1985; Sapir, 1964). To understand a culture is to acquire its language. Culture contact as a form of cultural communication presupposes common codes. In the multicultural context, this means acceptance of students' native culture as well as developing their emerging linguistic competencies: these are essential pre-conditions for meaningful teaching and learning. Acquiring linguistic competence is a hard, long-term process connected with translation and re-interpretation of old cultural signs according to a new cultural environment, with a mandatory compounded acquisition of new cultural meanings.

### ***The Identities of Multicultural World***

Current conceptions of multiculturalism and post-modernism make identity a much more complex issue. Post-modern pluralism creates a place for liberty and innovation but also threatens integrity and entirety. Identity becomes multi-stage, case-to-case, and situational (Augé, 1994).

Other conceptions of identity – sliced identity, partial identity and multiple identity – also assume a potential contradiction of identities (Barker, 2000, p 387). These identities change according to shifts in individual social status and roles, contact with various social groups and behaviour in varying social and cultural environments. Contemporary identity discourse commonly focuses on the increased importance and value of subjective identification factors such as emotional subjectivity: 'I am whom I feel myself to be'.

Multicultural contexts also stress identity as inclusive, rather than exclusive. Cultivating inclusive identity is integral to the socialisation role of education. Contact with another culture modifies cultural identity, consciously or unconsciously. Contemporary multiculturalism expects individuals to deal with cultural contacts and to face possible tensions between different worlds. Cultural contact should be seen as a source of enrichment, not of conflict.

There are various models of multicultural society (compare Goldberg, 1994, Guibernau and Rex, 1997 or Taylor *et al.*, 1994) showing differing majority and minority relationships. Examples of these include:

- **The liberal multicultural model.** All are equal in law: society emphasises the sameness (equality), the value and freedom of the *individual*. This social strategy stems from the individual, not the group, and the public sphere is neutral regarding ethnic and cultural differences. Culturally specific qualities are preserved at the private individual level.
- **The pluralistic multicultural model.** This emphasises cultural diversity. Individuals in various cultures preserve their specific cultural qualities; the public sphere considers their *group* identities. Those from the majority group are expected to be familiar with specific signs, ways of life and minority behavioural patterns; and those from minorities familiar with the dominant culture.
- **The critical multicultural model.** Both individual and group-specific qualities are considered changeable. They are dynamic, determined and adapted to meet current social conditions and needs. This form of co-existence attempts to integrate different groups. The different ('non-dominant') identity is not a limit or barrier for participation in political, economic, cultural or other spheres of social life.

One problem in multicultural societies is the possible clash of the cultural and civic identities of their members. This confrontation is closely connected with the problem of cultural inclusion, or the lack of it.

## The concept of Cultural Citizenship

Marshall (1950, 1992, p 8) divides citizenship into three elements: civic, political and social. Multiculturalism introduces a fourth element – the *cultural element* and cultural rights. 'Cultural citizenship' is 'the right to be different' while still enjoying full membership of a democratic and participatory community (Rosaldo, 1994). Stevenson (2001, p 3; 1997, p 42) views *cultural citizenship* as satisfying demands for full inclusion into the social community, cultural rights, heralding 'a new breed of claims for unhindered representation, recognition without marginalisation, acceptance and integration without 'normalising' distortion'. These go beyond standard rights to propagate a cultural identity or life style. Cultural citizenship is met when society makes necessary semiotic and material cultures commonly available. It meets the requirements of a meaningful social life, critiques practices of domination, and allows the recognition of differences. Differences are seen with tolerance and mutual respect.

Is it possible to be (for example) a Czech-European, a Finn-European or a Greek-European (and vice versa)? Is it possible to be seen as a European if one has a non-European cultural identity? The political efforts and initiatives in the EU suggest that the successful co-existence of different ethnic, cultural and national groups is possible in a democratic Europe. European citizenship complements citizenship at the national level, rather than replacing it.

## Education and developing Identity

A basic goal of education is to contribute to the construction of an individual's identity. Negotiating the terms of recognition of one's social and cultural identity is an integral part of the educational process, crucial to the empowerment of the 'self' to act independently when interacting with others.

