

A photograph of a person's hands cupping a small green seedling with soil. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text is overlaid on the image.

Supporting Intercultural Learning in Virtual Exchange Settings

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- intercultural trainings
- virtual exchanges
- train-the-trainer
for students



2 VE projects with
McMaster Univ.,
Canada, on
culture, health,
and SDGs



Workshop time: 14:00 – 16:00 CEST



Use whenever possible for visual feedback.



Turn off when not speaking.



Write anytime. Type * to raise your hand.

Where are you?

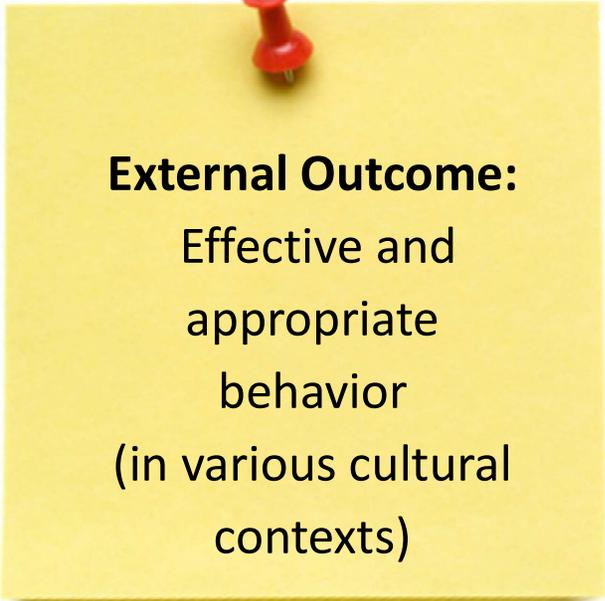
Please mark on the map
using the annotate function.



- What experience do you have with virtual exchange and intercultural learning?
- What is your motivation to participate in this workshop today?



Intercultural Competence

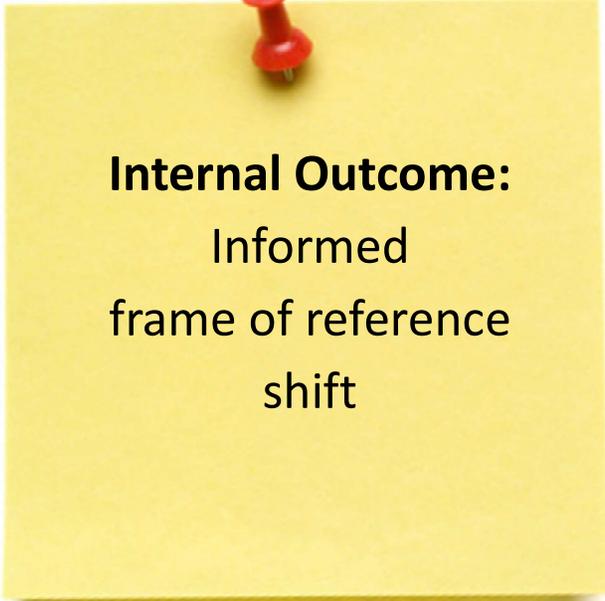


External Outcome:

Effective and
appropriate
behavior

(in various cultural
contexts)

