Developing teachers’ intercultural communicative competences for task-supported language classrooms

Abstract. This study first illustrates how intercultural communicative competences (ICC) may be modelled through tasks and then focuses on the question of how teachers of English may develop the process competences needed to support ICC with their learners. For this, we draw on data from a three-year collaboration with secondary EFL teachers and their classrooms who have developed, taught and reflected the competences needed to do so. Classrooms cover all types of school and our experiences highlight the challenges of developing ICC with heterogeneous groups. We will exemplify teachers’ competences with the case study of one teacher and will refer to a recent publication for a structured survey of teaching competences needed to introduce, support and evaluate ICC.

1. Introduction

The idea to connect learning English with developing the competences it takes to communicate with people around the world seems obvious, particularly when we think of the role of English as a lingua franca. Different forms of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) have therefore been integrated into education standards worldwide, including Germany, New Zealand and the U.S. (cf. COUNCIL OF EUROPE 2001; SEKRETARIAT DER KMK 2004: 20–21; AMERICAN COUNCIL ON THE TEACHING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES 2006; MINISTRY OF EDUCATION 2007). ICC seems to have established itself as a commonly accepted approach to teaching English. In our multilingual European context, education policy quite rightly “views users and learners of a language primarily as ‘social agents’, i.e. members of society who have tasks [...] to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action” (COUNCIL OF EUROPE 2001: 9). It therefore encourages the development of learners’ ICC through the medium of English as a foreign language and lingua franca, assuming that it may best be developed through meaningful tasks that
have the potential to motivate learners “to invest intensive mental energy in task completion” (Van Den Branden 2006: 175).

Research on how teachers best develop the skills to teach ICC in their classrooms does not reflect this in the same way. Our article therefore begins by examining some of the reasons for this discrepancy between educational practice and research. We then explain why tasks are an appropriate approach to develop ICC and present both a task model and related process competences teachers need. This is followed by describing research-based principles of teacher education that actually support teachers’ competence development in their classrooms. Finally, we illustrate these general principles using the model of teacher education we developed to experiment with ICC tasks in collaboration with teachers in their classrooms. In doing so, we refer to the project ‘Lernaufgabenentwicklung Englisch Sekundarstufe I (alle Schularten)’ that was commissioned to us by the ‘Institut für Qualitätsentwicklung im Bildungswesen (IQB)’, linked to the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. The twenty participants of this group were all teachers of English as a foreign language in secondary schools. They represent all types of school we have in secondary education, all language learning levels (learners aged 10–16), and all levels of job experience (from novices to experts). All of the teachers were well qualified, and they all subscribed to a professional self-concept which can roughly be described as learner-oriented. The data yielded from this project forms the empirical basis of our research on how teachers best develop the necessary competences to cope with designing ICC tasks and subsequently managing the resulting heterogeneous discourse in their classrooms. The development of ICC competences during this project is exemplified in the case study of one teacher. In the conclusion of our article, we (yet again) argue for context sensitive approaches to teacher education that integrate the perspectives of teachers, their learners, and external advisors and take their respective experiences and perspectives seriously. 1

2. Intercultural communicative competence and its relevance from the perspectives of research and education

Second Language Learning (SLL) research has hitherto largely ignored the issue of ICC in task-based language teaching with the exception of sociocultural oriented perspectives which focus on the interface between language, culture, and task-based language learning. Research on these aspects goes back to ideas first presented by Brenn (1985, 1987) and Candlin (1987). More recently Ishii (2009) has shown that problem-solving and decision-making tasks can enhance learners’ cross-cultural attitudes and develop their intercultural awareness (cf. also Reimann 2010). The same is true of the role of tasks in developing ICC through telecollaboration, which by now is a vibrant

---

1 When we talk of ‘external advisors’, we mean researchers and teacher educators. Apart from the authors of this article, this involved two teacher educators working with pre-service teachers during their internship phase.
Developing teachers' intercultural communicative competences

Research field (Müller-Hartmann 2000; O'Dowd/Eberbach 2004; Müller-Hartmann/Schocker-v. Ditfurth 2010; Guth/Helm 2010). The few existing classroom-based studies on ICC teaching competences stress the importance of teachers creating a safe learning atmosphere, so their learners dare to make mistakes when dealing with complex content issues. Furthermore, teachers must provide different forms of task support to help especially weaker learners (see Burwitz-Melzer 2003; Jäger 2011; Göbel 2007). Both Burwitz-Melzer (2003: 498 f) and Jäger (2011: 339–343) have made helpful suggestions how to model tasks when working with literary texts, and Müller-Hartmann (2006) has shown how ICC teaching competences can be developed through telecollaborative projects in teacher education.

