



Intercultural Communicative Competence

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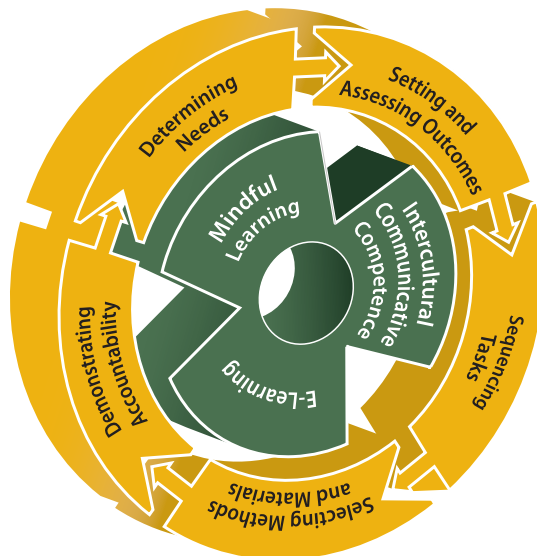
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ATESL Adult ESL Curriculum Framework





Section 7: Intercultural Communicative Competence

Table of Contents

- 4 Overview
- 4 Why intercultural communicative competence?
- 5 Unpacking C/culture
- 8 Understanding intercultural communicative competence
- 9 Integrating intercultural communicative competence into curriculum
 - The Massachusetts Model of ICC*
 - Task ideas for implementing the Massachusetts Model*
 - Integrating ICC and Canadian Language Benchmarks*
- 18 Conclusion
- 19 References

Overview

This section of the *ATESL Curriculum Framework* draws from the growing literature base and experiences of ESL practitioners who recognize the important role that culture plays in the language classroom. In this section, we will further refine our collective understanding and appreciation of the cultural knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes that curriculum developers, instructors, and learners bring to the adult ESL context. In *Intercultural Communicative Competence*, we

- Recognize culture as both product and process.
- Present ICC as a stance, or orientation, rather than body of content or method.
- Offer strategies to help you intentionally build ICC and foster more culturally responsive teaching and learning environments.

Why intercultural communicative competence?

There is growing recognition within the field of ESL¹ that it is important to focus not only on developing learners' linguistic skills, but also on advancing their intercultural communicative competence, or their ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in English within a culturally diverse society, such as Canada. As the *ATESL Curriculum Framework* was developed, consultations were conducted with English language providers, curriculum developers, and instructors across Alberta. Findings from the interviews and e-survey reveal an interest in better understanding how to integrate intercultural content into language learning tasks and how to incorporate strategies for promoting intercultural awareness in the classroom. Several interviewees indicated that cultural and intercultural content was not addressed in their curriculum documents, but tended to emerge organically in the classroom. There was often little direction for instructors in terms of how to “handle” culture.² This framework presents ICC as a core piece in ESL curriculum development.

ESL curriculum development in Canada has been influenced significantly by the view of language as communication. The essential elements for building communicative competence include discourse,³ strategic,⁴ functional,⁵ linguistic,⁶ and sociocultural⁷ competencies. Figure 1 represents this taxonomy.⁸ These elements are interconnected and each helps build communicative knowledge and skills when integrated into curriculum and practice in intentional ways. Within the *ATESL Curriculum Framework*, intercultural communicative competence draws attention to the importance of sociocultural competence and the place of culture in the English language classroom.⁹ This focus recognizes that culture is experienced, understood, and interpreted in language.¹⁰ It also helps address the multicultural nature of our Albertan and Canadian contexts.

¹ For example, ATESL, 2009, p. 82-83/#50; Holmes, Kingwell, Pettis, & Pidlaski, 2001; Lázár, et al., 2007; Liddicoat, et al., 2003.

² For an interesting study that supports these findings, see Thomson & Derwing, 2004.

³ *Discourse (or textual) competence* refers to the speaker's ability to connect sentences in a logical, cohesive, coherent way to form a meaningful whole, either orally or in written form (Adapted from Holmes, Kingwell, Pettis, and Pidlaski, 2001).

