CrossMark

Teachers and the foundations of intercultural interaction

Oya Günay[1]

Abstract With the effects of globalisation, the number of people exposed to intercultural interaction has increased significantly. One of the most affected sectors is education. In parallel to the increase in numbers of students going abroad for tertiary education, primary and secondary education classes have also become culturally and religiously more diverse, mainly due to the effects of migration. With the increase in cultural diversity among their students, teachers find themselves facing new challenges. In order to be able to effectively encourage cultural exchange and intercultural dialogue, teachers need to cultivate their own intercultural competence. However, instead of directly jumping to the end result, this paper focuses on the very foundations of any intercultural interaction, namely self-awareness – of one's own normative settings –, acceptance of the equality of different cultural approaches, and strategies for how these can be transformed into personal attributes. The author highlights the importance of the internalisation of a belief in order to be able to reflect it in one's behaviour and convey to others the sense that they are genuinely accepted as they are. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) provides important insights into how and under which conditions internalisation can take place. Combining the insights gained from SDT with questioning techniques used by coaching experts, the author drafts a set of self-assessment questions which aim to help teachers reflect on the foundations of their intercultural interactions, gauge their level of internalisation and define the areas they have to focus on in order to cultivate their intercultural competence.

Keywords teachers · intercultural interaction · acceptance · internalisation · self-determination theory

✉ Oya Günay
oya@oyagunay.com

[1] Stumpergasse 51, 36 1060 Vienna, Austria

 Springer

Résumé Enseignants et fondements de l'interaction interculturelle – Avec les effets de la mondialisation, le nombre de personnes confrontées à l'interaction culturelle a sensiblement augmenté. L'un des secteurs les plus concernés est celui de l'éducation. Parallèlement au nombre croissant d'étudiants qui suivent un cursus à l'étranger, les classes de l'enseignement primaire et secondaire sont elles aussi devenues plus diversifiées sur le plan culturel et religieux, conséquence probable de la migration. Face à la diversité culturelle croissante des élèves, les enseignants sont confrontés à de nouveaux défis. Pour être en mesure de stimuler efficacement l'échange culturel et le dialogue interculturel, les enseignants doivent cultiver leur propre compétence interculturelle. Au lieu de se rendre directement au résultat final, l'auteure traite les fondements mêmes de toute interaction interculturelle, à savoir la conscience de soi – de ses propres paramètres normatifs -, l'acceptation de l'égalité des différentes approches, et les stratégies culturelles pour transformer celles-ci en attributs personnels. L'auteure signale l'importance pour une personne d'internaliser une conviction avant d'être capable de la refléter dans son comportement, et de transmettre aux autres le sentiment qu'ils sont réellement acceptés tels qu'ils sont. La théorie de l'auto-détermination (SDT) fournit des renseignements décisifs sur la façon dont l'internalisation peut avoir lieu et sous quelles conditions. En associant des éléments tirés de la SDT aux techniques de questionnement appliquées par les spécialistes de l'accompagnement, l'auteure élabore une série de questions d'auto-évaluation susceptibles d'aider les enseignants à réfléchir aux fondements de leurs interactions interculturelles, à évaluer leur niveau d'internalisation, et à définir les domaines sur lesquels se concentrer pour cultiver leur compétence interculturelle.

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

Nelson Mandela

Introduction

Undeniably, the world has become flatter (Friedman 2005). With the effects of globalisation, the number of people exposed to intercultural interaction has increased significantly. One of the most affected sectors is education. The number of university students studying abroad has increased by almost 80 per cent in the ten years between 2000 and 2010 (UIS 2013). In 2010, 3.6 million people worldwide were studying outside their home country (ibid.). These numbers are expected to further increase with projections that by 2025 the number of students studying abroad will be close to 8 million (Cushner and Chang 2015, p. 2). In parallel to the increase in numbers of students going abroad for tertiary education, primary and secondary education classes have also become more diverse both in terms of culture and in terms of religion, mainly due to the effects of migration. Identity issues and the expression of cultural and religious differences have gained importance in everyday interactions. All of these developments present teachers with new challenges.

