



Intercultural Group Dynamics

Activity 4 Designing an Inclusive Learning Environment to Enhance Intercultural Learning

Activity Description

Purpose

Activity 4 is a group work activity including a fishbowl discussion, which is explained in detail below. It has the purpose of focussing on how to design an inclusive learning environment. Such a learning environment engages all students and leads to meaningful interaction in the international classroom regarding the substantive content of the programme and intercultural learning and development. This activity builds on the *thematic introduction Enhancing Intercultural Learning in the Curriculum*.

In activity 3, participants were asked to think of examples to deal with a dysfunctional group/team from an intercultural perspective. In this activity, participants will learn from each other's experiences by sharing and reflecting on examples of how to design a learning environment which engages all students in classroom activities. In such a learning environment, all students will benefit from diversity in experience and knowledge perspectives, which are resources for learning in and from the international classroom. As a reminder, we have included the Good Practice Principles (slide 5) that has been discussed in the module *Introduction to the International Classroom*.

In activity 4, participants will engage in a fishbowl discussion to achieve the learning outcomes addressed below (slide 3):

- To apply the different pedagogical interventions to stimulate intercultural learning through group interaction associated with the variety of student needs and expectations in the international classroom.
- To incorporate classroom opportunities brought by the cohort in terms of diversity in order to develop intercultural engagement.
- To recognize varied prior knowledge from the international classroom to be used as a resource for learning.

Nota Bene

In slides 21-23 of the PowerPoint presentation of this activity, a final reflection and two scenarios have been included, inviting the participants to capture the key



take-away messages of the whole module *Intercultural Group Dynamics* in their Learning Portfolio. Participants either have the opportunity to spend the last 5 to 10 minutes of this module on a reflection on the take-away messages from the scenario, or they may engage in the variation suggested at the end of these facilitator notes.

Procedure

This procedure is an adaptation of the renowned fishbowl method.

When the module is run as an integrated module in a summer/winter school, think of asking the participants to share their pedagogical interventions examples a couple of days/a day before running the module. This will allow for a better facilitation of the discussion.