⁴ *Strategic competence* refers to the speaker's ability to integrate and apply all elements of communicative competence effectively in communicative situations. These strategies include, but are not limited to, the following: learning and using language, self-monitoring, negotiating meaning, and coping with communication difficulties (Adapted from Holmes, Kingwell, Pettis, and Pidlaski, 2001).

⁵ *Functional (actional) competence* refers to the speaker's understanding of the intent (or function) of a sentence or written text and how to respond to interactions such as information or interpersonal exchanges, expressing opinions and feelings, responding to problems or discussing the future, for example (Adapted from Holmes, Kingwell, Pettis, and Pidlaski, 2001).

⁶ *Linguistic (or grammatical) competence* refers to the speaker's knowledge about the syntactic, lexical, morphological, and phonological rules of language as well as their ability to produce these in well-formed, (grammatically) accurate sentences (Adapted from Holmes, Kingwell, Pettis, and Pidlaski, 2001).

⁷ *Sociocultural (sociolinguistic) competence* refers to the speaker's understanding of the rules of language use, specifically the pragmatic (or functional) features of language, including how to express oneself appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication (Adapted from Holmes, Kingwell, Pettis, and Pidlaski, 2001).

⁸ Based on the works of Hymes, 1967; Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Celce-Murcia, 2007.

⁹ Brody, 2003; Byram, 1997a, 1997b; Kramsch, 1998.

¹⁰ Seidl, 1998, p. 101.



Sociocultural competence refers to the speaker’s understanding of the rules of language use, specifically the functional features of language including how to express oneself appropriately within the overall social and cultural context of communication.

Figure 1. Elements of communicative competence

The discussion below takes a closer look at culture. The purpose of the discussion is to re-examine how culture is addressed in the ESL classroom, and to offer strategies that promote the intentional integration of ICC into ESL curriculum, teaching, and learning.

Unpacking C/culture

Culture is a challenging and complex term to define.¹¹ Byram (1997b) offers a useful definition of culture to guide our understanding: “The framework of ideas, values, and shared knowledge common to a particular social group and the manifestations of them in behaviour and artefacts.”¹² In this sense, culture is both process (“behaviour”) and product (“artifacts”).

Culture is often examined from the perspective of big “C” and small “c” culture. Big “C” culture refers to large ethnic, religious, national, or international labels (e.g., Canadian, Tamil, Muslim). Hanley’s (1999) iceberg model of culture shows Culture as the (more or less) easily visible, surface aspects, such as fine arts, literature, drama, classical and popular music, folk dancing, games, cooking, and dress. These aspects of culture appear more objective and static. Culture is understood as an object or product.



Image source: iStock.com

¹¹ Brody, 2003; Hinkel, 1999; House, 2007.

¹² p. 52.

Small “c” culture moves away from references to ethnicity and nationality. From this perspective, *culture* refers to less tangible, more beneath-the-surface beliefs, behaviours, and values.¹³ Examples include the notion of time (e.g., how it should be ordered; conceptions of past, present, and future), modesty and beauty, leadership, patterns of group decision-making, facial expressions, and arrangement of physical space. These aspects of culture appear more subjective and dynamic; c-culture is understood as practice or process.¹⁴



Box 1. Expressions of time

The example of **time** is offered to stimulate reflection and discussion about the interconnected nature of language, culture, and intercultural communicative competence (see Box 1). In English, words associated with time are often associated with money. One can *spend, waste, invest, save, and count* (etc.) both time and money. We even have the proverb: *Time is money*. What does this mean for the way we live our lives? Time can be explored in a number of ways, depending on your teaching and learning context, your learners, and your own intercultural capacity. With the C/ culture distinction in mind, Table 1 explores some of the ways that time might be taken up in the adult ESL classroom.

¹³ Hanley, 1999; Lázár, et al., 2007.

¹⁴ Liddicoat, 2002; Liddicoat, et al., 2003.

Table 1. Ideas for exploring time from C/culture perspectives.