Teachers working in the field of intercultural education, who are involved with encouraging dialogue and learning among students of different cultures, beliefs and religions, need to be interculturally competent. Intercultural competence is defined as an ability to effectively function in culturally diverse settings (Bennett 1993; Rosinski 2003; Cushner and Chang 2015; Jackson 2015). Interculturally competent teachers "strive to develop rapport and build inclusive classrooms that welcome students from a wide array of backgrounds and experiences" (Cushner and Chang 2015, p. 4). They see diversity not as a burden or a source of chaos, but rather as an opportunity for cultural exchange and learning and therefore as a chance for creating more options and novel solutions. Studies have revealed that intercultural competence, like many other soft skills, can be cultivated; however, this requires a process which entails different stages.

This paper is concerned with the cultivation of intercultural competence among teachers. Instead of dealing with the methods and techniques which facilitate intercultural dialogue, it focuses on the oft-neglected foundations of intercultural interaction.

Based on the assumption that people with strong self-awareness are honest – with themselves and with others (Goleman 1998) –, their focusing on their own cultural mindsets, norms and codes constitutes an important condition for their being able to interact with people from different cultures. Hence, gaining awareness entails a process of self-reflection which directs the spotlight onto our own mental programmes rather than focusing on differences in others.

Another important condition is the acceptance of the equality of different cultural beliefs. However, accepting that the beliefs, values, norms and assumptions which matter to us are neither universally valid nor superior to those of others is a rather difficult undertaking (Bennett 1993; Rosinski 2003; Cushner and Chang 2015). Even if a person values cultural differences in principle, this belief often stays on the intellectual level and is rarely reflected in behaviour. In order to credibly act as a "facilitator" or "guide" of intercultural dialogue and learning (Jarvis 2012), teachers need to convey to students from different backgrounds the feeling of being accepted and not judged. However, "acting credibly" strongly depends on whether the person has internalised this belief or not.

Internalisation is defined as the taking on of a value, belief, attitude or behavioural regulation from an external source and its transformation into a personal attribute (Ryan and Deci 2000; Grolnick et al. 1997). Self-Determination Theory (SDT) highlights that internalisation can only take place when three basic psychological needs – namely relatedness, autonomy and competence – are satisfied or supported (ibid.). A continuum of internalisation in turn is highly dependent on finding a personal meaning in the idea, belief or regulation which needs to be internalised (Ryan and Deci 2000; Grolnick et al. 1997).

Building on the insights gained from SDT, this paper drafts a set of self-assessment questions for teachers who wish to gauge their level of internalisation and understand to what extent they are able to convey to students the sense that their cultural differences are accepted. The questions are developed according to questioning techniques used by coaching experts since they are meant to be powerful in evoking insight and discovery at the adult level. These questions do not

propose any solutions. Rather, they aim to increase self-awareness among teachers. This awareness will, in turn, help teachers understand their level of cultural competence and what they need to focus on in order to cultivate their cultural competence.

Foundations of intercultural interaction

Getting the foundation right is extremely important for any process and should be given maximum attention. However, in today's hectic world the focus has shifted to the end result of a process and there seems to be little room for checking whether the foundations of the process are solid. The same can be said about intercultural dialogue. Teachers around the globe have become overwhelmed with new toolkits, programmes and instructions dealing with cultural diversity and dialogue. This paper wishes to go back one step and focus on the necessary foundations of any intercultural interaction in the classroom.

A good starting point is a thorough grasp of the dimensions of culture and cultural differences. This is likely to help teachers understand why problems or conflicts may arise in culturally diverse settings.

What is culture?

Culture generally defines the common features of a group which distinguish it from another group. National culture manifests itself at two levels – a visible and an invisible one. While the first level entails language, artefacts, behaviour, food, fashion and other visible expressions, the second level refers to shared invisible features such as values, norms and beliefs (Rosinski 2003, p. 22). Intercultural conflicts mainly arise within the invisible dimension of cultural identity (Hicks and Peterson 1999). Geert Hofstede, a renowned pioneer of research on cross-cultural groups and organisations, emphasises the internal dimensions of culture. He defines culture as a mental programme producing an inner reality which shapes the basic assumptions, general values and societal norms of individuals (Hofstede 2001). These mental programmes are developed in the family in early childhood and reinforced in schools and organisations (ibid., "Summary of the book", p. xix).