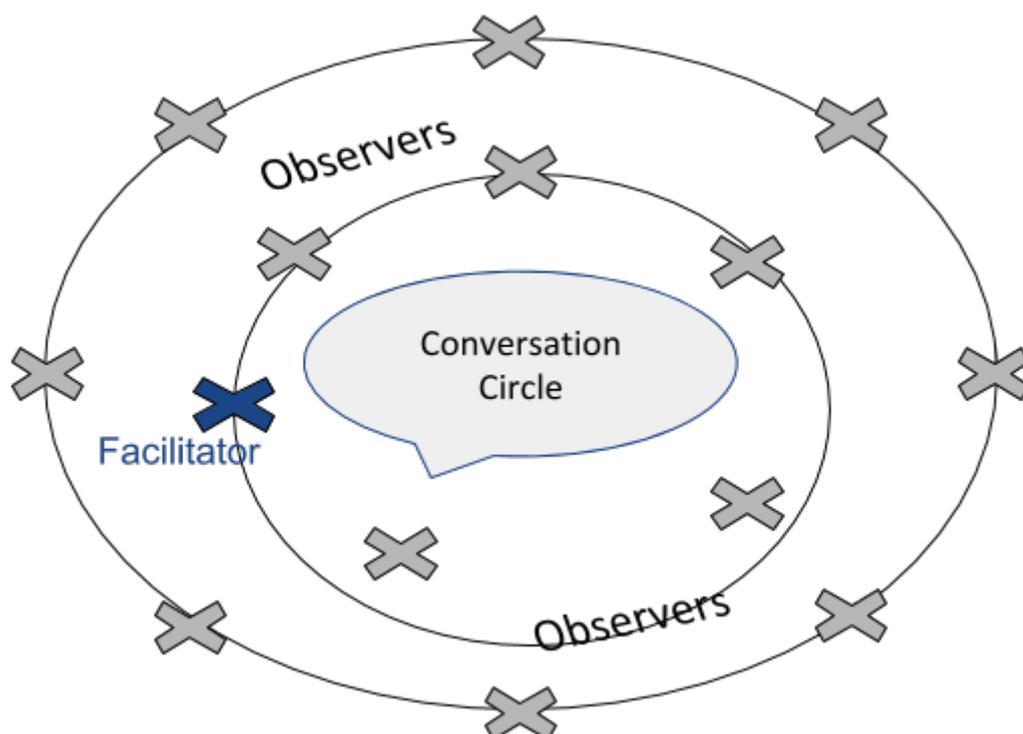
1) Preparation

- For the first part of the activity, the participants continue in their snowball groups.
- Introduce the activity by relating it to the learning outcomes (above) and by referring back to the insights from activity 3. This activity will focus on pedagogical interventions that help create an inclusive learning environment which stimulates intercultural engagement and learning. Such a learning environment incorporates classroom opportunities for intercultural engagement and the sharing of prior knowledge as resources (learning in and from the international classroom).
- Each participant group is assigned a topic for discussion (A-D)
- Ask each of the groups to share examples of how to design an inclusive learning environment taking into consideration one of the four questions “How do students differ as regards...”
 - a) ‘... what or how much they know about the topic (the content of the course).’
 - b) ‘... the disciplinary approaches (i.e. quantitative vs qualitative methods, communication style within learning and teaching).’
 - c) ‘... the skills needed (assessing the validity of source material; laboratory procedures; handling of discipline specific equipment; how to use).’
 - d) ‘... knowledge of and experience with specific forms of teaching, learning, and assessment.’
- The instruction takes 5 minutes, and the discussion in the subgroup may take up to 8-10 minutes.

2) Fishbowl activity



- After the 10 minutes in the subgroups, ask participants to divide themselves into an inner and outer circle (2 minutes).
- Set-up the room: create an inner and outer circle:
 - a) Include (depending on the number of participants) around 6 to 8 chairs for the participants in the inner circle and 1 for the facilitator.
 - b) Include enough chairs for the remaining participants in the outer circle as well as some extra chairs to allow flexibility in moving around
 - c) Groups A and B will take a chair in the inner circle. Groups C and D will start in the outer circle.



- Instruct the observers in the outer circle to take notes on the discussion taking place in the inner circle. The notes should result in a list of pedagogical interventions for designing an inclusive learning environment, the corresponding pros and cons, as well as including additional questions to ask after the 2x10 minutes discussions. The observers should be quiet at all times.
- As a facilitator, you should facilitate the discussion in the inner circle without intervening too much. Instruct the participants to respectfully listen to each other and to react to each other and share their own experiences / ideas when appropriate. Start the first round by asking participants to share practises and give examples of how to engage **all** students in the classroom in exploring (A) prior knowledge and (B) approaches to how knowledge is



acquired in their discipline. Allow the discussion in the inner circle to go on for about 10 minutes.

- After 10 minutes, end the first conversation and ask the group if participants from the outer circle would like to move to the inner circle and vice versa.
- Remind the observers again of the importance of taking notes and being quiet. Start a new round of discussion in the inner circle for about 10 minutes. Ask participants to share their experience and give examples of how to engage **all** students in the classroom in exploring (C) skills associated with their discipline and (D) their experiences and expectations about teaching and learning.
- After 10 minutes, end the second round and ask participants to move their seats so that they can all see the flipchart stand.

3) Debrief

- Ask all participants who have been in an observer role to share their notes regarding the pedagogical interventions and the pros and cons.
- After everything has been captured on the flipchart sheets, invite the participants to ask any additional questions they might have.
- Take 15 minutes for the debrief session.

4) Share the six key points

- Wrap up the activity by summarising the key points from the debrief session and link these to the ideas put forward by the six key points (slides 12-18) that constitute the foundation of pedagogical and didactical approaches and that are appropriate in the international classroom.
- Take 15 minutes

Resources needed

1. Activity 4 Worksheet
2. Activity 4 PowerPoint presentation
3. Flipchart sheets, flipchart stand/wall space + set of markers for flipcharts
4. Paper to allow participants to take notes

Timeframe

70 minutes with a minimum of 6 participants, maximum of 25 participants for one fishbowl.

Room / space needed

Room needs to allow for the creation of an inner and outer circle with chairs.



Possible variations of the procedure

If time allows, ask participants using the think – pair - share method (slide 23) of why the fishbowls is suitable to enhance classroom engagement with diverse groups. This activity takes 10 minutes. When there is no time left, just present the question and ask participants to reflect on it in their learning portfolio.

With larger groups, think of creating multiple groups.

References

<https://en.unesco.org/themes/intercultural-dialogue>

Kelly, P. (2008). Multicultural group-work: the group allocation process. In *Higher Education Association Conference* https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/phil_kelly.pdf

version June 2019



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



You are free to share, copy, redistribute and build upon this work provided that a clear reference to the source is given, which is:
www.equiip.eu