Much of SLL research has also been problematic in another sense because it has tended to ‘downgrade’ or completely ignore the teacher (cf. Eckert/Siekmann 2008). This has recently been challenged, arguing that “psycho-linguistically-oriented studies seek universal items in TBLT by reducing complexity and therefore have the tendency to treat learners as information processing units and tasks as something that take place in a vacuum” (Samuda 2001: 119). Teachers, in contrast, are interested in “the development of one particular class under the condition of task-based lessons” (Schart 2008: 49). Schart therefore identified a “perceptional gap” between teachers and researchers and consequently called for more practitioner research involving teachers and their learners instead (ibid.: 48).

Our research project illustrates that, through an approach of exploratory practice, the concerns of ‘research and practice’ can be aligned, as this approach encourages the development of teachers’ ICC competences and at the same time allows teachers and researchers alike to identify the emerging issues, results, and experiences, which may then be generalized for use in other foreign language teaching contexts. But let us first argue why a task approach is appropriate to develop ICC.

3. Task supported language learning as an appropriate approach to develop ICC

Tasks by definition conceptualize learning from learners’ perspectives, that is, their needs, their ideas, their discourses, their competences, and the resulting support that seems appropriate for each classroom and each individual learner in this classroom. This is a demanding endeavour, as classrooms have become increasingly heterogeneous with learners coming from diverse multicultural and multilingual backgrounds. Understanding the respective contextual constraints and affordances, being contextually sensitive, has therefore become the basic requirement for any educational initiative. We have therefore framed ICC tasks from the perspectives of the learners and modelled competence development in the following four steps (following Byram 1997). Teachers used this as a guideline to develop or revise existing activities for their classrooms (for a detailed description of the ICC task-as-workplan model, cf. Müller-Hartmann/Schocker-v. Ditfurth 2011: 174–86):
Task sequence: ICC

1. motivate and involve learners, making them curious about a culture and helping them to engage with other cultural practices

2. help learners to reflect / become aware of their own cultural practices

3. allow learners to discover and understand other cultural practices, changing perspectives in the process, integrating cultural knowledge, if necessary, in this process

4. make learners compare cultural practices so that they discover similarities and differences; evaluate their own and other cultural practices (critical cultural awareness), with the possibility for learners to develop their own (new) positions and create (new) discourses / products (coordinating perspectives, transforming practice, 'third space').

Not only do teachers need the competences to develop suitable tasks-as-workplan, but they also need the corresponding process competences to navigate the heterogeneous discourses resulting from learners working with these tasks in their classrooms. We will discuss how these may be developed and what is involved in the following two chapters.

4. Competence development through teacher education: research results and resulting teacher education model

4.1 Processes of professional teacher development

If we seriously wish to support teachers, we need to take their work contexts seriously and subscribe to an understanding of teacher competence that research into teacher knowledge has defined as a complex construct of beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge that is grounded in their experience (WOODS 1996). We need to focus on the person who teaches and on the activity of teaching in the diverse contexts if we wish to make an impact (SCHOCKER-V. DITFURTH 2001; JOHNSON 2009). Meanwhile there is a growing awareness of this central role of teachers when it comes to bringing about change in classrooms (cf., for example, KUMARAVADIVELU 1991; SCHOCKER-V. DITFURTH 2001; VAN DEN BRANDEN [et al.] 2007). This has been recently confirmed in connection with studies on the implementation of TBLL in Belgium:

(I)t is not so much the educational training enjoyed by teachers or the academic wisdom they are offered in in-service training or in educational journals, but what they have done and do in the classroom itself, and the meaning that they attach to these experiences, that constitute the backbone of what they think and believe about education (VAN DEN BRANDEN 2006: 222).

It was therefore obvious to situate teacher education within the complex environments of secondary school classrooms. In so doing, we find ourselves as part of a long line of
European researchers who are seriously concerned with developing contexts of practice through various forms of classroom-based research (cf. ALTRICHTER/POSCH 2007, ALLWRIGHT/HANKS 2009; BURNS 2009; LEGUTKE/SCHOCKER 2009).