Hence, based on this definition, culture can be seen as a "software" which certainly shapes the individual reality of group members, but which nevertheless functions differently in each person. It is a group phenomenon, but is not the only factor which defines an individual's identity (Rosinski 2003, p. 20).

Each person is unique and shaped by a variety of influences which go beyond national culture, such as family background, personal experiences, genetics, education, profession, and so on. All these aspects combine to create an individual's identity, world view, beliefs, assumptions and behaviours (Hicks and Peterson 1999).

Cultural differences

Cultural features are perceived as an integral part of one's identity and usually remain unchallenged until the individual is confronted with different cultural mindsets. When people from two or more cultures interact, it is mainly the invisible dimension of culture which causes conflict (Hicks and Peterson 1999). Gary Oddou and Mark Mendenhall explain this phenomenon as the "saliency effect".

> The differences in cultures may become salient features simply because they are novel and because the foreigner focuses more attention on them. The saliency effect may become extremely important in forming the foreigner's impressions and conclusions about the people and their behaviour in the new culture. Other things of the culture, less salient but equally important and common in the culture, may be omitted from the foreigner's consideration in creating a picture of the culture and making attributions about the people (Oddou & Mendenhall 1984, p. 83).

Individuals usually value the norms and beliefs of their own group more than those of others. Confronted with the invisible features of other cultures, people tend to perceive the unfamiliar or novel as peculiar or feel contempt for it. Such encounters may even reinforce the belief in the rightness and superiority of one's own norms. This kind of approach can also be defined as "ethnocentrism" (Bennet 1993). Milton Bennett (ibid.) defines ethnocentrism as an assumption that one's own culture is central to all reality. Ethnocentrism may occur in three forms (Rosinski 2003; Hawkins and Smith 2006; Jackson, 2015; Cushner and Chang 2015):

(1) *Denial:* The person ignores cultural differences. He/she tends to see his/her own cultural norms as correct and generally valid: In such a case, interest in and curiosity about the other culture are low.

(2) *Defensiveness:* The person recognises differences, but evaluates them negatively. In such cases, the person generally perceives cultural differences as something negative and tends to regard them as inferior.

(3) *Minimisation:* The person recognises differences and does not necessarily see them as negative, but minimises their importance. Philippe Rosinski holds that in such cases "uniqueness is ironed out" (Rosinski 2003, p. 33). It entails the assumption that "what works for me must also work for others".

However, it is important to keep in mind that ethnocentrism is neither a fixed nor an immutable propensity. Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) suggests how the interpretation of cultural difference – the world view – can change or can be cultivated at different points along a continuum of development (DeJaeghere and Zhang 2008, p. 257). In this continuum, a highly ethnocentric mindset stands at one end while an ethno-relative or intercultural one represents the other end (Cushner and Chang 2015, p. 4). People shift from one stage to another as they become more transculturally effective (Hawkins and Smith 2006, p. 263).

Intercultural competence and its precondition

The ability to shift from an ethnocentric perspective where "difference is viewed as something to be avoided" (Cushner and Chang 2015, p. 5) to an ethno-relative approach where difference is recognised and an individual is able to effectively interact with people of different cultural backgrounds, is what constitutes intercultural competence (Bennett 1993; Hammer 2013; Cushner and Chang 2015, Jackson 2015). The acquisition of intercultural competence is essential "if people are ultimately to come together with those whose backgrounds, ways of thinking, communicating and behaving are significantly different from their own in their efforts to solve the problems that are increasingly global in nature" (Cushner and Chang 2015, p. 3).

Both the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) (Hammer 2011, 2012), as well as the DMIS regard acceptance as a turning point in shifting from an ethnocentric mindset into an intercultural/global mindset.

Acceptance in which there is a recognition that difference is a relative variable which cannot be measured in reference to a universal norm and a postulation that there is no generally accepted hierarchy of cultural norms and beliefs constitutes an essential precondition for any intercultural interaction. Thus, before focusing on the counterparts and trying to analyse others and their features, it is important to turn to oneself and to question one's own features. One may conclude that without accepting the relativity of one's own cultural world view, no effective intercultural interaction can take place (Hawkins and Smith 2006).