Feber and Petrucijova (1998) argue that education as a creative process should be a deep interaction between teacher and student aimed at supporting their mutual moral development. The *moral culture of a person* is a part of her/his culture reflected in interpersonal relationships, including multicultural relations. Interpersonal *social empathy*, as a basis for pro-social behaviour, is one way of improving interpersonal relationships, and decreasing social tensions, aggression and violence. *Dialogue* is used to practise such behaviour, tolerance and mutual respect

Civic multicultural education needs to be student-oriented, helping students develop individual qualities and form their social 'self', searching for their own place in the world in relation to self and to others. Prerequisite is an individual approach. The '*social capital*' of each individual should be accepted, because each has life experience which guides questioning and looking for a place in the world.

In a multicultural society these tasks are realised through complex educational activities in the spheres of (1) intra-cultural, (2) multicultural and (3) inter-cultural education.

The task of **intra-cultural education** is to develop and encourage the original ethno-cultural identity of the student. To successfully integrate different social groups we must accept their cultural rights to cultivate and present their identity as an essential part of human rights. Intra-cultural education implicitly involves training to deal with situations of cultural contact. The concept of inclusive identity corresponds to multicultural and intercultural levels of education.

The task of **multicultural education** is to inform about the variety of world cultures, the diversity of value systems and world-views. Any individual's model is only one among many possible and existing models of reality, but their knowledge about other cultures and the practices of co-existence is not the same. The essential condition of cultural co-existence is real cultural communication based on mutual comprehension. This is the sphere of intercultural education competences.

Though the real content of **intercultural education** is determined by different conceptions in various European countries and by specific features of educated groups, experts agree that the ideal objective of intercultural education is to contribute to intercultural understanding in society.

Although multicultural education is widely used, we think the term intercultural education better describes our educational efforts. The UNESCO thesaurus suggests 'intercultural education' is preferable to 'multicultural education'; multicultural education is of North America origin and cultural/social background; in Europe the term 'intercultural education' is more often used.

Intercultural education should be an essential part of practice, based on mutual respect and co-existence of different ethno-cultural groups and nations (see Lasonen, J. & Lestinen, L., 2003). A basic prerequisite of inter-cultural communication is understanding combined with interpretation, which helps an individual capture cultural meanings in foreign sign systems. The social and political environment should be loaded in favour of intercultural understanding. *All* social groups – traditional European cultures and communities of newcomers – should strive to achieve this consensus.

## Identity and Teaching Practice

### *Teacher identity in transition*

The construction of teacher identity can be seen as a continuing and holistic action process. A pragmatic constructivist perspective (Pyhältö, 2003, p 40) emphasises that '*teachership*' is learnt, modified and realised in action and interaction with the environment. The policies and practices of the university institution and society, directly and indirectly, frame professional identity. Concurrently, linguistic, cultural and social identities are interwoven with professionalism.

Teacher identity as a social and cultural construction is in change with the expectations in the increasing legislative and governmental integration and migration and mobility of people in Europe. With respect to their identity, professionals at all levels and in all work sectors are challenged to respond to the questions – 'what to do, how to act, who to be?' (see Giddens, 1991, p 70).

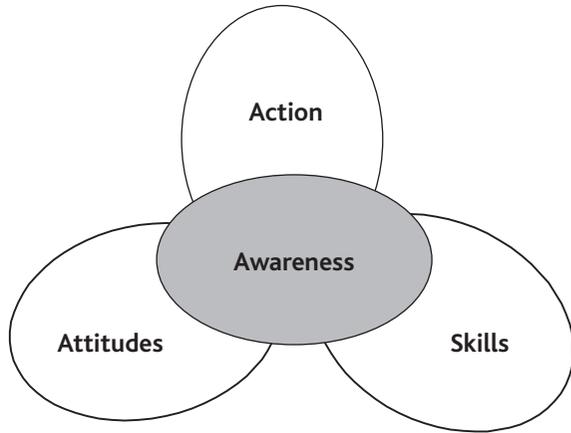
Professional groups need to continuously and critically evaluate routine practices and professional knowledge. This is particularly relevant in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Higher education teachers are doubly challenged: they work in an environment that is increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse, and also are educators of other professional groups.

