It’s more than just language: Cultural competency in today’s global environment

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My Voice, My Choice

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We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

July 4, 1776
What splendor! What poverty!
What humanity!
What inhumanity!
What mutual good will!
What individual isolation!
What loyalty to the ideal!
What hypocrisy!
What triumph of conscience!
What perversity!

Czeslaw Milosz
What is cultural competence?

- Cultural competence is a dynamic attribute, a changing, and never-ending pathway that guides us toward an increasingly multi-ethnic future world.

- It is an awareness, the valuing of all cultures, and a willingness to make changes are underlying values.

- But it is an arena in which the “head” is less important than the “heart.”
cultural competence = social justice

Leveling the playing field to provide equal opportunities for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness by ensuring

- Accessibility
- Availability
- Appropriateness
“Sources of Cultural Identity”

Ethnicity/Nationality
Race
Social Class
Sex/Gender
The Individual

Ability/Disability
Language
Social Status
Religion
Sexuality
Geographic Region

Health
Age

Cushner, McClelland, & Safford (1996), Human Diversity in Education: An Integrative Approach, p. 66
"Socializing Agents that Transmit Culture"

Cushner, McClelland, & Safford (1996), Human Diversity in Education: An Integrative Approach, p. 66
The Cultural Acquisition Process

- Race
- Ethnicity/Nationality
- Social Class
- Sex/Gender
- Ability/Disability
- Language
- Social Status
- Religion
- Sexuality
- Geographic Region
- Age
- Workplace
- Family
- School
- Church
- Community
- Neighborhood
- Peer Group
- Electronic Media
- Print Media
- The Arts
- Sports
- Technology
- The Individual

Cushner, McClelland, & Safford (1996), Human Diversity in Education: An Integrative Approach, p. 66
Why is it important to develop culturally competent skills to serve a diverse population of persons with disabilities?

- Accessibility
- Availability
- Appropriateness
Ethical Issues

- To what degree are students/participants, regardless of their beliefs and attitudes, encouraged to be open, reflective, and critical thinkers?
- To what degree may such inquiry place students/participants in direct conflict with their families and the communities in which they live?
Prejudice Formation

- Observation
- Group membership
- Media
- Religious fundamentalism – the more orthodox or fundamental one’s religious beliefs are, the greater the prejudice toward other religious and cultural groups is likely to be.
Prejudice/Empowerment

- Dismiss
- Devalue
- Disregard
- Disempower
- be Present
- be Proud
- be Pertinent
- be Powerful
Empowerment

“Empowerment is a process of increasing personal, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals can take action to improve their life situation.”

Gutierrez, 1990
Thoughts

It is more than just language.

What are some of the other factors?

What is objective?

What is subjective?
Hawai‘i as an Example

- No dominant ethnic majority
- “But not all are equal.”
- Many different languages
- Language Access Act
Myths

- Lump sum – lumps all Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders together as a category
- Dim Sum – only those in the same group can understand each other, ignores the larger forces affecting all minority groups
- Zero Sum – the gains of one group represents a loss to another or other groups
Disability Cultural Issues

- Stigma
- Shame
- Disparities
- Independence
- Self-determination
Participatory Action Research (PAR)

- Traditional research has often allowed the dominant cultural perspective to prevail over minority.
- PAR provides a voice for cultural interpreters.
- PAR offers a means of scientifically documenting and translating non-Western experiences.
Self-Inventory

Discussion
Josh
References


http://www11.georgetown.edu/research/gucchd/nccc