There is no doubt that acceptance, like many other acts, starts at the cognitive level. However, thinking in a certain way and even expressing it verbally may not automatically convince others that their difference is accepted. What makes a person credible and trustworthy in the eyes of others is mainly behaviour, and, to a lesser extent, words and intentions.

Acting credibly – conveying to others the sense of genuinely accepting that "a different truth or ideal is legitimate" (Rosinski 2003, p. 36) – requires the internalisation of this belief.

Internalisation of a belief

"Internalization concerns the processes by which individuals acquire beliefs, attitudes or behavioural regulations from external sources and progressively transform those external regulations into personal attributes, values or regulatory styles" (Grolnick et al. 1997, p. 139).

One may conclude that internalisation matters when values, attitudes and behavioural regulations are originally external but need to be taken on by the individual. Here, the individual's motivation which arises from outside can be defined as extrinsic motivation. "When extrinsically motivated, people behave in order to attain some outcome different from the mere enjoyment of the activity itself" (Grolnick et al. 1997, p. 137). This contrasts with intrinsic motivation, which comes from within the individual, not from external sources and does not consider

any external outcome. In the case of intrinsic motivation, an individual performs an activity or behaviour just because he/she enjoys the activity itself. The sense of pleasure or satisfaction which an individual gets from this activity is sufficient to motivate him/her.

However, studies show that only children are playful and perform activities without expecting any reward (Ryan and Deci 2000). Richard Ryan and Edward Deci argue that after early childhood people are mostly extrinsically motivated towards beliefs, attitudes or behavioural regulations, since "the freedom to be intrinsically motivated is increasingly curtailed by social pressures to do activities that are not interesting and to assume a variety of new possibilities" (ibid., p. 71).

In support of this thesis, the motivation of teachers to regard the different cultural mindsets among their students as an opportunity is rarely intrinsic but mostly extrinsic.

Since teachers themselves are socialised in a certain culture and shaped by its widely shared values and beliefs, leaving their own norms and assumptions aside and accepting that there are different ways of thinking and doing things is not as easy as it might sound. Therefore, like many other people, the majority of teachers may also lack any natural inclination towards feeling comfortable with differences and being able to accept that there are other ways of thinking and doing things. However, in recent years, international organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, as well as international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and national authorities have promoted cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue programmes involving youth. Teachers, considered as potential "facilitators" and "guides" of intercultural dialogue, have often been overwhelmed with seminars, recommendations, guides, toolkits and the like. One can conclude that such projects are often imposed on people working in the education sector, rather than being based on their own initiative. Thus, motivation is often highly dependent on external outcomes in terms of rewards or penalties. In other words, their motivation is mostly extrinsic. Awareness of the nature of one's own motivation is an important step forward and the only way to transform it into a self-regulated one is internalisation.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), initially developed by Ryan and Deci, provides important insights in that regard. SDT refers to a particular approach to human motivation and personality and focuses on how extrinsically motivated actions can also become self-determined. In other words, according to SDT an individual can only successfully perform an activity which was not self-determined, where the motivation was extrinsic and where an outcome was expected, if this person has internalised the value or belief underlying that activity and has been able to make it an integral part of his/her behaviour. "Individuals become increasingly autonomous or self-determined for extrinsic activities as the process of internal-isation functions more fully and effectively to bring the initially external regulations into coherence with one's self" (Grolnick et al. 1997, p. 139).

SDT argues that internalisation – the taking on of a value or belief – is interconnected with the support of three basic psychological needs: relatedness, autonomy and competence (Ryan 1995; Ryan et al. 1995; Ryan and Deci 2000).

Relatedness

In the process of internalisation, SDT highlights "relatedness" as one basic need. Since "extrinsically motivated behaviours are not typically interesting, the primary reason people initially perform such actions is because the behaviours are prompted, modelled, or valued by significant others to whom they feel (or want to feel) attached or related" (Ryan and Deci 2000, p. 73).

Relatedness can be also defined as having a kind of connection with others. According to Grolnick, Deci and Ryan it is the combination of "affection" and "security" which creates this connection (Grolnick et al. 1997). Whereas security refers to having a secure base and not feeling threatened, affection may encompass caring, interest, closeness, concern, belonging, love, etc. In his *Choice theory*, William Glasser supports this by highlighting love and belonging as the basic needs behind the motives of human behaviour (Glasser 1998, p. 33).