Learners will...

from a Culture perspective

- Complete a daily planner (agenda) page detailing their hourly activities during an important holiday in their country and then share the holiday agenda with others in the class.
- Watch a sporting event popular in their respective countries and create a timeline, charting the events that occur. (This is not a play-by-play of the game itself, but rather a description of the routines of the game. For example, before a hockey game begins, each team skates around the rink while the audience applauds). Use an online tool to generate the timeline (e.g., <http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/timeline>). Present the timeline to the class, with attention to adverbs of time and logical connectors (e.g., next, after).

from a culture perspective

- Role-play various scenarios to practice different greetings for different times of the day in different contexts.
- Work on time-related idioms, e.g., to express vagueness (*hang on a minute, give me a couple of minutes*) or speed-related expressions (*life in the fast lane, at the drop of a hat, in a flash, in no time, drag one's feet, at a snail's pace, snail mail, multitasking*).
- Compare time-related proverbs in English (e.g., *The early bird catches the worm*) with sayings from other languages.
- Explore notions such as change, e.g., the disadvantages of *life in the fast lane*.
- Interview those from other cultures or sub-cultures about their use of time. Report on the interviews orally, in writing, or through drama.
- Observe people's responses to waiting and follow up with further questions.¹⁵

It is notoriously difficult to uncover the small “c” aspects of one’s own culture, in other words, to be self- and culturally-aware. As Edward Hall (1959) said, “Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough, what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants.”¹⁶ Research and experience, though, highlight the need to begin with ourselves, exploring the links between our own culture(s) and language(s), recognizing and coming to understand our biases.¹⁷

The literature is also unanimous in the importance of making intercultural awareness and competence explicit in the classroom.¹⁸ However, the C/culture distinction is often passed over in ESL contexts as published ESL materials frequently take up Culture as objects and products, rather than culture as processes and behaviours. Thomson and Derwing (2004) found that when textbooks do attend to Canadian culture, “the focus is on superficial, supposedly static manifestations. The most common approaches to teaching culture are usually characterized by descriptions of cultural facts and behaviours, ignoring the complexity and ambiguity of the cultural experience as a social construct.”¹⁹ Understanding the distinction between C/culture is helpful for moving beyond the focus on Culture that sometimes creeps into efforts to promote intercultural understanding in the ESL classroom.²⁰

ATESL Best Practices for Adult ESL/ LINC Programming in Alberta No. 50 (indicator 2)

Instructors (as insider members of Canadian culture) mediate for learners the hidden culture of beliefs, values, and ways of knowing in Canada.

¹⁵ See Huber-Kriegler, Lázár, & Strange, 2003, p. 11-18.

¹⁶ p. 39.

¹⁷ Garrido & Álvarez, 2006; Lázár, et al., 2007; Liddicoat, et al., 2003

¹⁸ Newton, et al., 2010.

¹⁹ p. 23.

²⁰ Peterson & Coltrane, 2003.

Understanding intercultural communicative competence

Teaching English as a second language is not always synonymous with teaching intercultural competence. The cultural aspects of language and communication need to be made explicit and investigated as part of the second language learning process. Further, intercultural *communicative* competence is more than intercultural competence.²¹ Bennett, Bennett, and Allen (2003) define intercultural competence as “the general ability to transcend ethnocentrism, appreciate other cultures, and generate appropriate behaviour in one or more different cultures.”²² In this framework, intercultural communicative competence is understood in the following way:

ICC encompasses intercultural competence and focuses attention on communicative competencies, especially the sociocultural element. It also highlights the need to acknowledge the diverse perspectives, practices, and products of cultures that are an integral part of being a multicultural society. The intention of ICC is to blend understandings of the linguistic and cultural knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes that each individual brings to the ESL classroom.

It is important to recognize the diversity of languages and cultures that are brought collectively into the classroom, as well as the various cultures of English. It is also essential to consider the dynamic intercultural communicative aspect between learners. Seidl (1998) contextualizes the dynamic nature of ICC with this question: “How appropriate is it for an Italian to be competent in conversational gambits which are typically British if he is doing business in English with a woman from Germany and someone from Japan?”²³ Within the context of ICC, ESL teaching and learning is approached as a multi-way process of learning to communicate respectfully and appropriately within a multicultural context. This intersection of culture and language carries implications for curriculum development and teaching practices.

ATESL Best Practices for Adult ESL/LINC Programming in Alberta
No. 50 (indicator 3)

Classroom activities expand learners’ capacity to live and work in a multicultural environment by encouraging learners to...