Studies of the impact of linguistically and culturally diverse groups on professional attitudes, skills and actions (e.g. Pitkänen, 1999; Petrucijova & Meciar, 2003; Spinthourakis & Katsillis, 2003; Clarke, 2003) suggest there is a need and demand for appropriate in-service training and extended education in intercultural competence in addition to organizational and structural changes. Further training is also recommended by the latest country reports concerning racism and intolerance by ECRI (the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, see [http://www.coe.int/t/E/human\\_rights/ecri/1-ECRI/](http://www.coe.int/t/E/human_rights/ecri/1-ECRI/).)

### *Awareness and intercultural competence*

The ECRI reports highlight raising multicultural awareness for professional groups, focussing simultaneously on themselves and on the cultural context. Awareness can be seen as a continuous process intertwined with other dimensions in developing intercultural competence. In this booklet we emphasise this form of awareness and combine it with pedagogical capacity-building in a multiculturally-oriented teacher identity. Järvelä (2002, p 44) questions whether it is important 'first to become aware of one's own value and cultural bonds in order to examine and critically analyse the value and cultural grounds of one's own and the others' action'.

### ***Dimensions of intercultural competence***



adapted from Jokikokko 2002, p 87

Jokikokko (2002, p 88) summarizes five basic elements of cultural awareness as follows:

- Knowledge of one's cultural background, including codes that guide and restrict one's thinking, beliefs and action
- Knowledge of other cultures and people, using their historically, culturally and geographically constructed values, norms, thinking and behavioural patterns as guides, while also avoiding stereotyping
- Identification of prejudices, attitudes, assumptions and unjust practices on both individual and institutional levels
- Social and political knowledge of societal differences and their influences
- Knowledge and understanding of global perspectives.

### ***Teachers' multicultural identity***

Teacher identity can be understood as a reflexive<sup>1</sup> project of the self (see Giddens, 1991) and thus as self-development. Barker (2000, p 167) describes that this self-project as 'something that we create, something always in process, a moving towards rather than an arrival.' This builds on the conceptions of the past and present as well as of the future that is anticipated or hoped for.

The cultural diversification of societies and educational institutions creates tension in the self-development of higher education teachers. As Talib (2002, p 131) points out, 'the development of teachers' own multicultural identity is a prerequisite for understanding other

<sup>1</sup> see below, footnote 2, p 15, for our use of the word reflexive.

cultures and their difference.' Teachers with a multilingual or multicultural background, or experience of another culture, have a major advantage in developing a multicultural orientation in their identity.

The expected outcomes of education and learning about another culture have much in common. Both provide 'cultural capital' in which the conscious refinement of human qualities – *sivistys* in Finnish, *bildung* in German – is a constitutive component. As Talib (2002) says: 'Society needs people that have inner strength to endure challenges and failures. The characteristics of a civilized person are broad-mindedness, tolerance and the ability to consider the issues from several perspectives. However, the most important characteristic is ... humility that can be seen as self-respect and respect of others' (p 141-142).

It has been argued that a higher education teacher working in an ideal traditional university produces cultural capital, by cultivating civilization and qualities of multicultural identity in all its members, both teachers and students. However, critics suggest that the everyday practices of educational institutions may well be problematic regarding the best possible realisation of such ideals.

### ***'Hidden pedagogy' and everyday culture***

'Hidden pedagogy' is used here to refer to the hidden curriculum, a phenomenon identified by many educationalists in different systems (e.g. Broady, 1980; Ghourchian, 1988; McLaren, 2003, p 86-88; Törmä, 2003). They suggest the hidden curriculum is created by the informal and tacit aspects of educational processes and by the whole educational environment and society. In spite of official aims, all pedagogical practices include their own hidden curricula, leading to unintended consequences. They cannot be eliminated nor evaluated in the official curriculum, nor openly discussed, even if some faint awareness of the hidden aspects exists. What can be done is to try to make them more visible, in order to develop pedagogical awareness and openness. One means to achieve this is by critically analysing everyday practices, knowledge construction, interaction and communication in classrooms, which may hide more than might be expected.

