



Language Centre Teaching Development Seminar

Teaching for Intercultural Citizenship in (Foreign) Language Education

Presented by

Professor Michael Byram
University of Durham, England

Date: 16 Jan 2012 (Monday)
Time: 4:00 – 5:15 p.m.
Venue: OEM1018, 10/F OEN Hall Main,
Ho Sin Hang Campus, HKBU

Abstract

The purposes of language education are changing. From a focus on the instrumental purposes of the communicative approach, there is a shift – or rather an addition and a return – to humanistic purposes in a revised form. In pre-communicative times, the humanistic purposes focused on the (liberal) education of the individual through exposure to the/a high culture associated with a language. In contemporary times the humanistic educational dimension comes through a reflexive attitude to engagement with 'otherness'.

In this talk I will show how this new purpose is evident in curricula and how it can be pursued by teachers of languages when they also take seriously the relationship of language and culture. I will do so with examples from Europe, which I hope will lead to discussion about their transfer to the Hong Kong context.

As a second element of the talk, I will also indicate the links which are possible, and in my view desirable, between language education and a kind of citizenship education which is also constructed in a humanistic perspective.

Bio

Michael Byram, Professor Emeritus University of Durham, England, studied at King's College Cambridge and then taught French and German in secondary and adult education. He has been at Durham University since 1980 engaged in teacher training, research student supervision and research on languages and education. His books include *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*; and *From Foreign Language Education to Education for Intercultural Citizenship*. He is the editor of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning* and was until recently an Adviser to the Council of Europe Language Policy Division.



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