- *Explore the impact of their own cultural assumptions on their own expectations, behaviours, choices, values, communication styles, etc.*
- *Explore the impact of the cultural assumptions of those they meet in Canada... on the expectations, behaviours, choices, values, communication styles, etc. of those individuals.*

Integrating intercultural communicative competence into curriculum

Most language learning tasks and activities that are taken up in the ESL classroom can lead to a consideration of culture. Intercultural communicative language teaching is more of a stance than body of content or method. The idea is not to separate culture from language, but to recognize its inherent presence in language and to see language as culture. Integrating ICC into curriculum and instruction is about intentionally highlighting this dimension within existing program goals, language learning outcomes, tasks, materials, and assessments.

²¹ Stier, 2006.

²² p. 237.

²³ p. 110.

The Massachusetts Model of ICC

While a number of different models of ICC have been proposed,²⁴ the *ATESL Curriculum Framework* builds on the Intercultural Knowledge and Skills strand of the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework (the Massachusetts Model)²⁵ which takes an instructional approach that is comprehensive, widely adaptable, and appealing to educators. The Massachusetts Model offers seven standards or ways of demonstrating awareness of cultural differences and attitudes, as well as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function in a culturally diverse society. Standards are not proficiency levels or benchmarks, but are intended instead to describe what learners should know and be able to do within a specific content area. The Massachusetts Model is helpful for integrating intercultural communicative awareness into ESL curriculum and teaching practices in an intentional, contextualized way.

The seven standards are shown below in Figure 2. They have been adapted to reflect Albertan and Canadian contexts, as well as the unpredictable way in which intercultural communicative proficiencies may develop. In the Massachusetts Model, the standards are numbered, suggesting a developmental order. Here, ICC learning is viewed as a dynamic process that has applicability and resonates across all proficiency levels and contexts. In other words, each standard may be taken up in various ways at different ESL proficiency levels. Therefore, Figure 2 represents the standards as equally important and interconnected aspects or strands of ICC.

²⁴ For example, Byram (1997a), who is well-known in the field, particularly in the European context, has developed a set of five *savoirs* that describe ICC along the dimensions of knowledge (*savoirs*), skills (*savoir comprendre and savoir apprendre/faire*), attitudes (*savoir etre*) and critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*). Bennett and Bennett (2004), leaders in the American context, are known particularly for their Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS).

²⁵ Massachusetts Department of Education & Adult and Community Learning Services, 2005.