Acknowledging the critical role of teachers in their work contexts, we organized our project following an exploratory practice approach (see below 4.2). This was motivated by existing research on teacher development from which we delineated our teacher education model which is summarized below.

Focus on the person who teaches
Learning-to-teach studies (APPEL 1995; SCHOCKER-V. DITFURTH 2001) have demonstrated that, unless student teachers encounter practice situations that allow them to experience convincing alternative practices and to experiment with new ideas, the imprints from their ‘apprenticeship of observation’ (LORTIE 1975) are exceedingly resistant to change. The same is true for in-service teachers who may find readings on alternative approaches persuasive but not credible or too demanding to be a realistic, do-able option for their contexts. Another powerful argument to support the integration of teachers’ perspectives is that teaching is fundamentally a person-centered activity based on relationships: patterns of the teacher role in research have repeatedly revealed that success in motivating and involving learners depends on the attitudes of teachers to learners (for a summary of research on teacher role and task cf. MÜLLER-HARTMANN/SCHOCKER-V. DITFURTH 2011: chapter 7). From an affective point of view, the success of task-based lessons depends on teachers’ high expectations of the students, their willingness to share responsibility with the students, and their empathy, flexibility, tolerance, and enthusiasm (cf. VAN AVERMAET [et al.] 2006: 195). Teacher education approaches that do not reduce teachers to mere linguists who mediate language but which view them as personalities in their own right who succeed in motivating their learners to become involved therefore hold promise.

Focus on the teaching activity
SCHÖN’s publication on the nature of professional action in dynamic situations of practice (cf. SCHÖN 1983) has made us aware that teachers must cope with situations of uncertainty, complexity, uniqueness, instability, and value conflict. Constructing a communicative TBLL classroom means “working out the relationships among the participating persons and their positions and identities, their stance towards topics, processes, roles, values and ideologies which ([...] are) to be negotiated through a process of constant, creative, and useful exploratory struggle” (CANDLIN 2003: 41). Classrooms are not merely settings for teaching but define the very nature of teaching and learning (cf. BREEN 1985). The interpretive paradigm of the sociocultural turn defines human learning as a dynamic social activity that is situated in the contexts within which teachers work (cf. JOHNSON 2009). These contexts shape how and why teachers do what they do. Knowledge does not develop simply by accumulating information but is shared, negotiated, and co-constructed through experience in the communities of practice in which the individual participates. Therefore, teacher education must create
opportunities for teachers to make sense of theories (of knowledge of pedagogical content, of language acquisition, of language) in the contexts in which they work so that site-specific knowledge may develop in the process of reconsidering and reorganizing direct experience. Teacher education must provide opportunities to develop locally appropriate responses.

Proceeding from the various approaches resulting from these considerations (for a survey cf. JOHNSON 2009: 25), we decided to organize the project following the exploratory practice rationale.

4.2 Our teacher education model of 'exploratory practice'

The participation of teachers in our project was motivated by their interest in experimenting with tasks that would allow their learners to develop the competences set in the national attainment standards. The prospect of participating in the construction of disciplinary knowledge was yet another reason why teachers took part. In WELLS'/CHANG-WELLS' (1992) words, our group of teachers and external advisors represented a "community of inquiry" in which "opportunities are set up for teachers and researchers to construct knowledge about AR [action research] collectively over time. Pedagogical knowledge construction thus occurs through dialectic interaction and critical exchange" (BURNS 2009: 294).

As stated above, the action research (AR) approach has a long tradition in classroom-based research in Europe, being low-scale in terms of size and interference in classroom processes. The term "classroom research refers to research conducted in classrooms – regardless of who does it or what methods are used. Action research, in contrast, is an actual research method, in that it involves a codified sequence of steps" (NUNAN/BAILEY 2009: 19). It is self-reflective, allowing teacher-researchers to better understand and possibly change their classroom practices by going through action research cycles (cf. NUNAN/BAILEY 2009: 227). ALLWRIGHT/HANKS (2009) make us aware that the focus needs to be on teachers' "particular understandings that are directly appropriate to their unique situations (and that) will not marginalize learners (but) will prioritize learner understandings" (ibid.: 149). They therefore call their approach of practitioner research exploratory practice (EP): "AR starts out as an intention to change in order to solve a problem, or at least to introduce an innovation. EP starts out with an intention to try to understand, rather than change" (ibid.: 172–173). In this project, we have tried to align both concerns, as will be demonstrated in the description below of how we organized the development process. This 'dual perspective' on understanding and change is also reflected in the role of our data collection tools. They functioned as reflection tools for teachers and their learners. During the process of designing, teaching, and evaluating tasks, data were generated on two levels: data documenting the task design in the task-as-workplan and video-recordings of the task-in-process.

