



# DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES USING VARIOUS LEARNING METHODS AT A MEDIA COMMUNICATION STUDY PROGRAMME

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# CONTENT



# INTRODUCTION



# WHY RESEARCH ABOUT INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES?

- *Intercultural communication competency* (ICC) has been important topic in the field of education since 1960s.
- Developing ICC is never-ending life-long process. But educational activities can help.
- Importance of media workers to be competent in *intercultural communication* (IC).
- Slovenian researchers do not discuss these topic. IC themes part of non-obligatory courses.

EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION RESEARCH – effectiveness and usefulness of different teaching/learning methods in developing students' ICC.

# INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY



# WHAT IS INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY (ICC)?

- IC and ICC are widely used in different research fields → no consistent definition.
- Deardorff (2006) quoted 50 authors, who defined IC concept from different perspectives.
- Fantini (2007) offered 20 alternatives.

# DEFINITION OF ICC

- Fantini:

“(...) a complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself. (...) One’s ICC manifests in ‘domains’ of (...) relationships, communication and collaboration (...) and [through] ‘dimensions’ of “(...) knowledge, attitude, skill and awareness (...)” (2007:9).

- Deardorff:

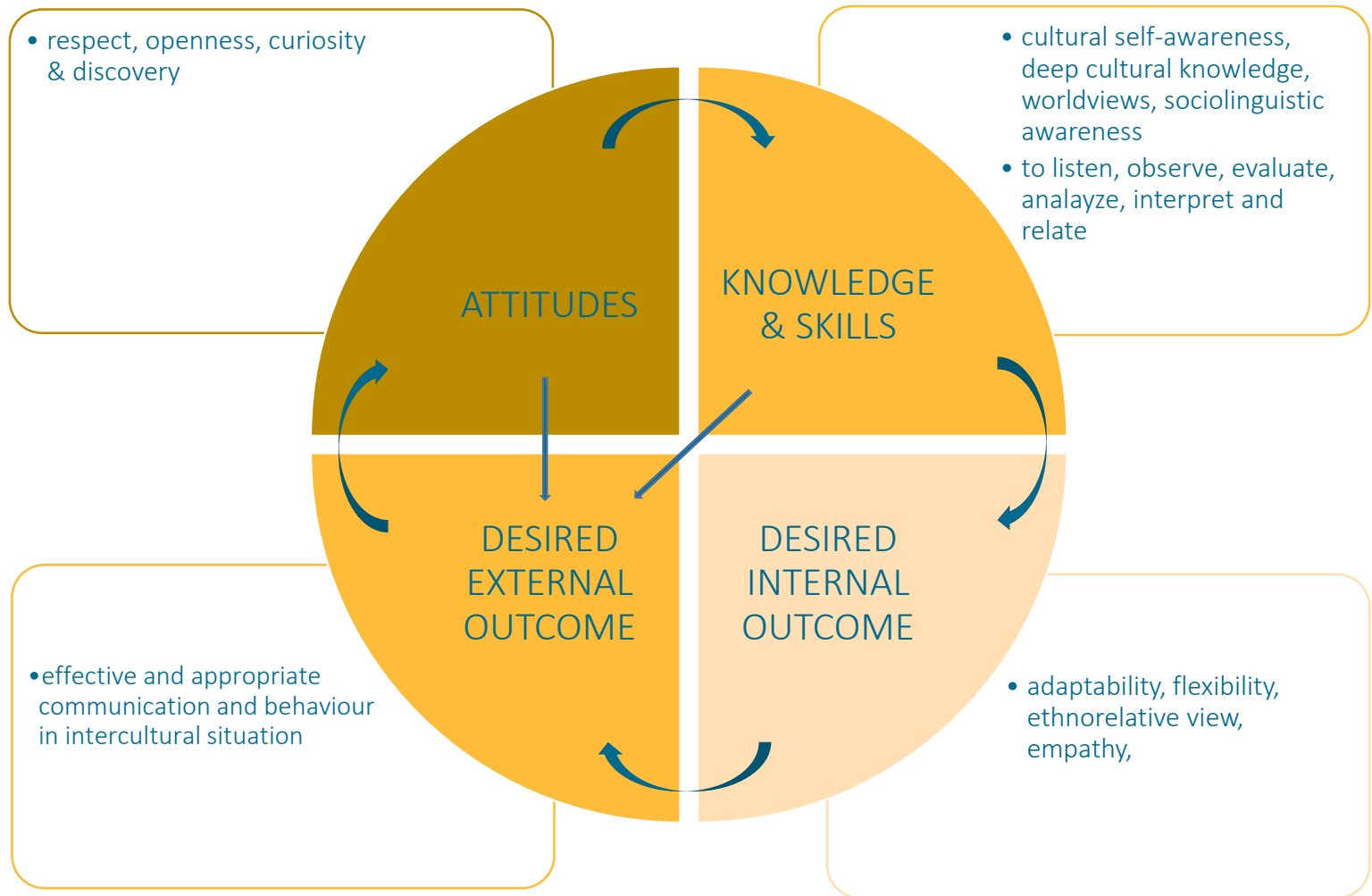
behaviour and communication that are both effective and appropriate in intercultural situations and which are developed out of targeted knowledge, skills and attitudes. (2006: 241-266)