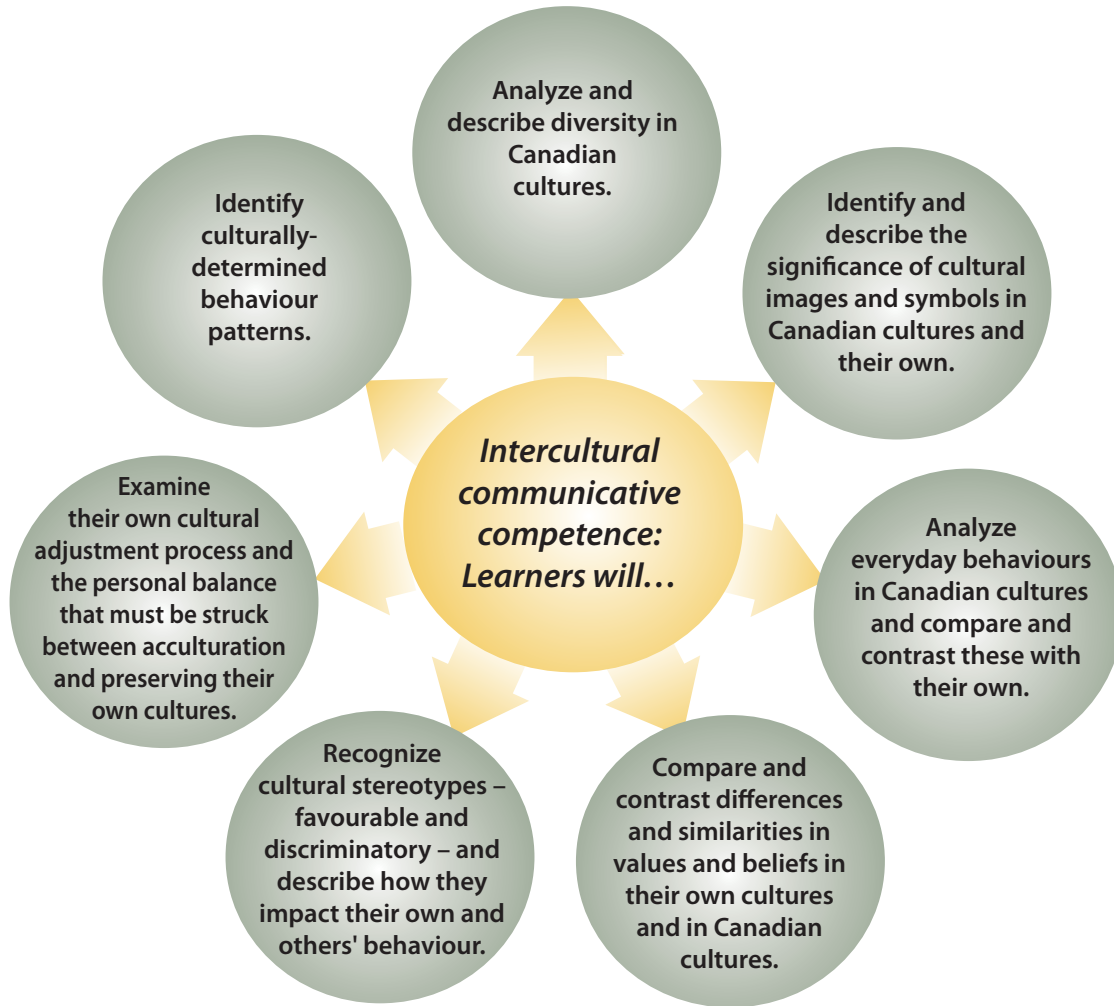


Figure 2. Adapted Intercultural Knowledge and Skills Strand of the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework (2005).



For more information on developing learning outcomes, see *Section 2: Setting and Assessing Outcomes*.

Task ideas for implementing the Massachusetts Model

The following sets out ideas for tasks and/or projects to help you integrate ICC into your existing curriculum and teaching practices. Note that the strands are presented intentionally in a different order than that in Figure 2 to highlight their complementary, non-sequential nature.

Analyze everyday behaviours in Canadian cultures and compare and contrast these with their own

Greetings, farewells, daily routines, dress, eating, personal hygiene, shopping, dating...

- Use film clips or podcasts to focus on cultural conventions, such as English greetings. Learners might complete a chart, diagram, or outline while they listen to a dialogue or watch a video. Then, instructors might lead a discussion of the cultural norms represented in the clip(s) and what these norms might say about the values of the culture(s). Discussion topics might include nonverbal communication (e.g., gestures, eye contact, the physical distance between speakers), and how people in different social roles relate to each other. Aspects of communication such as conversational timing and turn-taking could be considered. Learners might describe the behaviours they observe, write about similarities and differences with their own cultures, and determine strategies for more effective communication in English.²⁶
- Use TPR²⁷ routines (e.g., getting ready in the morning), role plays, and ethnographic studies (observation and recording) to launch discussions of everyday behaviours in Canada and across cultures (both C/c perspectives).

Recognize cultural stereotypes—favourable and discriminatory—and describe how they impact their own and others' behaviours

Race, gender, ethnicity, religion, class, nationality, rural/urban, sexual orientation, age...

- Use a selection of international proverbs to explore cultural stereotypes and misrepresentations.
- Design a task that asks learners to consider various cultural profiles prepared by the Government of Canada (See <http://www.cp-pc.ca/>), and discuss, for example, how the profiles might promote cultural stereotyping.
- Ask learners to demonstrate how *favourable* and *discriminatory* might feel and manifest as behaviour.
- Have learners prepare a report on one effect of cultural stereotyping.

²⁶ Peterson & Coltrane, 2003

²⁷ TPR is an instructional technique developed by James Asher in which learners respond to commands that require physical movement.

Identify and describe the significance of cultural images and symbols in Canadian cultures and their own

Historical symbols; popular culture images from mass media; folk culture images; holiday images and rituals; icons and citizenship...