The project was organized in a blended learning format, in which face-to-face meetings (workshops) were supplemented by virtual exchanges that provided continuous
support and advice from colleagues and participating external advisors during phases in which teachers experimented with tasks in their classrooms.

The Workshops
The first workshop focused on classroom research procedures, which included different data collection methods to integrate the perspectives of learners and participating observers (colleagues) at the respective schools (cf. ALTRICHTER/POSCH 2007). Each of the workshops focused on a research question related to learners' competence development through tasks. The question that is the focus of this article was:

*How can we develop intercultural communicative competences in an integrated way through tasks and content that our learners perceive to be meaningful?*

Both teachers' experiential knowledge and published research knowledge were to be integral parts of the collaborative development process, and we organized the project to incorporate the needs of teachers and context requirements as the starting point of our work. This meant that we integrated the coursebook, which is a defining feature of EFL teaching in secondary schools in Germany. Depending on the publisher, coursebooks contain tasks of varying degrees of difficulty and quality, which is why teachers need to be able to evaluate their learning potential against their learners' needs and to alter or exchange tasks if necessary (cf. MÜLLER-HARTMANN/SCHOCKER-V. DITTFURTH 2011: chapter 4, *Developing a TSL1 framework*). These concerns resulted in us organizing our work following the *ERA principle* (*Experience – Reflection – Application*, cf. LEGUTKE 1995), which, used in empirical research on teacher development, has documented positive effects on teachers' practice (cf. SCHOCKER-V. DITTFURTH 1992, 2001):

*Experience:* Workshops started by teachers exchanging their views on the issues related to ICC tasks in teams, based on examples of tasks and the resulting learner texts they had brought along from their classrooms. The presentation and discussion of the issues as seen from their perspectives was compared to published research results we presented (cf. summary in MÜLLER-HARTMANN/SCHOCKER-V. DITTFURTH 2011: chapter 9). These research results were corroborated by our experiments and experiences in secondary classrooms (researchers as teachers).

*Reflection:* This exchange of experiences resulted in a number of mutually agreed upon key questions to be considered when planning ICC tasks for teachers' classrooms. These questions were based on intensive reflection on the practicability and appropriateness of research results and our task examples for our teachers' contexts.

*Application:* The remaining time at the workshop was spent on the cooperative planning of tasks in teacher teams which were continually supported by participating teacher educators and us.

*Experimentation with tasks in classrooms, support, and research*
During the interim period before the next workshop, teachers experimented with the tasks they had collaboratively developed in their classrooms and documented their experiences in case studies which they shared at the following workshop. During this
phase, we provided continuous support: we commented on the first task-as-workplan version and, if appropriate, asked questions to establish understanding or suggested alternative procedures (cf. SCHOCKER-V. DITFURTH 2002). The revised task-as-workplan was then taught, filmed (by our assistant), and complemented by the teachers’ research on their learners’ perspectives and those of participating colleagues. The teacher in question and the external advisors all received filmed copies of the lesson(s). Independent of one another, the teacher and external advisors identified the critical incidents which, viewed from their perspectives, marked the issues of ICC tasks (open retrospection). These issues were negotiated in the following workshop. The teachers documented their experiences in their case studies, meaning they provided contextual information about their school and class, the task-as-workplan, and task-in-process, other participants’ and their learners’ perspectives on the task-in-process, as well as their own reflections. This intense process of understanding, reflecting on, and eventually improving was thus based on the ‘potentially exploitable pedagogic activities’ of this teacher education design. The pedagogic activities made possible the necessary intercommunicative validation procedures which were organized both at the level of teachers and external advisors, and they produced a rich set of data, which enabled us to subsequently identify the emerging issues related to teaching ICC in a validated way. The next section illustrates findings based on an example.