Autonomy

Autonomy can be simply defined as the right of an individual to organise his/her own activity. In contrast to being controlled, it is self-regulated and gives an individual freedom to attain an activity.

Being autonomous is an innate need of individuals. "A basic human propensity is to be an 'origin' or agent with respect to action: People fundamentally desire to experience an internal locus of initiation and regulation for their behaviour" (Grolnick et al. 1997, p. 138; DeCharms 1968; Heider 1958). When any belief or behaviour is fully regulated/controlled by external sources, it is highly likely that an individual will fail to internalise it. Supporting this approach, Glasser emphasises that "external control is the enemy of freedom" (Glasser 1998, p. 40). He refers to freedom as one of the basic psychological needs of human beings and mentions that as human beings we need to feel free to choose how we live our lives (ibid.).

In order to have a greater sense of autonomy, some factors like freedom, choice (Glasser 1998), willingness or flexibility should be in place in contrast to pressure, anxiety or a sense of "should" (Grolnick et al. 1997).

Competence

According to SDT, "people are more likely to adopt activities that relevant social groups value when they feel efficacious with respect to those activities" (Ryan and Deci 2000, p. 73).

Feeling competent or believing in oneself does not only play a key role in the process of internalisation but also has a big impact on successfully carrying out any activity. Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory argues that "the strength of people's conviction in their own effectiveness is likely to affect whether they will even try to

cope with given situations. At this initial level, perceived self-efficacy influences choice of behavioural settings" (Bandura 1977, p. 193). Therefore, one may conclude that people tend to get involved in activities when they believe they are capable of performing them.

Personal meaning

In addition to these three psychological needs (relatedness, autonomy and competence) which are key to internalisation, SDT also highlights "personal meaning" as another factor which has to be taken into account in this process. According to SDT, what promotes internalisation is finding a meaning in a new belief or value and then being able to link it with already internalised values (Ryan and Deci 2000). "What does it mean to me?" is the key question when looking for a meaning in any value, belief or activity.

Developing a meaning is not only an important factor for internalisation, but is also considered to be one of the most important drivers of human motivation and happiness. There are a number of studies which support this argument. Viktor E. Frankl (2006) and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (2008) are two among many authors who point out the significance of personal meaning.

Self-assessment questions for teachers

Questioning techniques used by coaching experts

Coaching, which has its roots in adult learning, neuroscience, adult development, management education, sports psychology, psychotherapy, organisational behaviour and behavioural sciences (Stein 2004) is considered to be one of the most effective methods used for personal development and growth (Rosinski 2003; Stober and Grant 2006; Ives 2008; Passmore 2010). Rather than teaching or telling people what to do (Rosinski 2003; Whitworth et al. 2007), coaching aims to facilitate self-reflection, self-awareness and self-initiated change through powerful questions. Powerful coaching questions should evoke a process in which individuals explore the thinking behind their behaviours (Garmston et al. 1993). Therefore, they do not aim to gather more information, but "invit[e] clients to look – not only with their minds, but with their hearts, souls, and intuition – into places that are familiar but that they may see with new eyes and into places they may not have looked at before" (Whitworth et al. 2007, p. 76). According to the *Professional Coaching Core Competencies* of the International Coach Federation (ICF 2008), powerful coaching questions include the following characteristics:

- they are open-ended and require more than "yes" or "no" answers;
- they evoke discovery, insight, commitment or action;
- they reflect an understanding of the individual's perspective; and
- they help move the individual forward.

The set of questions developed at the end of this section build on SDT and were drafted in line with the above-mentioned characteristics. Their main purpose is to help teachers working in the field of intercultural education reflect on and increase their awareness of the oft-neglected psychological foundations which underlie their behavioural interaction with other cultures.

Structure

The questions are divided into four sections, reflecting the three basic psychological needs as defined by SDT, plus one additional factor. While the first three sections aim to assess the individual respondent's reflections with regard to "relatedness", "autonomy" and "competence", the fourth and last section, "personal meaning", helps explore what the respondent values about diversity.