+



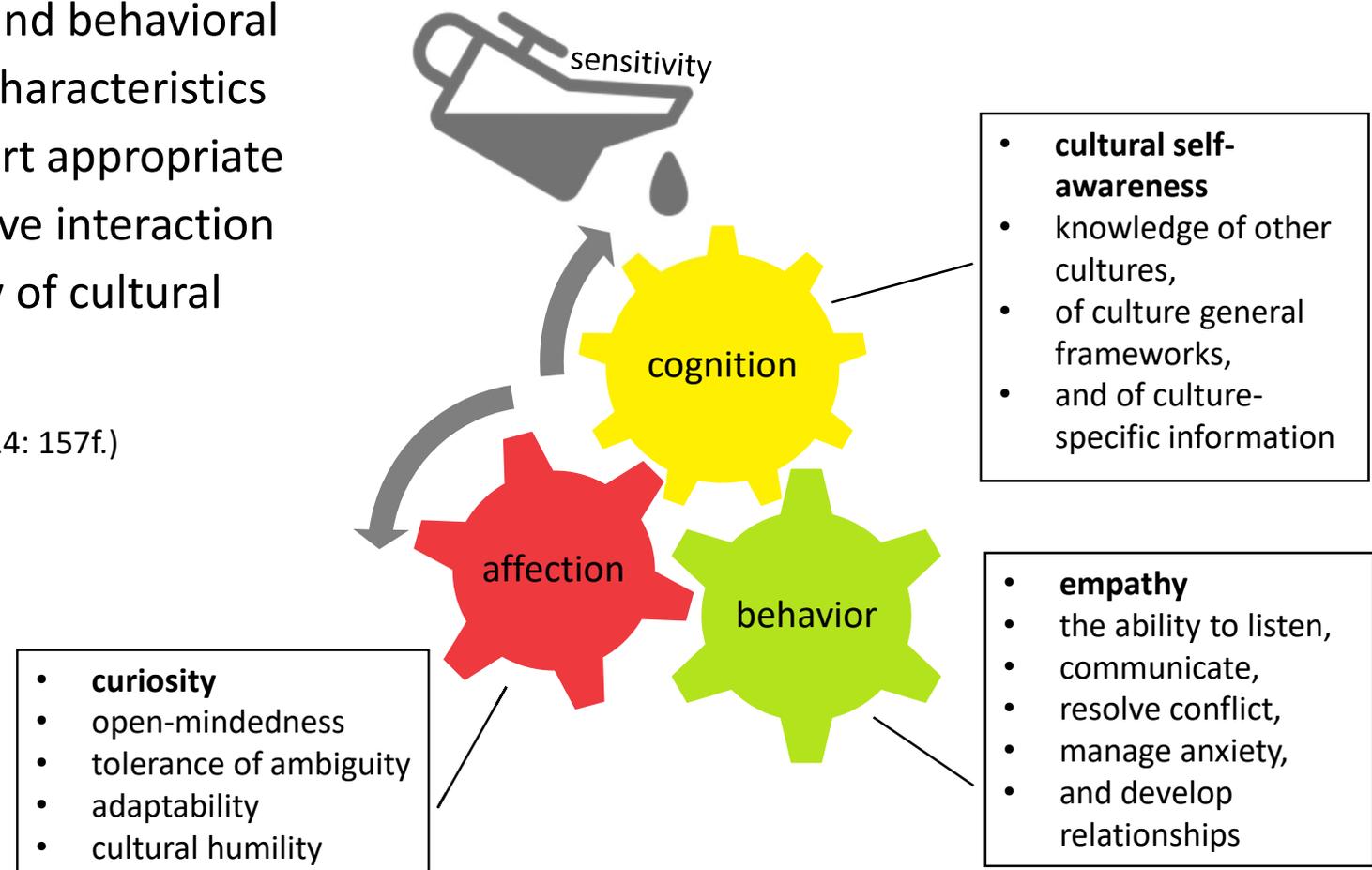
Internal Outcome:

Informed
frame of reference
shift

Intercultural Competence

“a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support appropriate and effective interaction in a variety of cultural contexts”

(J. Bennett, 2014: 157f.)



- What does intercultural learning require from the learner?
- Please write in the chat.



Your answers:

- Patience
- Openness
- Open-mindedness
- Initiative
- Self-reflection
- Motivation
- Tolerance
- Having experienced similar situations
- Curiosity
- Attention
- Humanity
- Empathy
- Leaving the own comfort-zone
- Curiosity
- Distance
- Self-awareness
- Give/accept constructive feedback
- Courage
- Knowledge
- Energy
- Get rid of perfection
- Resilience
- Tolerance of ambiguity
- Understanding that 'I might be wrong'