5. Our research results: the competences teachers need to develop ICC in their classrooms illustrated by an example

Like the teachers who developed a case study of each task sequence, we followed a case study approach in examining the development of ICC teaching competences. In so doing, we were able to capture the complexity of the processes involved and cover the development over a longer period of time. A case study is also characterized by integrating multiple perspectives (external advisors, teachers, and learners) and the triangulation of data. In our project, the collected data comprised workshop materials, various versions of the tasks-as-workplan including reflections as part of the teachers’ own case study materials, transcriptions of video data of the task-as-process, and of audio data of teachers’ work in small groups when designing tasks and discussing critical incidents from the task-as-process during workshops.

In the following, we present the case of one teacher and her community of practice, who developed a task sequence about a letter project with an American partner class in a fifth grade. The development of selected ICC teaching competences is described by following the different phases in the process.

_Negotiating concepts and discussing approaches during the workshop_  
_Designing tasks in small groups (here five 5th and 6th grade teachers)_
The teachers started their negotiation about appropriate ICC tasks for their classrooms in small groups. To begin with, teachers supported each other in clarifying the complex ICC concept:

**Elke**: I would like to know whether intercultural learning is different from cultural knowledge.

**Karin**: Cultural knowledge is part of that.

**Elke**: For me, these are two different ball games.

**Sandra**: This is part of knowledge, in this table (she refers to the knowledge dimension in Byram's model, *Byram 1997: 34*), but the intercultural goes beyond that, beyond factual knowledge.

**Julia**: You should be able to talk about it, about the differences.

**Karin**: To critically question it.

**Julia**: Right. Or be able to feel empathy.

This discussion quickly led to the question of how to approach a possible ICC topic:

**Elke**: Is intercultural learning also about how my neighbour is different?

**Julia**: I would say that, on a small level, it starts like that.

**Julia** also provides examples how she makes use of the different cultural backgrounds of her students to develop ICC ("I have six different cultures in my classroom. If everybody tells something about his or her festivities and customs, they will already have learned a lot"). The teachers exchange so-called 'small stories' (*Vasquez 2011*) from their classrooms to generate ideas, clarify approaches, and provide support. Through this, they help Elke realize the importance of allowing one's students to discover the potential of their own cultures in their own classroom – one dimension of the ICC competences.

At other times, though, the teachers did not always agree when it came to possible constraints in their classrooms. When Beate, motivated by the input from the first workshop phase, presented the idea to design an e-mail exchange with an American school, the others liked the idea, but Julia considered this approach unrealistic: "These are things we do not do in our daily school life. [...] We must be realistic [...] Let's be honest, only few teachers set up e-mail contacts." At this point, Beate no longer pursued her idea in the discussion. Only later, when one of the external advisors joined the discussion and suggested an e-mail exchange, explaining ways to work with young learners, did Beate start asking questions again. When the advisor mentioned a supportive website to find partners abroad, Beate asked, "What kind of website is that?" She also immediately turned to practical questions of organizing the exchange: "And who writes to whom? Does that all go through me? Do I pull it all together and send it off? And then it comes back to me, and I pass it on to the children?"

As we can see, due to lack of experience and initial lack of support from colleagues and the fear of technical, organizational, or institutional obstacles, teachers refrain from embarking on innovative approaches. This incident demonstrates that external support

---

2 All names have been anonymized.
is helpful to trigger change, as we can see in the next phases of task design and teaching the task sequence.

**Developing tasks and putting them to practice**

Back home from the workshop, teachers designed their ICC tasks for their individual contexts. It was interesting to see that Beate did actually design a task sequence based on a letter exchange with an American partner school. One issue that the group had also discussed in the workshop was the daunting complexity of an ICC task sequence and how to organize this for young learners (Beate: "How do I construct a lesson of 45 minutes which focuses on ICC?"). For her first lesson, she asked the students to bring pictures to class about the sports and hobbies (the two main topics of the exchange) they liked and then developed a word web with words and chunks based on her learners' experiences; in so doing, she considered the task phase ‘helping learners to reflect / become aware of their own cultural practices’. She was not aware in this phase that she had actually done this because she commented in the task-as-workplan: “In the first lesson, we work on the vocabulary, a task-support for the following tasks. For this lesson, the dimensions of ICC cannot be applied.” Only when she reflects on the video-recording of her lesson does she realize the potential of this phase. “It was surprising that the children checked the English names of certain sports on their own in the vocabulary list of their textbooks. This way, the children solved the problem of explaining the difference between soccer – football – American football on their own. They already knew about the differences”. Not only does she realize that this first phase of activating vocabulary about one’s own cultural practices helps develop ICC, she also realizes that the learners already have cultural knowledge the teacher can make use of in the lesson, consequently learners should be involved when providing cultural input knowledge.