- Culture capsules: Present learners with objects or images (e.g., figurines, tools, jewellery, art) from a particular culture and ask them to find information about their object(s), either by doing research or investigating clues provided. Learners might write a brief summary or make a presentation about the cultural relevance of the object. Have a group discussion of less obvious aspects of culture that the objects may embody.²⁸
- Design tasks and projects that ask learners to describe images and/or symbols in Canadian culture, express the feelings they evoke, and compare them with national images and symbols from their own cultural background. Perhaps provide these questions: What is this symbol and where is it from? Why is it important? How does it represent a dimension of a culture? How does this symbol compare with those in other cultures? How do those comparisons highlight larger similarities or differences between cultures?²⁹

Identify culturally-determined behaviour patterns

Small talk, nonverbal communication, taboo topics, telephone protocol, degrees of familiarity, ways to express emotions, eye contact, use of time and space...

- Role plays: Give learners opportunities to practice various politeness strategies (and related grammar such as modals and the conditional) and explore how these strategies reflect different degrees of familiarity. Include miscommunication scenarios. For example, after practising greeting someone of the same age versus someone older, learners might role-play a situation in which an inappropriate greeting or intonation is used. To assess understanding, other learners might be asked to identify the reason for the misunderstanding.
- Ethnographic studies: Send learners into the community to collect information about English and Canadian cultures. For example, learners may conduct and record ethnographic interviews with Canadian neighbours, obtain and present an oral family history, or interview a professional about his/her workplace culture.³⁰ Ask learners to observe conversations on the street and various non-verbal behaviours, such as degree of proximity and hand gestures. Alternatively, learners could observe a meeting and the ways in which people get the floor, take turns, and achieve consensus. Later, these behaviours can be role-played.³¹

²⁸ Peterson & Coltrane, 2003.

²⁹ Massachusetts Department of Education & Adult and Community Learning Services, 2005.

³⁰ Peterson & Coltrane, 2003.

³¹ Massachusetts Department of Education & Adult and Community Learning Services, 2005.

Compare and contrast differences and similarities in values and beliefs in their own cultures and in Canadian cultures

Attitudes about male/female roles, work ethic, corporal punishment, aging, independence, materialism, time, money...

- Explore differences and similarities between English proverbs and proverbs from the learners' cultures. Learners might discuss the values and behaviours embedded in the English proverbs and how differences might underscore historical and cultural backgrounds.
- To explore gender, learners might agree or disagree with various stereotypical statements, explain their reasons, and compare and contrast Canadian practices with their own. They might interview older people about changes in gender relations in their lifetimes or do a survey to find out how household chores are shared. They might consider rules of etiquette and physical display between genders in different cultures. Controversial topics include working women and the division of household labour, the "glass ceiling" effect in the workplace, sexual harassment, female soldiers, *hijab*. Language work might include Mr., Mrs., Ms., and Miss, slang, informal terms for men and women, and labelling by gender.³²

Analyze and describe diversity in Canadian cultures

Ethnicity, race, religion, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, urban/rural...

- Design a learning task or project around the question "What does 'mosaic' mean to you?"
- Ethnographic studies of sub-cultures are helpful for highlighting the complexity of Canadian culture (i.e., it is not homogeneous). Ask learners to identify a sub-culture other than their own and create a presentation of its main characteristics and relationships with other groups.
- Use critical incidents that have occurred because of assumptions of similarity, helping learners see and understand the diversity of cultures.³³

Examine their own cultural adjustment process and the personal balance that must be struck between acculturation and preserving their own culture

Parental rights and limitations, multilingual/multicultural homes, "home" remedies, religious and social practices...

- Explore topics from the perspective of straddling two or more cultures: What is the experience like? Design a task or project that asks learners to explore what remains difficult and/or has become easy for them, and their strategies to handle cross-generational and/or cross-cultural differences.³⁴
- Use critical incidents in school, community, workplace, and acculturation to spark discussion, writing, and presentations.³⁵

³² Huber-Kriegler, Lázár, & Strange, 2003, p. 39-47.

³³ Barna, 2004; Norquest, 2007, 2010.

³⁴ Massachusetts Department of Education & Adult and Community Learning Services, 2005.

³⁵ Norquest College, 2007, p. 52-62.



For more information on tasks and projects, see *Section 3: Sequencing Tasks*.