KNOWLEDGE

ATTITUDE

SKILLS

AWARENESS



Adapted from: Process model of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006)



# DEFINITION OF ICC FOR RESEARCH

- Intercultural communication competencies as result of:
  - learning,
  - individual personality characteristics,
  - specific human behaviour.
- Focus on:
  - attitudes,
  - skills,
  - knowledge and understanding,
  - self-awareness.

# METHODOLOGY

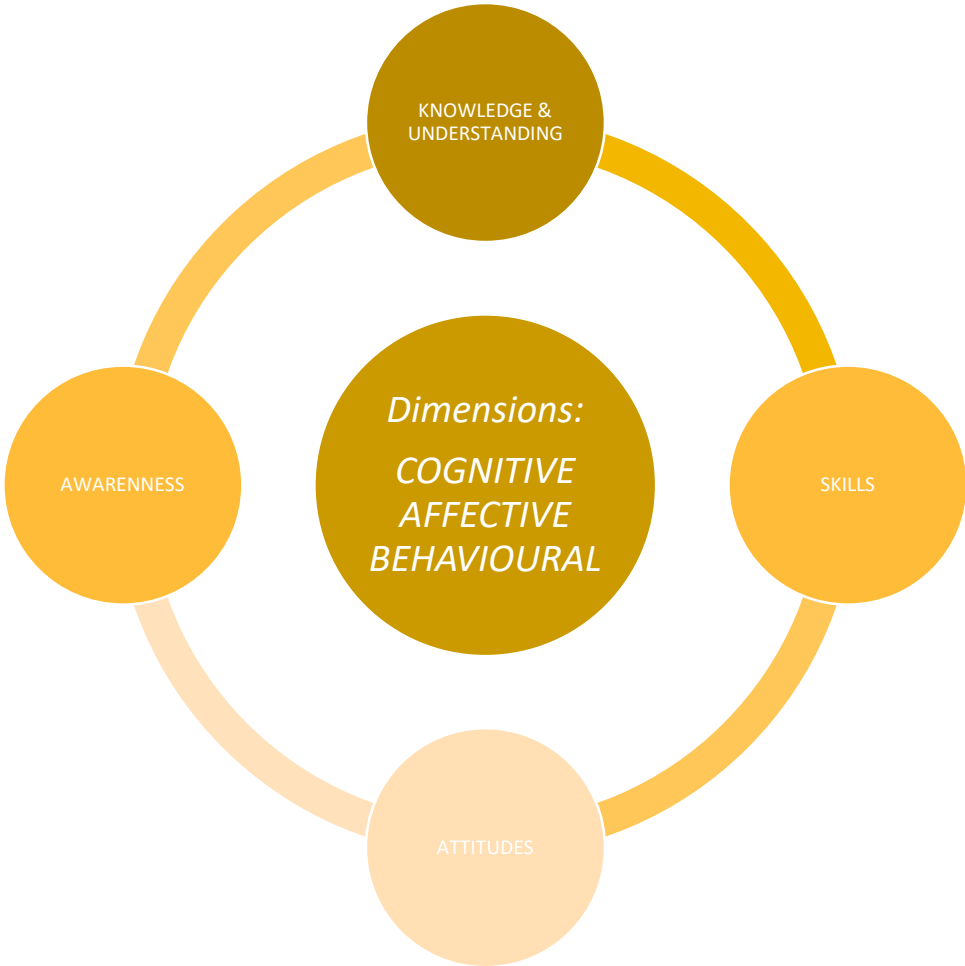


# THE RESEARCH

- Type: An educational intervention research with qualitative-evaluative approach.
- Aim: to provide information about the impact of implementing certain teaching and learning methods for developing intercultural communication competencies in the context of the present journalism and media communication education in Slovenia.