Her awareness of the importance of integrating learners’ expert knowledge becomes clear in a later phase of the task sequence. In her task-as-workplan, she plans the arrival of the American letters in her classroom in the following way: “The letters that the American children wrote to us have arrived – here is the envelope. Let’s have a look at the map – where is Crestwood, Kentucky? The American students’ school is called Centerfield Elementary.” The advisor’s comment here reads: “Very nice. Providing cultural knowledge is exciting even at this stage. Do the learners understand elementary? If not, you will need to tell them that it is a primary school. [...] Then you can talk about the cultural difference that the primary school there includes the 6th grade (as in some German states).” Examining the transcript of the lesson, the teacher goes beyond this advice. Instead of simply telling the students, she asks them to check their dictionaries and find out what elementary means if they don’t know. They are surprised to realize that the American partners are – from their 5th grade perspective – still in elementary school while they are already in secondary school. They voice their surprise (“Oh my God, they are in primary school!”), and then – since the teacher now holds back with explanations and provides room for the learners to comment – they tell the
Developing teachers' intercultural communicative competences

95

Developing teachers' intercultural communicative competences

teacher what they already know, i.e. that in Berlin, primary school also lasts until 6th grade.

This small incident demonstrates that Beate has learned to give her learners a chance to discover cultural knowledge for themselves rather than providing it at the outset of the task. This was part of her professional self-concept (“I try and encourage my students and trust in their potential, their talents, and their strengths”). The exchange between teacher and external advisor brings this to fruition.

Another example of an issue that emerged was about the demand of learners having to reflect on intercultural issues. In the group discussion, Beate asked, “5th graders cannot reflect too much yet. [...] Do I provide language chunks? If so, this would guide them very strongly, and there won’t be much from the students. I think this is very, very difficult in a fifth grade.” In this respect, the group is not able to provide sufficient support, and Beate poses the question again in her first task-as-workplan: “How much German is allowed?” The external advisor answers: “There should be a reflection which can be done in German if it doesn’t work in English.” Beate does just that when she has the learners reflect on what they learned about their American partners from the letters in the lesson.

Another critical incident for Beate was the question how to structure the task sequence, as pointed out above. She was especially concerned about collecting and structuring the observations the students made when reading and analyzing their letters. In her task-as-workplan, she had planned to do this in form of a table, and she tried to do it in the lesson as well. In her reflection, though, she shows her growing awareness of allowing students to deal emotionally with intercultural issues: “Here I would process differently in an optimized version. At first, the children were incredibly motivated to receive the American letters and pictures, and they ‘blew apart’ the planned frame of the lesson. They compared letters on their own, translated texts, and used the dictionaries. To force this excitement and the encounter with the new culture into a table was not appropriate. Therefore, my alternative: Evaluating other cultural practices must be done earlier, less structured, and more spontaneously. In the second lesson, the children must have the opportunity to talk spontaneously and in German about the letters”.

The incidents demonstrate that the intensive exchange among the teachers and between the external advisors and the teachers contributed to ICC teaching competence development. They also demonstrate that tasks must be put to practice and not merely the task-as-workplan analyzed, as is common in SLL research today.

6. Conclusion

We have tried to illustrate the challenges involved when teachers embark on developing intercultural communicative competences in their classrooms. In this article, we were only able to highlight a very small excerpt of what this involves, using a few incidents from our data as illustrating examples. For a detailed list of competences,
including illustrating examples, please cf. MÜLLER-HARTMANN/SCHOCKER/PANT (2013: chapter II.3).

Once again, this project has demonstrated that processes of research and teacher development must initiate from teachers, their concerns, and their experiential expert knowledge. Our project has also demonstrated that critically reflecting and integrating other perspectives (in our example: models of ICC, support from research and teacher education) proved helpful in the development process. If discourses of education and research are not integrated, they run parallel to each other. There is no link between the two, as recently observed in a state government commission when participating teachers interpreted ICC as merely applying sociocultural knowledge as they did not have the research background on ICC. Our project has also demonstrated that teachers need time to clarify concepts and relate these to their respective educational practices. School rarely provides the room for this. Teacher education may provide the space, time and support needed to develop these competences.

Literature


Developing teachers’ intercultural communicative competences


REIMANN, Andrew (2010): “Task-based cultural awareness raising through learner ethnographies”. In:


