

The intercultural dimension of English as a foreign language: a survey of teachers of English in primary education in Portugal

Sandie Mourão

CETAPS

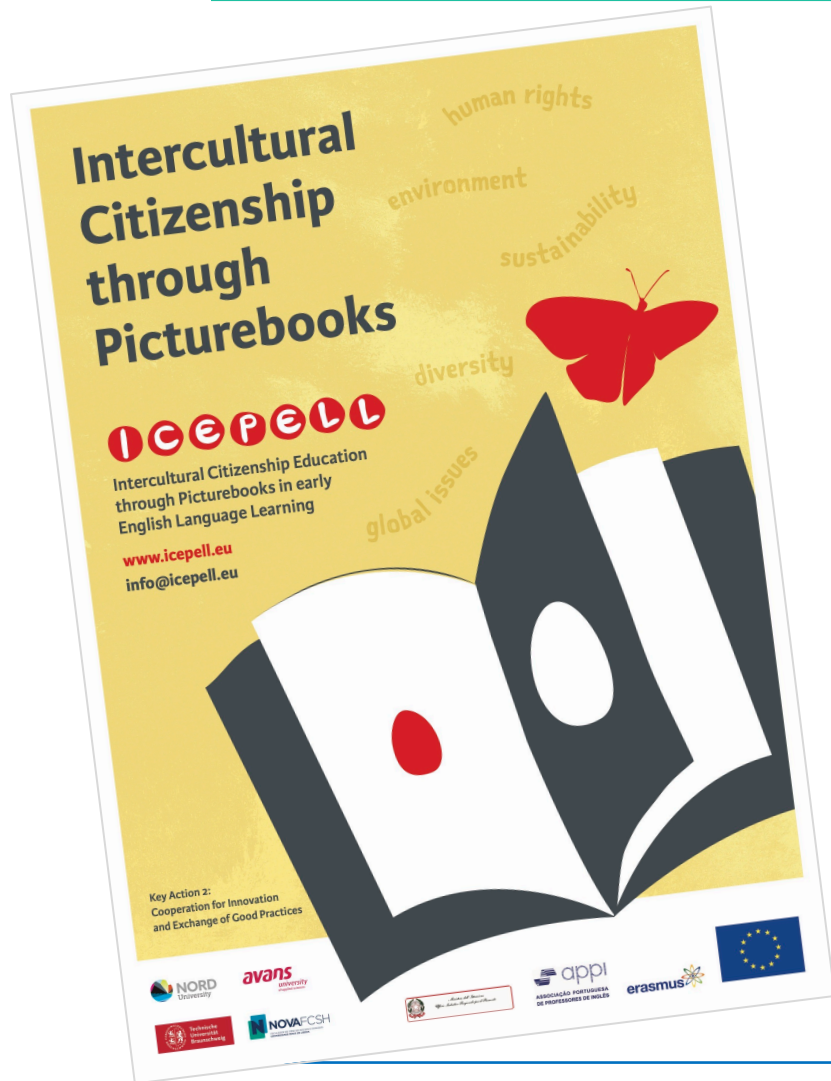


Part of the CETAPS' FCT Funding - project nº UIDB/04097/2020

Plan ...

- ✓ The context
- ✓ The intercultural dimension of early language learning
- ✓ The survey and its challenges
- ✓ Discussion around results
- ✓ Conclusions and what's next ...