The questions developed with regard to each of the three basic psychological needs focus on factors which need to be in place in order to satisfy each respective need. The chosen factors are based on the literature reviewed and represent samples which can be adapted, extended and further elaborated. Each factor is subdivided into three questions. In each case, the first question requires the respondent to place the response on a scale of one to ten; the other two questions ask for verbal responses.

Methodology

In the first three sections, the self-assessment tool provided (Fig. 1) combines powerful coaching questions with the scaling technique. The scaling technique, which is widely used in coaching and other "human change methodologies" (Grant 2012, p. 21), was developed in the early 1980s by Steve de Shazer, Insoo Kim Berg and others as a tool of Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (Gingerich and Eisengart 2000). In the measurement of feelings, intentions or experiences which are highly personal and subjective, scaling or rating encourages individuals to make a more concrete, clear and factual analysis than textual descriptions may do. Paul Jackson and Mark McKergow highlight that "scales offer an intuitive logic that is readily accessible" (Jackson and McKergow 2002, p. 95). Scoring a feeling, an attitude or a belief not only raises awareness of what is already in place but also helps define what can be further developed. In that regard, questions which entail scoring create a visual map of the person's current position and where he or she can move on to through personal development. In order to be effective, the wording applied in the questions needs to be specific, detailed and encourage change (Jackson and McKergow 2002).

Based on this approach, the scaling questions are ordered as follows:

- Respondents are first asked to rate their degree of satisfaction in terms of how much they can relate to cultural differences, how autonomous their decisions are and how much they believe in their own competence. They are provided with a checkbox-scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best.

RELATEDNESS										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
RQ1: How secure/safe do you feel when exposed to culturally diverse settings?										
RQ1: What has helped you get to this point?										
RQ1: What would take you up one step?										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
RQ2: How close do you feel when getting together with people of different cultures, backgrounds, religions?										
RQ2: What has helped you get to this point?										
RQ2: What would take you up one step ?										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
RQ3: How much warmth and love do you experience with people of different cultures, backgrounds, religions?										
RQ3: What has helped you get to this point?										
RQ3: What would take you up one step?										
AUTONOMY										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
AQ1: How willing are you to work with students of different cultures, beliefs and religions?										
AQ1: What has helped you get to this point?										
AQ1: What would take you up one step?										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
AQ2: How much anxiety do you experience in working with students of different cultures, beliefs and religions?										
AQ2: What has helped you get to this point?										
AQ2: What would take you up one step?										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
AQ3: How self-regulated were you in choosing to work in the field of intercultural education?										
AQ3: What has helped you get to this point?										
AQ3: What would take you up one step?										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
AQ4: How free do you feel to keep working in that field?										

Fig. 1 Self-assessment tool for teachers to gauge their own intercultural competence

AQ4: What has helped you get to this point?										
AQ4: What would take you up one step?										
COMPETENCE										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CQ1: To what extent do you believe you are capable of managing differences?										
CQ1: What has helped you get to this point?										
CQ1: What would take you up one step?										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CQ2: To what extent are you capable of dealing with a situation when you are ignored by a group of people of different cultures, beliefs or religions?										
CQ2: What has helped you get to this point?										
CQ2: What would take you up one step?										
On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being low/worst and 10 being high/best	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CQ3: To what extent do you believe you are capable of making the first move/initiating contact when exposed to a new/different cultural environment?										
CQ3: What has helped you get to this point?										
CQ3: What would take you up one step?										
PERSONAL MEANING										
PQ1: What does diversity mean to you?										
PQ2: What is it that you value in interacting with differences?										
PQ3: What kind of connection/link do you see between your existing values and acceptance of differences?										

Fig. 1 continued

- The next question aims to expose what made them check a particular box in response to the previous question. The respondent is guided to discover the resources and factors which helped him/her get to the level he/she checked in the earlier question.
- In the third and last step, respondent teachers are invited to think about the next step. The question aims to inspire them to think what they can do or need to do to move up one level. Focusing on a rather small but attainable improvement on the scale will enforce a positive motivation for change.

Whereas the scaling questions in the first three sections help define where the respondent stands and where he or she can progress to, the last section ("personal

meaning") provides three additional powerful questions to reveal what exactly the respondent thinks about diversity.