University pedagogical development research has also tried to uncover hidden aspects of university culture. According to Viskari (1995, p 33) the university and its units house cultural elements such as 'common values, beliefs, conceptions, myth, expectations, norms, roles and rituals that often unconsciously guide and regulate the action'. If left hidden, these constructs lead to the reinforcement of hidden pedagogy, and are thus not supportive of authentic learning. Studies of university culture have found hidden operational structures, or a 'social grammar', which influences social practices in

the university community and negates reform (Kumpula, 1994). The result is that the aims of the official curriculum differ from those of the actual studies. Students are not treated as equal members of the university community and they learn 'survival and coping strategies' instead of developing their own critical thinking and reflection, and creating new knowledge.

Teacher-student and student-student power relationships may also include elements that act as hidden pedagogy, identified in the use of language, non-verbal communication and moments of silence, in reactions, attention and non-attention given to others, expectations and non-expectations expressed concerning others, etc. While most observations of the everyday use of power have been made in compulsory education, it is as relevant to examine the phenomena in higher education.

Developing an awareness of one's own and wider institutional and cultural routines, their covertly discriminatory and exclusive elements, stereotypes and prejudices, may be difficult, but is crucial for a higher education teacher who aims to become an intercultural/multicultural educator. Hidden pedagogy influences not only the teacher's professional identity and work, but the development of their professional capacity, as well as the identity construction of their students.

### ***Reflective Tool***

An exemplary tool for self-inquiry is the conception of **prejudice**. In *Communicating prejudice*, Hecht (1998) describes the US education context. However, it is just as relevant for an examination of European contexts. Presenting the basic definitions of prejudices in metaphors, Hecht indicates how to detect our own critical points: 'Prejudice as fear of difference or the unknown (difference as threat); prejudice as dislike of difference or the unknown (difference as aversive); prejudice as competition with difference for scarce resources (difference as competition), and prejudice as hierarchical and structure (prejudice as hierarchy).' (p 3).

Hecht also offers various explanations for these metaphors from biological, economical, cognitive or emotional and social perspectives, with respective theoretical approaches.

## Supporting pedagogical capacity development by awareness raising

Reviewing university teachers' pedagogical training cross-nationally, Gibbs (1998) found that despite various patterns, duration, comprehensiveness and standards, the rationales of these programmes were increasingly focused on reflective practice. We do not know the pedagogical training background of the teacher-readers of this Guideline. We have chosen to highlight reflective practice, deriving from the conception of the reflective and action oriented practitioner (Schön, 1983), as the framework for the remaining sections. The continuing action → reflection → modified-action process may be visualised as a spiral, in which intersections leading to a new cycle are catalysed by problematic situations (see Schön, 1983, p 40). Problems may also be perceived as subtle puzzlements or uncertainties based on 'reflection-in-action'.

We earlier emphasised the need to become reflectively aware, starting with the construction and action of one's own identity. We suggest that this will create the capacity to view new possibilities and make choices to transform personal pedagogy. Extended to the campus level, this may encourage joining and creating pedagogical 'communities of practice' (see Wenger, 1999) characterised by 'mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire' for developing inclusiveness of learning contexts.

There are other ways of becoming aware besides developing critical perception: teachers may analyse and reflect on their teaching situations and practice; they may acquire additional views and knowledge through discussions with other professionals; they may seek assistance from colleagues, peers, professionals trained in pedagogical faculty development; and most importantly, learn through interaction with their students. Below we offer some examples of tools available to the practitioner.

### **Writing your 'story'**

Giddens writes that the 'self' can be understood reflexively i.e. here reflectively<sup>2</sup> in terms of one's biography (1991, p 53; also Barker, 2000, p 167). Constructing a biographical narrative may add the feeling of continuity and consistency of self-identity, and show possible points of change and growth. Emotional and bodily sensations are important in our conception of self, not just cognitive components. Self-identity can be seen, as Barker (2002, p 166)

<sup>2</sup> We use 'reflectively' instead of 'reflexively' as used by Giddens. Intentional reflection of one's self and one's activities can mean also 'reflexively' as in Giddens, at least at the individual level. Giddens' use of 'reflexively' related to self-identity may put more emphasis on a routine-like aspect of reflection (see Giddens, 1991, p 52).

reminds us, 'not as a fixed entity but as an emotionally charged description of ourselves'.

