



3rd Annual Conference
Intercultural Competence: Key to the New Multicultural Societies of the
Globalized World

October 7-9, 2013
Siena, Italy



Siena Italian Studies



SIETAR ITALIA

Society for Intercultural Education
Training and Research
Associazione per l'educazione, la formazione
e la ricerca su temi interculturali



Intercultural competence has always been essential to human relations. In today's globalized world, where societies are increasingly challenged by multiculturalism, an active employment of intercultural skills at all levels of all societies is becoming more and more necessary to achieve understanding between cultures. Today's societies are increasingly intertwined by technology and by movements of peoples. They are continually challenged by a fast pace of life and resulting sudden changes that bring about a need to constantly evolve and quickly adapt to new transformations. Intercultural competence, understood as a set of key skills completing the profile of every global citizen, allows one to stand before these socio-cultural challenges. It therefore needs to be integrated into societies throughout their infrastructures, i.e. educational and healthcare systems, government and third sector organizations, and corporations. Special attention needs to be dedicated also to new changes in interpersonal relationships (new forms of families and caregivers, virtual relationships, multicultural classrooms, refugees etc.) where

intercultural competence becomes an effective tool to overcome and heal misunderstandings.

The third edition of *Intercultural Horizons* is dedicated to this multifaceted theme. Due to the countless topics within this general theme we have created several macro areas to help guide the various streams of discussion.

Macro Areas:

I. Geopolitical Themes

A main goal of this edition of *Intercultural Horizons* is to create space for dialogue on the vast number of geopolitical themes related to intercultural studies. A number of topics are common to various or all geographic regions, for example: *Intercultural dialogue as a strategy for overcoming ethnic/sectarian divisions within and between nations* or *The role of religion regarding the development of intercultural competence: help or hindrance?* In addition, there obviously are topics that are of more current relevance to particular regions; we have tried to list a few of these below, recognizing that they may also be important beyond the specific region we have identified. We would be very interested, therefore, in proposals that offer comparative views of a topic among two or more regions of the world.

Europe:

- Intercultural Dialogue and Immigration in European countries
- New Multicultural Societies of Europe
- The Growth of the EU: Intercultural Challenges within the European "Union"
- Are European Educational Institutions Ready for the Intercultural Challenge?
- The role of religion regarding the development of intercultural competence: help or hindrance?

Africa:

- Facilitating intercultural dialogue among different ethnic and religious groups within African nations
- The role of intercultural dialogue in healing divisions resulting from civil and interethnic conflict and war
- Constructing intercultural strategies in a post-colonial context

Middle East:

- Humanistic Universalities in Relation to the Muslim World
- What the Arab Spring means for intercultural growth and discussion
- Tradition and Modernity from a Middle Eastern perspective: Mutually Inclusive or Exclusive?
- Intercultural dialogue as a strategy for overcoming sectarian and ethnic-tribal divisions

- The role of religion regarding the development of intercultural competence: help or hindrance?

Asia:

- Intercultural dialogue as a strategy for overcoming ethnic/sectarian divisions within and between nations
- Linking the regional growth of service-learning with intercultural communication strategies
- Intercultural education/dialogue in relation to new communication technologies and their dominance over young people

Americas:

- Intercultural dialogue/education for the “place-bound” student: is it possible to develop virtual strategies/curriculum when many students cannot travel (particularly relevant, for example, for U.S. community college students)?
- Intercultural dialogue as a strategy for confronting growing polarization in U.S. society and politics
- New forms of conscientious international education and tourism to foster intercultural understanding
- Intercultural education/dialogue in relation to new communication technologies and their dominance over young people
- Worldview of indigenous peoples of the Americas and its relationship to Western societies: intercultural dialogue as a key to understanding

II. Theoretical Considerations of Intercultural Competence and Interculturalism

This macro area is dedicated to exploring theoretical considerations and questions regarding intercultural studies. As a relatively new field of study and practice there still exist some foggy areas surrounding definitions, roles and concepts that are fertile grounds for interesting discussion. Some questions that come to mind are: Who are the interculturalists and what are their functions? Does Intercultural Competence effectively exist yet? If so, how can it become a collective part of society as opposed to an individual quest? Proposals that solicit reflection on these themes will be favorably reviewed.