Rationale and benefits

The rationale of these questions is to give teachers an opportunity to expand their thinking and gain new insights into assessing themselves. The questions are designed for the purpose of personal development based on self-assessment and not suited for external assessment or evaluation. Since the questions asked wish to uncover subjective approaches, results vary individually and are neither qualified for gaining collective data nor useful for any comparative analysis. There are no false or true answers. Rather, they provide a platform for self-discovery. By helping teachers discover where they stand and what they can do in terms of satisfying their basic psychological needs, these questions present teachers with an alternative to credibly and effectively function in culturally diverse settings.

Conclusion

Education has been exposed to severe changes due to the effects of globalisation. The number of university students going abroad is increasing from year to year. At the same time, in primary and secondary education, teachers are confronted with increasingly culturally diverse classrooms. Cultural diversity among students requires new skills in teachers. In order to not only function in such a culturally diverse environment, but to effectively encourage intercultural dialogue and learning and to act as facilitators or guides, teachers need to be interculturally competent.

Instead of developing new techniques with regard to the concept of intercultural dialogue, this paper aims to offer a new perspective. It draws attention to the oft-neglected foundations of any interaction, which are: to become aware of one's own cultural settings and to be able to accept the equality of different cultural norms, assumptions and beliefs. Acceptance constitutes a turning point for effective intercultural interaction. Accepting difference in us and in others is crucial for being able to interact on an eye-to-eye level.

Teachers' attitude and behaviour are crucial to being able to encourage intercultural dialogue and learning. The more a belief or value has been internalised, the more this reflects on a person's behaviour. Only teachers who have truly internalised that different norms and assumptions are of equal value can gain the trust of their students with different cultural backgrounds. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) emphasises that the internalisation of beliefs, values, ideas or behavioural regulations can only be achieved when basic psychological needs of human beings, namely relatedness, autonomy and competence, are satisfied. In addition to these psychological needs, SDT also suggests that finding a personal meaning is necessary for progressing along a continuum.

The originality of this paper lies in combining the insights gained from SDT with questioning techniques used by coaching experts. It provides a set of self-assessment questions which teachers can use for testing the foundations of their intercultural interactions. By evoking self-reflection on the satisfaction of their basic psychological needs, these questions are designed to help teachers gain awareness of how much they can relate to cultural differences, how autonomous their decisions are, how much they believe in their own competence and what diversity means to them. The questions do not only activate their thinking and increase their awareness about where they see themselves but also where they can progress to.

References

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Towards a unifying theory of behavioural change. *Psychological Review, 84*(2), 191–215.

Bennett, M. (1993). Towards ethnorelativism: A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the Intercultural Experience* (pp. 21–71). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2008). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper & Row.

Cushner, K., & Chang, S. C. (2015). Developing intercultural competence through overseas student teaching: Checking our assumptions. *Intercultural Education, 26*(3), 165–178.

DeCharms, R. (1968). *Personal causation: The internal affective determinants of behaviour*. New York: Academic Press.

DeJaeghere, J. G., & Zhang, Y. (2008). Development of intercultural competence among US American teachers: professional development factors that enhance competence. *Intercultural Education, 19*(3), 255–268.

Frankl, E. V. (2006). *Man's search for meaning*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Friedman, T. (2005). *The world is flat: The globalized world in the twenty-first century*. London: Penguin.

Garmston, R., Linder, C., & Whitaker, J. (1993). Reflections on Cognitive Coaching. *Educational Leadership, 51*(2), 57–61.

Gingerich, J. W., & Eisengart, S. (2000). Solution-focused brief therapy: A review of the outcome research. *Family Process, 39*, 477–498.

Glasser, W. (1998). *Choice theory: A new psychology of personal freedom*. New York: HarperCollins.

Goleman, D. (1998). What makes a leader. *Harvard Business Review, OnPoint, 3790*, 90–102.

Grant, M. A. (2012). Making positive change: A randomized study comparing solution-focused vs. problem-focused coaching questions. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 39*(2), 21–35.

Grolnick, W. S., Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1997). Internalization within the family: The Self-Determination Theory Perspective. In J. E. Grusec & L. Kuczynski (Eds.), *Parenting and children's internalization of values: A handbook of contemporary theory* (pp. 135–161). New York: Wiley.

Hammer, M. R. (2011). Additional cross-cultural validity testing of the Intercultural Development Inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 27*(3), 421–443.