The development of identity is a major task of education; and teachers in higher education are expected to support their students in this. The teacher's identity influences the identity development of their students, and vice versa. Going through an awareness raising project such as constructing a reflective autobiography may support the teacher's capacity-building, first, by describing one's experiences as a pupil and a student; then, based on one's past, present and the expected future, reflecting on the delineated identity process. Points to consider might be the equivalence of delineated self-identity and the social identities offered by people and social institutions; changes and turning points in life, their reasons and consequences; ethnic, linguistic and other cultural group identifications and their groundings; belonging to cultural majority and minority groups; and finally, notable social exclusions or rejections.

Reflecting on one's own identity formation processes, through both story and its construction, may help the teacher become more sensitive to and reflective about their students. Students, as well as teachers, can reflect on their identity through autobiographical narratives. Extending this practice leads to greater awareness and perception of the variety of constructions of reality, as different perspectives and conceptions are produced from diverse life experiences and cultural backgrounds.

### ***Examining your conceptions of learning and teaching***

Whether teaching multilingual and multicultural issues and/or working in such contexts, it is appropriate to consider one's habitual teaching practice and note that there are alternative ways for practicing pedagogy. It is equally important for teachers to become able to identify elements of hidden pedagogy that connect with the structures and processes of higher education. This booklet offers two simple but theoretically grounded tools that may help reflection on their practice in a new way. The first emphasises the perspective of learning and the second that of teaching. Although these perspectives are interconnected, we present them separately, emphasising that the focus of teaching and learning are not equivalent, and although teaching creates a context for learning, it does not cause learning (Wenger, 1998, p 266).

**Learning conceptions:** Negvi and Lindblom-Ylänne have compiled and developed (2002, p 112) *Dimensions Describing Conceptions of Learning* based on Kember's (1997) research. These dimensions provide the teacher with a framework to reflect on conceptions of learning and from which to consider different ones.

How do you conceptualise the following elements of learning generically, and within your personal pedagogy?

- Conceptions of knowledge and humanity related to learning
- The position and role of the student in the learning process
- The position and role of the teacher
- Learning: more as an individual or as a communal process?
- Influences of the conception of learning on the planning, realisation and evaluation of teaching.

Contemplate your conceptualisations with the help of the *Dimensions Describing Conceptions of Learning* (in Appendix 1). Which conception of learning guides your practice? What other conceptions are there, and how and where do these differ? Your own conception of learning may fit with one, many or maybe none of those in the Appendix. Expanding one's knowledge allows for a fuller understanding of one's self-identity and professional identity. This may support enhancing pedagogical imagination and openness in learning contexts.

**Teaching conceptions:** *Five Perspectives on Teaching in Adult and Higher Education* (Pratt et al., 1998), based on extensive research among teachers in five countries, asks the reader to reflect on the basic question 'What does it mean to teach?' and then to consider their answers.

Pratt suggests the perspectives can be considered as lenses through which teachers understand their teaching. There is no space here to present the whole pattern of questions or to describe the different perspectives, but to clarify perspectives and conceptions of learning further (Appendix 1), it may be helpful to consider the following questions:

- What are you trying to accomplish? (your intentions)
- What is important? (your beliefs/justification)
- What (and whose work) have you included and excluded in the curriculum, working methods and materials? (Your intentions)
- Why? (Your beliefs/justification)

The answers to these questions allow one to identify with one or more of the following five perspectives and their pedagogical core ideas outlined by Pratt et al. (p xiii):

- Transmission perspective : Effective delivery of context
- Apprenticeship perspective : Modelling ways of being
- Developmental perspective : Cultivating ways of thinking
- Nurturing perspective : Facilitating self-efficacy
- Social reform perspective : Seeking a better society

Pratt points out that none of these perspectives may be considered as any more valuable than the others. They are alternatives that may also be complementary, emphasising different aspects of learning environments.

It may be helpful to consult Pratt *et al.* on learning, and to start experimenting with one's teaching. The book is comprehensive and practical, and includes references to major authors and theorists of each perspective described.

These two tools allows one to pay attention to one's teaching practice. Looking at and becoming aware of one's own values, aims and practice enables one to strengthen one's intercultural pedagogical capacity, and to identify elements of hidden pedagogy in structures and processes by looking at one's perceptions of curriculum, content knowledge, teaching materials, teaching and working methods, interaction and evaluation.