Intercultural Learning

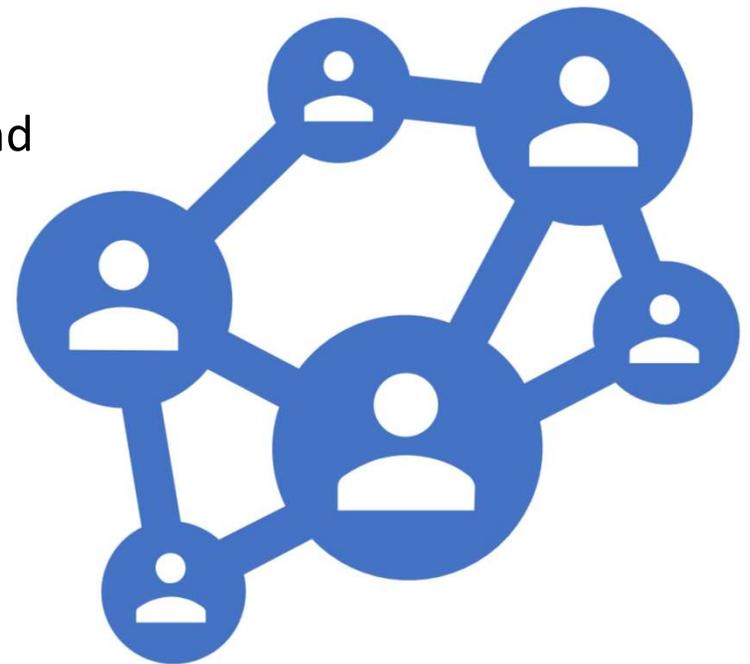
- Personal development process
- Lifelong transformation
- Interpretation work
- Demanding/challenging



Virtual Exchange

„‘Virtual Exchange’ refers to the application of online communication tools to bring together classes of learners in geographically distant locations with the aim of developing their foreign language skills, digital competence and intercultural competence through online collaborative tasks and project work.“

(Robert O’Dowd, 2017)





- When participating in virtual exchange, what causes of anxiety can you imagine?
- Please use the chat.

Your answers:

- Technical issues
- Access to (stable) internet
- The virtual medium
- “letting people in” their home, room, family, circumstances
- Seeing just a little picture of the other participants instead of getting the whole picture
- Just being together in professional settings (no coffee break, etc.) – no smooth transition between job matters/social happenings
- Digital tiredness
- Different time zones
- Time frames
- Interacting with strangers
- Lack of experience
- Leaving comfort zones
- Cultural barriers
- Language barriers
- Lack of body language
- Miscommunication
- Limited understanding of other context
- Holding back because one might think their language skills are not sufficient
- The risk of being stereotyped
- Pre-conceptions about the other students

- What can we do to make it easier for students, especially at the beginning of the course?
- Please collect ideas in the break-out session and write down your results in **Padlet**.



Best practices from Göttingen

- Testing and experiencing the technical means
- Allow time to greet, introduce, and get to know each other
- Use of methods that invite participants to share something about themselves
- Introducing and sharing the real individual learning environment
- Conscious and continuous inclusion of body and physicality through real movement, standing up, creating resonances, which strengthens one's own body awareness
- Identifying and reflecting on the spatial separation and the influences on cooperation and the learning atmosphere.

Setting informal ground rules

- What are your expectations for the course?
- What fears or concerns do you have about participating?
- How could we make sure this is the best possible experience for all of us?
What's YOUR role in this course?



Dealing with the online context

How can you make up for the lack of non-verbal cues when communicating online?



5 minutes



As teacher

Have a credo and teach by it, e.g.:

- It's okay to make mistakes, we are here to learn.
- This is your exchange and your group. It is as good as you make it.
- Every voice matters.



Make things explicit. Be transparent. Act as a guide. Be there for the students.

„simply engaging students in virtual exchange does not guarantee successful intercultural learning outcomes”

(O’Dowd, Sauro & Spector-Cohen, 2020: 147)



Make it intentional!

- ICL needs occasion and time
- Conscious design of
 - Contact situations
 - Curriculum (content)
 - Facilitation



In your opinion, what is necessary for effective and smooth international collaboration?



Spend 2-3 minutes thinking and write keywords in chat.

Lessons learned: multicultural teamwork

Discuss with your assigned partners:

- What is your major learning experience for successful teamwork and why?
- What is surprising, what is different, how can we make use of this (to be “polished”)?

Note down your answers for your final reflective task.



Cultural orientation

How do you prefer to schedule your team assignments?



I tend to approach assignments in a sequential fashion, one thing at a time. I tend to stick to a plan and deadlines are important.