Hammer, M. R. (2012). The intercultural development inventory: A new frontier in assessment and development of intercultural competence. In M. VandeBerg, R. M. Paige, & K. H. Lou (Eds.), *Student learning abroad, what our students are learning, what they're not, and what we can do about it* (pp. 115–136). Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Hammer, M. R. (2013). *A resource guide for effectively using the intercultural development theory (IDI)*. Berlin: Intercultural Development Inventory LLC.

Hawkins, P., & Smith, N. (2006). *Coaching, mentoring and organizational consultancy: Supervision and development*. Maidenhead: Open University Press/McGraw-Hill.

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. New York: Wiley.

Hicks, M. D., & Peterson, D. B. (1999). Leaders coaching across borders. In W. H. Mobley, M. J. Gessner, & V. J. Arnold (Eds.), *Advances in global leadership* (Vol. 1). Stamford, CT: JAI Press.

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviours, institutions and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

ICF (International Coach Federation) (2008). Professional coaching core competencies. Lexington, KY: ICF. http://www.co-active-coaching.de/uploads/media/CoreCompEnglish_01.pdf. Accessed 11 May 2016.

Ives, Y. (2008). What is "coaching"? An exploration of conflicting paradigms. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring, 6*(2), 100–113.

Jackson, J. (2015). Becoming interculturally competent: Theory to practice in intercultural education. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 48*, 91–107.

Jackson, P. Z., & McKergow, M. (2002). *The solutions focus: The simple way to positive change*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Jarvis, D. H. (2012). Teacher education for change: The theory behind the Council of Europe Pestalozzi Programme. *Book review. International Review of Education, 58*(5), 705–708.

Oddou, G., & Mendenhall, M. (1984). Person perception in cross-cultural settings: A review of cross-cultural and related cognitive literature. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 8*, 77–96.

Passmore, J. (2010). *Excellence in coaching: The industry guide*. London: Kogan Page.

Rosinski, P. (2003). *Coaching across cultures: New tools for leveraging national, corporate & professional differences*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

Ryan, R. M. (1995). Psychological needs and the facilitation of integrative processes. *Journal of Personality, 63*(3), 397–427.

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *The American Psychological Association, 55*(1), 68–78.

Ryan, R. M., Deci, E. L., & Grolnick, W. S. (1995). Autonomy, relatedness, and the self: Their relation to development and psychopathology. In D. Cicchetti & D. J. Cohen (Eds.), *Developmental psychopathology: Theory and methods* (pp. 618–655). New York: Wiley.

Stein, I. F. (2004). Introduction: Beginning a promising conversation. In I. F. Stein & L. A. Belsten (eds), *Proceedings of the first International Coach Federation Coaching Research Symposium* (pp. viii–xii). Mooresville, NC: Paw Print Press.

Stober, D. R., & Grant, A. M. (2006). *Evidence based coaching handbook*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

UIS (UNESCO Institute for Statistics) (2013). Global flow of tertiary-level students [online resource]. Montreal, QC: UIS. http://www.uis.unesco.org/EDUCATION/Pages/international-student-flow-viz.aspx. Accessed 11 May 2016.

Whitworth, L., Kimsey-House, K., Kimsey-House, H., & Sandahl, P. (2007). *Co-active coaching: New skills for coaching people toward success in work and life*. Nicholas Brealey: Boston & London.

The author

Oya Günay is an Executive Coach and Strategy Partner, working with leaders and senior corporate executives across Europe. She has more than 20 years of international business experience in financial services, including senior investment banking operations, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Project Management roles. She leverages her diverse business experiences to help corporate executives and organisations develop unique strategies to maximise their potential. Her expertise includes leadership development, cultural transformation, conflict resolution and mediation, resilience and change management. Oya Günay is a certified Executive Coach of Columbia University Business School and a certified Assessment Analyst on The Neethling Brain Instrument. She works with several multinational companies across Europe and is a business partner of StangerCarlson Leadership and Talent Company in New York, USA, Coach in a Box Company, UK, and WU Executive Academy in Vienna, Austria. She teaches in some of the seminar programmes organised by the Istanbul Technical University in Istanbul, Turkey. She speaks Turkish, English and German. For more information, see www.oyagunay.com.