The context: ICEPELL



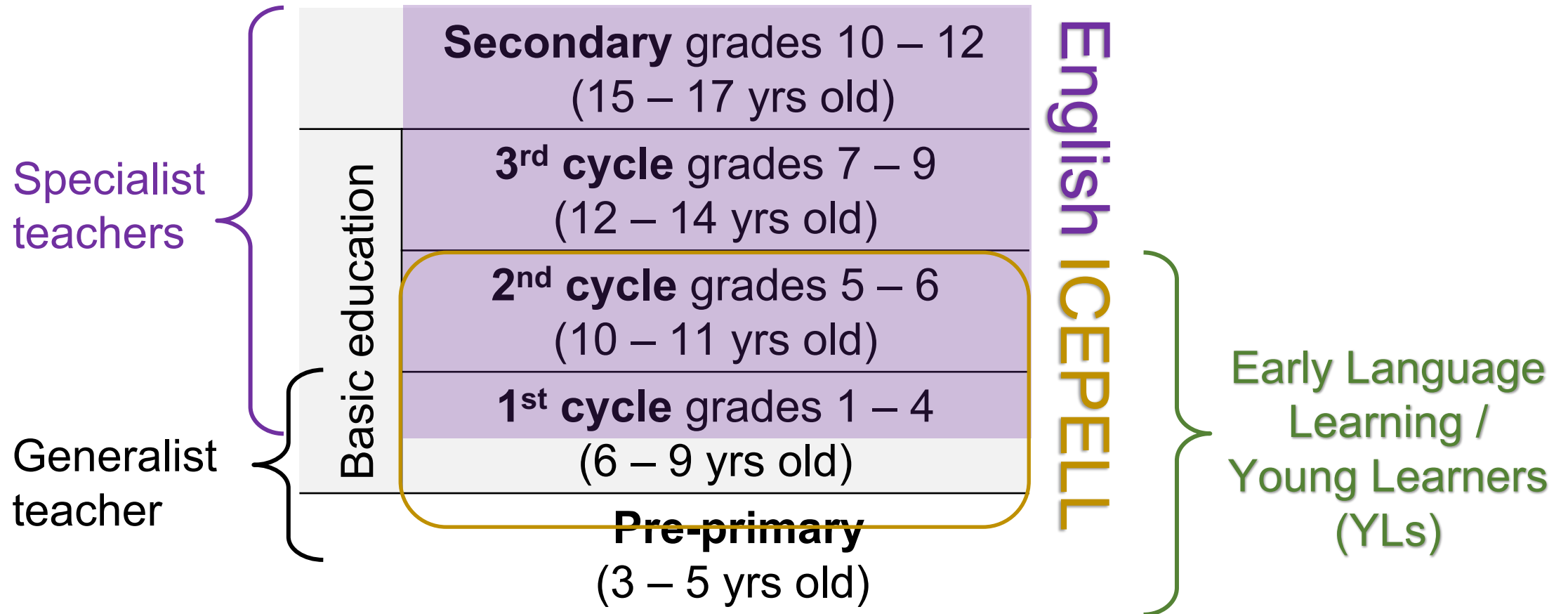
Intercultural Citizenship Education through Picturebooks in early English Language Learning (ICEPELL)

- ✓ Erasmus+ KA202 project
- ✓ September 2019 – August 2023
- ✓ Coordinated through CETAPS
- ✓ The aim: to support practitioners to confidently integrate **intercultural citizenship education** into their EFL lessons and library sessions with children aged 5 to 12 years.
- ✓ <https://icepell.eu/>

A survey of teachers of English in primary education in Portugal

CETAPS / TEALS Advanced Research Seminar: Challenges, Solutions and Synergies * 4 February 2021

The context: Teaching English in Portugal



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The context: Teaching English in Portugal

Objectives for grades 3 - 6

Skills and domains

- Intercultural domain
- Lexis and grammar
- Listening
- Spoken interaction
- Spoken production
- Reading
- Writing

Expected proficiency (CEFR)

- ✓ End of Grade 4 - A1
- ✓ End of Grade 6 - A1+

National Standards

Intercultural Domain: Grade 4

Understanding / knowing yourself and others

- Identify festivities in different parts of the world
 - Identify activities related to festivities
 - Participate in games and dramatizations
-

Understanding / knowing your world and that of others

Identify school spaces, parts of the body, food and drink, spaces around you, animals, the five senses, open air activities

Course books tend to lead instruction

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Teaching English to YLs... and the intercultural dimension