I tend to approach assignments in a flexible manner, a schedule a suggestion deal with things as they arise and change as opportunities arise.

Cultural orientation

In the break-out session, please discuss:

- How is your cultural orientation map similar or different from your peers'?
- Which traits are difficult for you to deal with in other people?
- How could you work together in a team with people that have different preferences than you, e.g., who prefer socializing for a while before working on a task?



Set up your team!

Discuss and decide

- how to work together
- way of communication
- time commitment
- meeting time
- handling tasks
- ...

Draft a team contract.



Pedagogical Mentoring

TABLE 1
Pedagogical Mentoring in Virtual Exchange

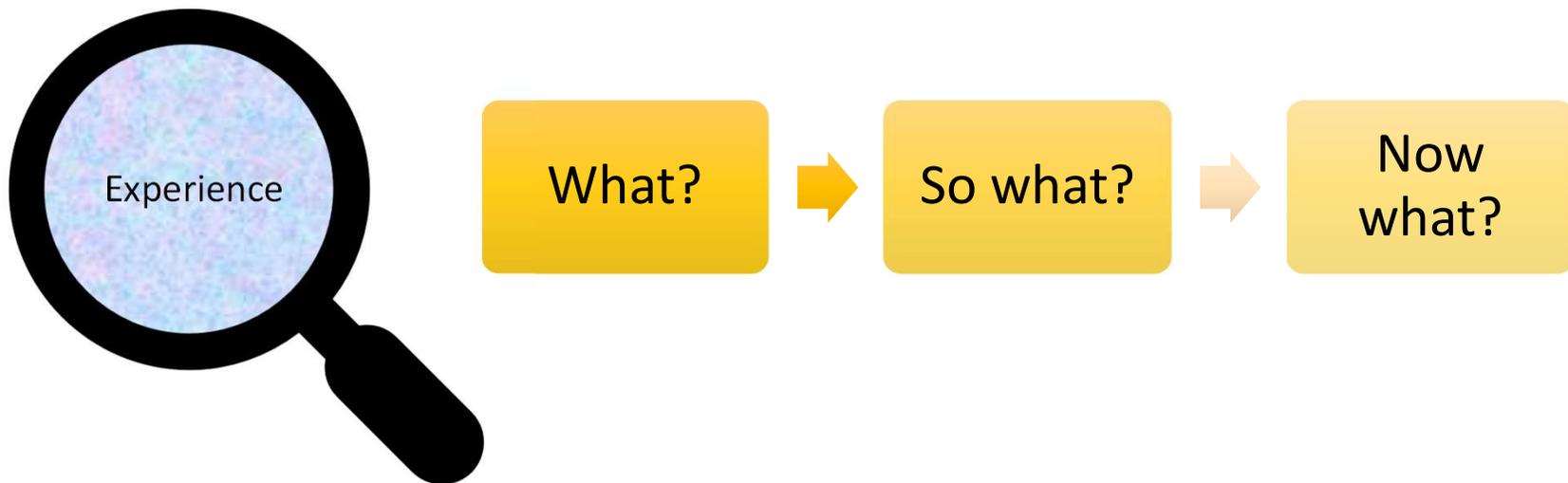
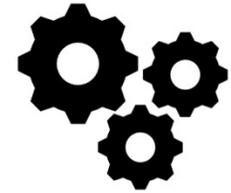
Type number	Type of pedagogical mentoring in virtual exchange	Stage of virtual exchange	Description	References
1	Awareness raising of online interaction strategies	Before the online interaction begins	Educators provide students with examples or models of effective or appropriate online interaction strategies.	Müller-Hartmann & O'Dowd (2017); Ware (2013)
2	Leading online intercultural interactions	During the online interaction; often in real time	Educators participate in and guide online intercultural communication.	Helm (2016)
3	Integrating students' own online interactions into class work	After episodes of students' own online interactions	Educators engage in guided reflection and discussion with students on extracts from their own online interactions.	Cunningham (2016); Furstenberg et al. (2001); Vyatkina & Belz (2006)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8NUKZvY9d8>



Guided Reflection

Reflection model *What? So what? Now what?*
Driscoll, 1994



Reflective writing



- Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange student e-portfolio
- EVOLVE student e-portfolio

Literature:

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Stay connected:



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