Integrating ICC and Canadian Language Benchmarks

Following are a number of tasks and a lesson plan designed to show how different ICC strands might be taken up within the context of the Canadian Language Benchmarks. Each of the three sample tasks below addresses the following ICC strand: *Identify and describe the significance of cultural images and symbols in Canadian cultures and their own*. The purpose of providing this series of sample tasks is to demonstrate the applicability of one strand across a range of proficiencies.

ATESL Best Practices for Adult ESL/
LINC Programming in Alberta
No. 50

Instructional activities are culturally sensitive, and they encourage learners to share and celebrate aspects of their cultures, to explore their own and others' worldviews, and to expand their capacity to live and work in Canada.

Task 1: What does money tell us?

Level: CLB 2

Outcomes

Reading: Gets key information from texts.

Writing: Copies words or numbers; writes or prints legibly; spells accurately.

Listening: Identifies factual details in a listening text.

Speaking: Gives a basic description; describes size, colour, and number.

ICC: Identifies and describes the significance of cultural images and symbols in Canadian cultures and their own.

Task: Have learners look at the images found on Canadian money (e.g., beaver, loon, polar bear) and match the images to short verbal or written descriptions. Ask learners to bring samples or provide pictures of money from their home countries, and compare the images on Canadian money to those found on money from their own countries. Ask learners to provide a short oral description of one bill or coin (in pairs or as a group) and write new vocabulary on the board. Learners discuss what they can learn about Canada from images found on Canadian money.

Task 2: Iconic Canadian women

Level: CLB 5

Outcomes

Reading: Identifies type and purpose of text and gets the gist; identifies specific factual information and inferred meaning in the text.

Writing: Provides an introduction, development and conclusion, and an adequate paragraph structure; expresses main idea and supports it with details.

Listening: Identifies main intent, main idea, factual details, words and expressions and inferred meanings in an oral presentation.

Speaking: Presents information about the reading text in a coherent connected discourse; speaks intelligibly so the listener can follow all details; asks relevant questions.

ICC: Identifies and describes the significance of cultural images and symbols in Canadian cultures and their own.

Task: Jigsaw activity. Divide the class into small groups. Distribute a different short reading (e.g., an adapted newspaper or magazine article) about a female Canadian icon (e.g., Julie Payette, Hayley Wickenheiser, Margaret Atwood) to each small group. Each group reads through its assigned text. Together, group members identify the meaning of new vocabulary and prepare a set of 3-5 comprehension questions related to the reading. Reconfigure groups so each new group is comprised of members who have read different passages. Each group member provides a summary of the reading about the Canadian icon and asks the group the comprehension questions based on the summary. Once each group member has had a turn, learners discuss a set of questions on the board regarding iconic females in their own countries and the contributions they have made. Other questions for discussion may include: Why were only female icons discussed? Are famous women immortalized or revered in Canada and in their home countries? If so, how? What does this tell us about each country? As a follow-up, learners write a short paragraph describing a (famous) woman, her contributions, and why she is important to her home country.



For a discussion of the jigsaw as an active learning technique see “Active Learning: Suggestions for the Classroom” in *Section 6: Mindful Learning*.

Task 3: Changing impressions of Canada

Level: CLB 9

Outcomes

Reading: Locates and integrates several pieces of information; transfers complex textual information to an alternate form (i.e., multimedia).

Writing: Conveys main ideas, supports them with sufficient detail; uses logical connectors.

Speaking: Obtains, organizes, states, supports, sequences, and connects information and ideas; gives a 15-minute group presentation.

Listening: Identifies, summarizes, and critically evaluates development of positions; follows a 15-minute presentation and provides oral feedback.

ICC: Identifies and describes the significance of cultural images and symbols in Canadian cultures and their own.

Task: Either as a gallery walk or as objects/photographs to pass around, present various images and symbols of Canada (e.g., maple leaf, loon, Inukshuk, the Queen, RCMP, the prairies, Arctic, a barn, igloo). In small groups, with reference to the various images and symbols presented, ask learners to discuss and compare their thoughts about Canada before they moved here (often Culture) with what they have learned about Canada from living here (often more culture). Then, learners will prepare a 15-minute group multimedia presentation for their peers, outlining their individual preconceptions of various Canadian symbols and images and how they understand the images and symbols now. Develop this task over a few classes so that learners have the opportunity to do some research and prepare. As well, ask learners to conduct an informal survey of their classmates, neighbours, and colleagues to gather their impressions of the learner's home country. Following their group presentations, each learner will write a 3-page personal response essay about the symbols and images of their home countries, incorporating the survey feedback from their peers.