# THE RESEARCH GOALS

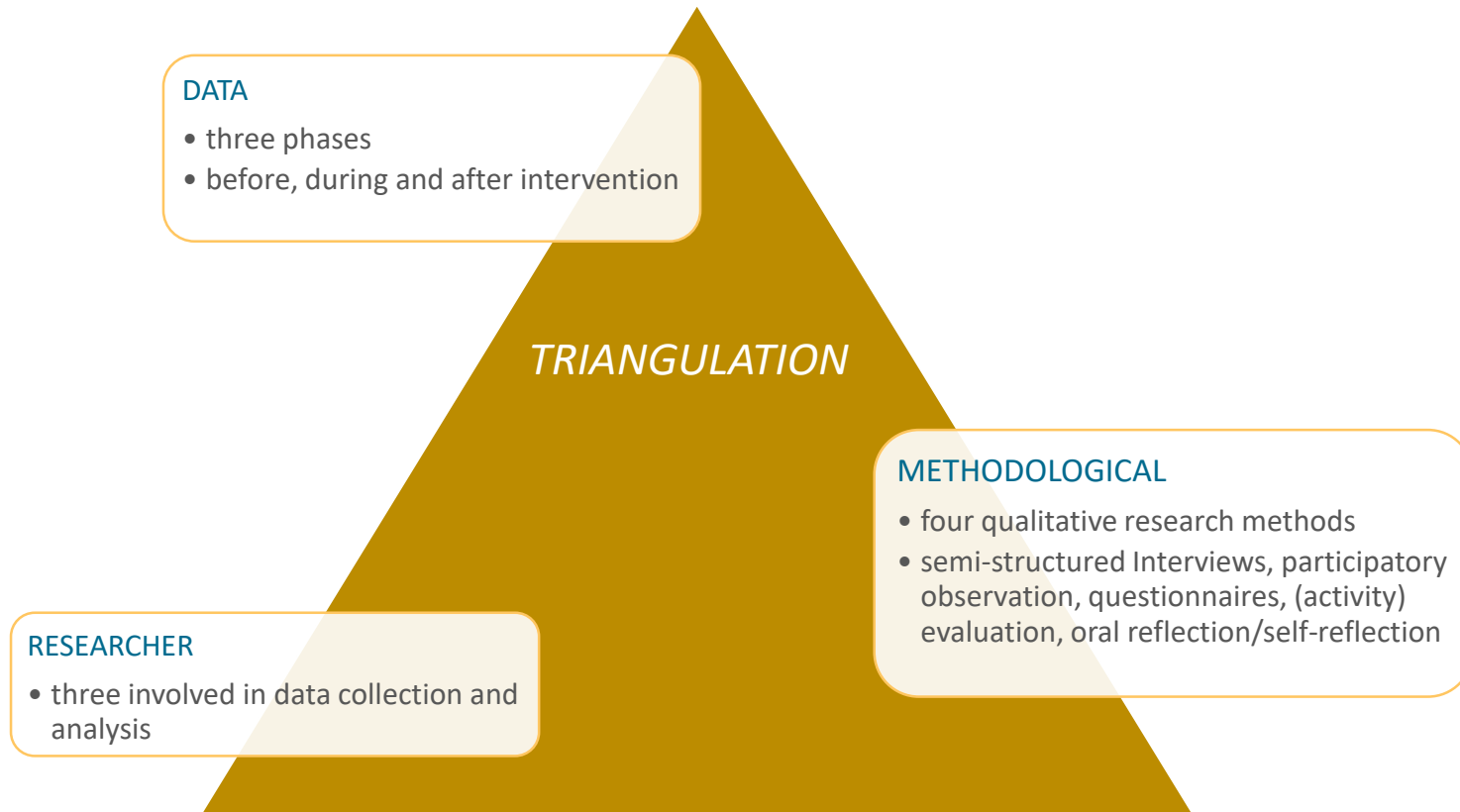
- To find out the effectiveness and usefulness of specific IC teaching approach applied to Journalism and Media Communication education.
- To find out which degree of ICC students acquired through the study programme overall.



# THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

- Group of 13 students enrolled in the course *International and Intercultural Communication*.
  - 9 female and 4 male students;
  - 12 domestic students and 1 foreign student;
  - Added characteristic: regional cultural diversity or *intraculturality*.

# THE RESEARCH METHODS & INSTRUMENTS



# THE IC PEDAGOGY

- Intercultural educational situation.
- Bilingually – English and Croatian (Slovenian).
- 85 hours:
  - interactive lectures (15 hours),
  - different types of activity (55 hours),
  - questionnaires (15 hours).
- New learning methods: experiential, cooperative and collaborative, interactive, active, anchored.



# KEY RESULTS & FINDINGS



# IC ATTITUDES

- Accepting cultural diversity – ground for tolerance and coexistence.
- Accepting different persons is easier than accepting unfamiliar circumstances and situations.
- Students partially value cultural views and practice diversity.
- Deep understanding of other cultures has profound importance in today's world.
- Positive attitude is shown by openness, acceptance and readiness to adjust to the new environment and learn about others.
- Lower degree of understanding the concept of decentralisation from their own perspective.
- Respondents adapt their behaviour (in foreign cultures) more easily than change opinions.

# IC SKILLS

- Students tend to compare and relate their own culture with foreign ones rather than interpret gathered information.
- Importance of not forgetting their own culture while learning about others.
- Linguistic and sociolinguistic skills are the most important skills for IC encounter.
- The majority estimated themselves as skilled for critically evaluating beliefs, values, practices, discourses and products, including those associated with their own culture.
  - Objectively, their critical skills were intermediate.

# IC KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING

- IC knowledge more theoretical than the one coming out of real situations; incomplete, weak, or simplified, because they consider in-depth IC knowledge results from experiences.
- Mostly referring to politics, general issues, pop culture and social processes from global forces or countries that are nearby (i.e. the European Union).
- A lack of grounded arguments was noted.
- A high degree of culture specific knowledge.
- Basic experience in analysing IC topics in media content.

# IC AWARENESS

- A basic level of self-awareness during the educational intervention.
- Usually aware of their appearance.
- Regularly think about their identity.
- It is absolutely „logical“ and „self-evident“ that different cultural backgrounds have different worldviews, as „it is clear that there is no universal worldview“.

# AFFECTIVE DIMENSION

- THREE TYPES OF STUDENTS:
  - Do not have problems with IC encounters. Open, communicative, relaxed, positive.
  - Reluctant to expose themselves in group and/or unfamiliar situations.
  - Avoiding these kind of situations, feeling fear or insecurity.
- As the course progressed they adapted to the new educational situation; coping more successfully with negative emotions they felt about public speaking and revealing personal things in public.

# BEHAVIOURAL DIMENSION

- Group dynamic was lower when new learning methods were used.
- English language.
- Intervention demanded their active presence.
- Hard to stay concentrated and active the whole time.
- Adapting and assimilating instead of conflicting.

# OUTCOME OF ICC LEARNING ACTIVITIES

## Greatest results & interest

- Co-operative and collaborative learning
- Group activities
- Abstract thinking and imagination
- Watching, analysing and discussing media texts

## Lower results & interest

- Learning by doing and discovery
- Individual activities
- Active involvement of themselves (reflection, in-depth thinking, showing feelings and talking about identity in public)
- Role-playing activities



# CONCLUSION



- Subjects dealing with (inter)cultural communication in media and journalism study programmes are necessary/mandatory.
- One-case study to induce important debate.
- As the course progressed participants adapted to new educational situation and gained (new) IC knowledge.
- Group progress and dynamic depended on the nature of activities.

- A few key things for future (re)thinking of including development of ICC in JMC education:
  - IC subjects as obligatory courses;
  - activities of learning by doing (in particular those which encourage a student's nonverbal communication);
  - a range of contextual IC learning (especially those developing IC contextual skills);
  - media practice in minorities/subcultures, or other media reflecting social categorization;
  - IC pilot projects in the local environment activated by students;
  - different languages` usage;
  - an IC field trip.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.