Particular attention should be given to the language dominance of the majority, which often excludes and culturally subordinates minority languages. There are many pedagogical tools to promote a more 'democratic world linguistic order' and multilingualism in the classroom (eg Phillipson, 2000).

One's reflections may lead to the improvement of the learning environment to become more inclusive, secure and participatory. Wenger (1998, p 267) suggests that interactive teaching and learning should become 'structuring resources for each other'. This gives emergent space in multicultural contexts.

### ***Proceeding toward a continuing professional development***

Professional self-development is a continuing transformative process, based on one's private and individual work and on interactions with others in the community and society. When working to improve pedagogy, it may help to try some of the following on a continuing, rather than a one-off basis: writing a personal journal, preparing a portfolio, consulting students, networking and/or cooperating within as well as outside the local academic community.

***Writing a journal and preparing a portfolio:*** Memos, journals and other documents related to one's teaching practice, complemented by reflections, can show the development of one's awareness and teacher identity. Little by little, documenting one's teaching activity forms a teaching portfolio, a tool used in pedagogical faculty development. The portfolio may collect together evaluations, teaching experiments, critical incidents, teaching philosophy, reflections, other narratives, etc. There are many ways to organise, collect and keep a portfolio. As a long term reflective vehicle, it can follow one's cumulative growth as a teacher. Some higher education teachers have found it beneficial to teach their students how to prepare a course portfolio, while the teacher is also preparing one on the same course, thus allowing for an enriched course evaluation and mutual reflection on learning.

***Perceiving students as 'learning companions':*** A teacher's most genuine 'companions in learning' are the students. Working in multilingual and multicultural contexts, it is very important to get to know one's students, their backgrounds, their preferred learning styles and their general well-being, because these influence interactions and learning. Teaching practice can be enhanced by giving students a chance to use their voices, their languages and cultural knowledge and by encouraging all students to be linguistically and culturally active learners. This can create rich learning environments and empower the students to openly negotiate their identities. This can ultimately lead to multiculturally enhanced professionalism for both students and teachers.

Students with different cultural backgrounds, given the opportunity, may be the best evaluators of 'hidden pedagogy'. This includes both those in minority and majority positions. These evaluations can serve as catalysts for developing more democratic and culturally sensitive dialogical working methods with one's students. Being receptive and open to differences and other kinds of perceptions and views, as well as discussing controversies, allows one to show students one's self-respect and respect for them. This can serve as a model of good practice for one's students and thus enhance the development of their own professional awareness and skills, whether they are in the position of linguistic and cultural majority or minority. The recognition of students' identities is crucial, as Talib (2002, p 142) notes: 'Only a conscious awareness of one's own self-respect makes it possible to realize one's own life project and develop an accepting attitude toward the others despite the difference'.

***Advancing pedagogical communities of practice:*** Actively participating in established networks and creating a personal multiculturally-oriented teachers' network in one's academic community may also be beneficial. Sharing experiences, learning from each other and acting as the evaluators of each others' teaching adds to personal and professional identity development. One may learn a lot by connecting with visiting teachers as well as in-house teachers with a different linguistic and cultural background from one's own. Teachers and students with multilingual or multicultural backgrounds may not only make one more aware of their cultural identity, but can also act as cultural code switchers serving as positive models of the benefits of multi-identities (Campbell, 2000). These connections may even encourage one to conduct experiments using new teaching methods, for example cross-cultural team teaching, participating in teacher exchange programmes, or even participating in international programmes focused on intercultural teacher training, e.g. within ERASMUS. Practising multicultural relations is necessary ground for the creation and development of multicultural identities.

***Benefiting from a multidisciplinary and multiprofessional campus community:***

University processes in higher education systems may differ in many ways, although a certain degree of similarity may be expected, given the Bologna Process. There may already exist, or plans may have been made, for a specific and clearly defined strategy and process for the creation of a multicultural community of practice in each university. If such a process is not defined, however, the interested teacher can work proactively to establish one within the university framework. As already mentioned, it may well be worth creating contacts with and learning from researchers and teachers in a variety of departments such as the schools of human and social sciences, and the physical sciences as well as teacher education units. The international affairs unit at each university may be a good source of information and further connections. In addition most universities nowadays have a unit, or at least some experts responsible for foreign language training and faculty development or pedagogical training of teachers, that may arrange special training or offer consultation on a one-to-one basis.