Lesson plan: Mentorships offer a leg up in life

Level: CLB 6 and up

The following adapted lesson plan addresses a different ICC strand: *Compare and contrast differences and similarities in values and beliefs in their own cultures and in Canadian cultures*. The original lesson plan, found on CBC Manitoba's EAL website,³⁶ has been adapted to demonstrate how ICC can be planned and introduced intentionally in the ESL classroom. The adaptations (bolded) also demonstrate how ICC can be worked into an existing lesson plan, highlighting the concept that culture is inherently present in language. The materials, including the podcast link, can be downloaded from the website.

³⁶ Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), 2010: <http://www.cbc.ca/manitoba/eal/2010/11/mentorships-offer-a-leg-up-in-life.html>. (Adapted with permission).

Outcomes

Reading: Scans a notice for detail; reads a text for the main ideas.

Writing: Writes a thank-you note.

Speaking: Role-plays a dialogue; expresses ideas.

Listening: Listens to a short interview for fact and opinion.

ICC: Compares and contrasts differences and similarities in values and beliefs in their own cultures and in Canadian cultures.

Tasks:

- Answer questions **and compare answers** about mentoring traditions in home countries.
- Listen for fact and opinion in a radio interview with photographer Sarah Crawley about her mentorship project with Eritrean women.³⁷
- Find synonyms for new vocabulary.
- Role-play a dialogue using expanded responses to keep the conversation going.³⁸ **Discuss the purpose of this kind of conversation strategy and other ways of fulfilling the same purpose, e.g., asking about extended family, weather, etc.**
- Scan a notice about mentorship programs for detail.
- Read tips on finding a mentor and answer questions on how you could personally use this information to find a mentor. **Write a personal essay about the challenges you can imagine facing as you look for a mentor. Consider values and beliefs. Keep a learning journal and note your use of socioaffective learning strategies.**
- Write a thank-you note to a mentor. **Discuss the thank-you note, its rules and etiquette, deeper values and beliefs, such as hierarchical relationships (e.g., deference to elders). How is gratitude expressed in other cultures?**
- Describe photos that would be included in a class exhibit on life in **Alberta and** your country.



For more information on the Canadian Language Benchmarks, see *Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2011*.



For more information on developing learning outcomes related to the CLB, see *Section 2: Setting and Assessing Outcomes*. For more information on selecting and sequencing tasks to support an outcome, see *Section 3: Sequencing Tasks*. For further discussion of socioaffective learning strategies, see “Second Language Learner Strategies” in *Section 6: Mindful Learning*.

³⁷ http://www.cbc.ca/manitoba/eal/media/nov15_2010.mp3.

³⁸ For example, in response to the question “Did you like the mentorship program?” the learner replies “Yeah. It was great. I met so many new friends.” instead of simply “Yeah.”

Conclusion

Intercultural communicative competence is established in the *ATESL Curriculum Framework* as an interconnected, multifaceted element of adult ESL curriculum development and teaching practice. While building language knowledge and proficiency is the focus of ESL programs, it is also essential to acknowledge the connection between language and culture. Attending to ICC in an intentional way builds on the cultural knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes that instructors and learners bring to the classroom and the less visible aspects that promote a deeper understanding of culture as a dynamic process. To guide, support, and refine an understanding of ICC practices, the Intercultural Knowledge and Skills component of the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework³⁹ has been introduced and adapted. The seven strands of this model (and their respective examples) illustrate how intercultural communicative proficiencies may be developed intentionally and contextualized to reflect Albertan and Canadian contexts. Research and experience suggest that integrating ICC into ESL curriculum and instruction advances the knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes necessary for communicating with others who represent diverse linguistic and cultural perspectives. Expressing oneself appropriately, whether inside or outside an ESL classroom, relies on an understanding of and an ability to work within plurality.

³⁹ Massachusetts Department of Education & Adult and Community Learning Services, 2005.

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