

Developing Students' Intercultural Understanding and Awareness through Adapting an Intercultural Pedagogy in Foreign Language Teaching

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Abstract : The recent trends in foreign language teaching -influenced widely by the process of globalization, interculturalism, and global flows and migration- are leaning towards adopting an intercultural perspective to help in developing students who are global citizens able to effectively function across diverse boundaries (cultural, social, geographical). Researchers call for intercultural learning and teaching perspective that would foster and increase intercultural awareness and understanding (e.g., Guilherme, 2002; Byram et al., 2002). The present research aims at unfolding whether including the cultural dimension in foreign language instruction can help in developing students' intercultural understanding and awareness. In doing so, a cultural pedagogical experiment was designed and conducted for the period of one year at the level of the university. Data were collected qualitatively and analyzed thematically. Results help in drawing important implications for educational institutions, foreign language teachers, and syllabus designers about the importance and effectiveness of perceiving foreign language instruction as a social activity that can nurture interculturally competent individuals who adequately respond to the demands of today's intercultural and globalized societies.

Keywords : foreign language teaching, intercultural awareness, language and culture, intercultural understanding

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