The task, even where processes exist, is something the individual needs to approach, as ownership of action comes from within rather than from others. Maximizing the resources available supports finding one's way through the maze of highly complex multicultural learning contexts and teaching situations caused by different worlds and identities.

The ultimate goal, however, would be both personal and communal identity transformation. It can be described as creating a campus-wide 'learning community' (Wenger, 1998, p 214-221) in which the *multiculturality* of students, teachers and other personnel creates positive tension between experience and competence to enhance learning of the new.

## Appendix: Dimensions of conceptions of learning, after Nevgi and Lindblom-Ylänne

	Transmitting information	Transmitting structured knowledge	Teacher-student interaction	Facilitating understanding	Conceptual change
<b>Learning theory</b>	Behaviourism	Cognitive theories of learning	Humanism	Constructivism	Socio-constructivism
<b>Teacher's role</b>	Presenter of information	Presenter and transmitter of knowledge	Tutor and coach	Facilitator and helper	Change agent and lead of the way (avant-gardist)
<b>Teaching</b>	Transfer of information	Deconstruction of knowledge and transfer of well structured information	Interactive process	Process of helping students to learn	Development and conceptions, teaching that leads to the proximal development zone
<b>Student's role</b>	Passive recipient	Recipient, active experimentalist	Participant	Student is responsible for her/his own learning	Student participates in learning community and is responsible also for the learning process of peers
<b>Content</b>	Defined by curriculum	Described in curriculum, teacher organises, orders and structures the material for its teaching	Defined by teacher on the basis of her/his expertise	Constructed by students within teacher's framework	Constructed by students, but conceptions may be changed
<b>Knowledge</b>	Possessed by teacher and transmitted to students	Possessed by teacher, student receives the knowledge with own effort and understanding	Discovered by students but within teacher's framework	Constructed by students	Socially constructed knowledge together with members of a learning community

Sources: Lindblom-Ylänne & Nevgi, 2002; based on Kemper, 1997.

## Some supportive resources

To expand one's knowledge and professional connections outside the local academic community one can acquire information from different sources for self-development and awareness building. We provide a sampling of possible supportive resources available to the university professional.

### Library and the Internet

University library collections and data bases. Utilizing global as well as national search engines using the Internet and the appropriate keywords. Even the most critical review of the Internet materials suggests that the open-access literature and other resources offered by a border-crossing international community is worth browsing.

### Periodicals and handbooks

Consulting the university library may lead you to the basic handbooks and journals in the field; many libraries also provide electronic article database connections which allow one to read the articles of the international journals in their electronic full-text versions.

See e.g. *Intercultural Education; International Journal of Intercultural Relations; Journal of Language, Identity & Education; Journal of Peace Education; Race, Ethnicity and Education*.

Major international publishing houses publish handbooks and readers, with overviews, theory-into-practice discussion, examples and models for teaching and learning; some recent titles:

Landis, D., Bennett J.M. & Bennett M.J. (eds.) 2004. *Handbook of intercultural training* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Darder, A., Baltodano, M. & Torres, R.D. (eds.) 2003. *The critical pedagogy reader*. New York and London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Adams, M. et al. (eds.) 2000. *Readings for diversity and social justice*. New York and London: Routledge.

There are thematic publication series, for example: *Languages for Intercultural Communication and Education*. Editors: Michael Byram & Alison Phipps. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.  
<http://www.multilingual-matters.com>

See also: Batelaan, P. & Coomans, F. 1999. The international basis for intercultural education including anti-racist and human rights education. (2nd ed.) International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE in cooperation with UNESCO: International Bureau of Education (IBE) and the Council of Europe.  
<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/Publications/FreePublications/FreePublicationsPdf/batelaan.PDF>

### International and area organizations and centres

UNESCO, Council of Europe and of late the European Union are just some of the international organizations that provide resources on a variety of subjects related to multicultural contexts. Some of their efforts include: organizing units, projects, campaigns, and conferences, publishing official and other international documents, providing data bases and disseminating information concerning the issues of for example: human rights, intercultural education, peace education, and acting against racism, xenophobia and intolerance. The website addresses for these three organizations are:  
<http://www.education.unesco.org>; <http://www.coe.int>;  
<http://www.europe.eu.int>.