Additionally, a special session will be dedicated to the linguistic and cognitive processing of metaphors, intended as a conceptual, linguistic, and cultural means of expression, whose understanding can shed light on culture-specific traits. This topic is today widely recognized as strategically crucial in intercultural communication, because of the tremendous amount of consequences that the gained insights can bring to different aspects of our society. We welcome abstracts for presentations concerning the study of metaphors and culture, metaphors and cognition,

metaphors and foreign language learning and teaching. Contributions can include analyses based on materials collected from literary writing, educational teaching, political speeches, product marketing, and all those fields that show innovative and highly effective use of metaphors across different cultures and languages.

III. Intercultural Competence development and assessment: Practical examples and research

Discussions surrounding intercultural competence development and assessment are of fundamental importance to this conference series and will continue to be a focal point in years to come. Proposals that highlight new, original research, and practical examples of implementation, development or assessment are sought to ensure a high quality exchange on this theme.

IV. Civic engagement in International and Culturally Diverse Contexts

Civic engagement is one of the leading educational practices that foster the development of intercultural competence. In this macro area we would like to dedicate space for discussion on this important field by soliciting proposals focused on strategies, challenges and outcomes of civic engagement in international and culturally diverse contexts, both from an institutional point of view (colleges/universities) as well as an individual one (faculty/student). Proposals that address both will be favorably reviewed. Possible themes within this macro area could be:

- New needs in service-learning given multicultural societies
- The role of the Third Sector in creating space for intercultural competence development
- The changing role of higher education institutions in civic engagement
- Graduate education and intercultural competence: forming the interculturalists of the future

V. New “intra-cultural” applications of intercultural competence

As a new area of discussion, Intercultural Horizons would also like to invite proposals that take into consideration how the same skill-set provided by intercultural competence can be used in intra-cultural issues arising in today’s societies, and in dealing with difference in general. For example, how intercultural competence can be a key in inter-generational relationships, how it can be useful in relating to new forms of families (gay/lesbian/transgender– or families with a foreign caregiver as a central component).

VI. Intercultural education and training

We would like to encourage submissions that address new developments in intercultural education and training. For example, teacher training that addresses intercultural needs within a multicultural classroom, or research dedicated to new intercultural skills developed among schoolchildren of a multicultural classroom.

Alternatively, another discussion we would like to encourage within this macro-area is that which addresses the difference between the fields of intercultural education and intercultural training. Though they share a theoretical basis in intercultural studies, people operating within these two fields can often perceive a certain distance that exists between them. We welcome reflections and proposals on this discussion that highlight comparative studies or experiences that bridge the two fields.

Presentation formats

The following presentation formats are encouraged for Intercultural Horizons:

Concurrent conference session

Concurrent conference sessions are for individual or group presentations of research, analyses or findings related to intercultural competence development. These sessions should cover in depth a topic related to one of the aforementioned themes, though themes not mentioned above will still be considered. Concurrent sessions are 60 minutes, comprised of 40–45 minutes of presentation and 15-20 minutes for discussion and questions. Concurrent conference sessions will be presented in specific time bands during the session, most likely five concurrent sessions per time period.

Interactive workshop

An interactive workshop is a session to exchange ideas and/or discuss research on a theme relating to intercultural competence. Interactive workshops should involve the audience through group work, activities or open discussion and may be facilitated by more than one person. Workshops will be held concurrently and are 60 minutes long. These sessions will be limited to a maximum of 40 participants.

Poster session

A poster session is designed to present a specific research idea or feature a specific program related to one of the conference themes, with one presenter per poster. Poster sessions will be offered in two late afternoon time bands, with several posters to be set up in a single room. As conference attendees will move from one poster to another, presenters should be prepared to repeat a brief discussion during the poster time period.

Call for proposals deadline

Proposals will be accepted through **April 1st, 2013**. Notification of acceptance will be sent by **May 15th, 2013**.

Presenters will be asked to confirm their participation and register by **June 30th, 2013**.

Submission procedure

All proposals must be submitted online through the following link:

<https://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=ih2013>

Publication of Papers

Accepted papers for presentation will be published in early 2014.

Language of Conference Presentations and Papers

English is the official language for Intercultural Horizons 2013.

Assistance

For questions that cannot be answered here or on the website www.ticfie.com you can write to interculturalhorizons@gmail.com and the conference staff will do their best to assist you.

Registration information and deadlines:

Early registration deadline: June 30th, 2013

Anticipated early registration fee*: **225 EUR**

Regular registration deadline: September 15th, 2013

Anticipated regular registration fee*: **275 EUR**

Presenter registration deadline: June 30th, 2013

Presenter registration fee*: **225 EUR**

*Registration fees may vary slightly before February 1st 2013, please consult www.ticfie.com for latest information and to download the registration form.