The European Union sponsored and funded Socrates-Erasmus Programme geared towards: student and teacher exchanges; joint development of study programmes; CD projects; thematic networks between university departments and faculties across Europe; language courses and intensive programmes. The website address for this is:  
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/erasmus/erasmus\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/erasmus/erasmus_en.html)

European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) conducts research and publishes reports and other informative documentation on inter-ethnic relations, minority issues and ethnic conflict in Europe.  
<http://www.ecmi.de>

### Networks

*Citizenship education*: The international Children's Identity & Citizenship in Europe (CiCe) network and its web-based data base are a major supportive resource. All the major documents of the CiCe network are collected on the website: conference proceedings, books, reports, handbooks, guidelines, booklets and contact information of the people within the network. The site will ultimately also include thematic materials and their references in national languages.  
<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/cice/>

*Peace education and conflict resolution*: Outside the formal schooling arena there are international networks, e.g. Transcend, a Peace and Development Network, that is organizing training and publishing documents. <http://www.transcend.org>

*Pedagogical faculty development*: Multi-professional networking on a national and international basis, international conferences and an academic journal,

for example the International Journal for Academic Development or (IJAD), of the International Consortium for Educational Development in Higher Education (ICED) which acts as an umbrella network of the networks. <http://www.csd.uwa.edu.au/iced/>

### Academic communities

Internationally organized disciplinary and multidisciplinary research associations create connections in discussion forums, organize conferences and publish proceedings, journals and other publications; their web pages include information on activities and additional links that may be of interest. Within research associations there are Special Interest Groups (SIG) or networks for researchers and teachers interested in perspectives and issues of intercultural/multicultural pedagogy and higher education:

*Educational research:* The European Educational Research Association (EERA), <http://www.eera.ac.uk/>; the European Association for Research in Learning and

Instruction (EARLI), <http://www.earli.eu.org/>; as well as the American Educational Research Association (AERA), <http://www.aera.net>.

*Inter-/multicultural education:* See the associations above, and for training see also the European Association for International Education (EAIE): <http://www.eaie.nl/>; the Society for Intercultural Education, Training, and Research – Europe (SIETAR), <http://www.sietar-europa.org/>; as well as the International Academy for Intercultural Research (IAIR), <http://www.watervalley.net/users/academy/>

*Applied linguistics:* International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA), <http://www.aila.soton.ac.uk>

*Cultural Studies:* Association for Cultural Studies, <http://cultstud.org/>

*Semiotics:* International Association for Semiotic Studies (IASS), <http://www.uni-ak.ac.at/culture/withalm/semiotics/AIS/>

The supportive resources we have listed above are the tip of the iceberg. And, while it may seem that there is an abundance of materials and potential linkages available, this creates a problem of relevant selection. One may choose the materials one is most literate in, or for example, be more open and choose an area with which one feels a degree of 'distance'. At this point choosing a 'distant' area may offer a broader cross- and interdisciplinary forum for widening one's professional perspectives.

## Conclusion

Multicultural/multilingual identities have become an integral part of our contemporary world. They are the result of our worlds' previous development and the ground from which to upgrade its multicultural quality based on non-violent co-existence, solidarity and respect for cultural diversity, which are considered a starting point for mutual enrichment of inter-cultural contact agents.

The conscious constructing of multicultural/multilingual inclusive identities has become an essential goal of education institutions. For the university teacher to be able to develop the multicultural inclusive identities of her/his students the teachers themselves must have them. It is up to us as educators to begin from within, from ourselves.

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The Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe (CiCe) Thematic Network links 28 European states and some 80 universities and college departments which are engaged in educating students about how children and young people learn about and understand their society, their identity and citizenship.

A cross-disciplinary group, we include lecturers in social psychology, pedagogy, psychology, sociology and curriculum studies, and those who educate various professions such as teachers, social pedagogues, psychologists, early childhood workers and youth workers.

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