Intercultural communicative competence model (Byram, 1997 / 2021)	Skills of interpreting and relating to Other (<i>Savoir comprendre</i>)	
Knowledge of 1) self and Other; 2) interaction (individual and societal) (<i>Savoir</i>)	Education Critical cultural awareness toward Otherness (<i>Savoir s'engager</i>)	Attitudes of curiosity and openness towards Otherness (<i>Savoir être</i>)
	Skills of discovery, interaction and showing sensitivity (<i>savoir apprendre/faire</i>)	

Teaching English to YLs... and the intercultural dimension

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Teaching English to YLs... and the intercultural dimension

**Intercultural
communicative
competence model**
(Byram, 1997 2021)

Skills of interpreting and
relating to Other
(*Savoir comprendre*)

✓ **Possible with YLs**
Curtain & Dahlberg, 1984
Byram & Doyé, 1999
Kirsch, 2008

Knowledge of
1) self and Other;
2) interaction (individual
and societal) (*Savoir*)

Education
Critical cultural awareness
toward Otherness
(*Savoir s'engager*)

Attitudes of curiosity
and openness towards
Otherness (*Savoir être*)

Surveying YL teachers
Breka & Petravić, 2015
Brunsmeier, 2017

Skills of discovery,
interaction and showing
sensitivity
(*savoir apprendre/faire*)

✓ **Possible with YLs**
Byram, et al., 2013
Byram, 2021

Teaching English to YLs ... and culture / being intercultural

NB: Early Language Learning / Young learners = children from 5 – 12 years old



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ICEPELL Survey: Objective and challenges

Objective: Diagnose the needs of practitioners in relation to the concept of and ability to include Intercultural Citizenship Education in their teaching repertoire

Challenge 1 : The concept ‘Intercultural Citizenship Education’

Solution: Separated ‘intercultural’ and ‘citizenship’ sections

Challenge 2: The terms ‘intercultural’ and ‘citizenship’ ... do we define them?

Solution:

- a) Opinions / beliefs vs actual practices (requested examples)
- b) Questions around which culture(s) to target
- c) Unpick the concept ex. Qs around development of desired attitudes ie. ‘Being open and respectful towards others’

Organisation

Survey sections

Section 1: Background information

Section 2: Teaching context

Section 3: Opinions and beliefs about EFL teaching objectives, practices and resources

Section 4: Actual classroom practices: intercultural learning and citizenship (focus on topics, practices, assessment and challenges)

Closed questions: Yes / No; multiple choice; Likert scales: matrix questions

Open questions: requesting examples of practice and final comments

Dissemination: APPI members by email invite + social media

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Results: background

Respondents

Gender: female 92,9% / male 5,4%

Age:

35 – 44 years old 57,7%

45 – 54 years old 35,7%

Qualified to teach ...

Pre-primary 1%

Grades 3 / 4 76,4%

Grades 5 / 6 21,0%

Grades 7+ 20,3%

Surveys analysed n=182

Nationality

Portuguese 97,2%

Portuguese + other 2,5%

Language proficiency

Upper-intermediate 18,6%

Advanced 75,8%

Experience teaching children under 12 years old

>10 yrs 60%

Results: opinions

Opinions	Agree*
The more pupils know about different cultures, the more tolerant they will become.	98,8%
Learning English at school can enhance pupils' understanding of their own cultural identity.	98,8%
Teaching culture is as important as teaching the foreign language.	98,8%
The teaching of English should make reference to other cultures, not just English-speaking cultures.	94,5%
Intercultural education reinforces pupils' already existing stereotypes of other peoples and cultures.	15,3%
Intercultural skills cannot be acquired at school.	4,4%

* Agree + Totally agree

Results: Which skills / domains? Which culture?

How important is it to ...

Develop ...	ExImp	AEL
... English language skills	94,5%	
... English grammar and lexis	25,3%	40,7%
... an intercultural awareness	65,2%	30,2%

How often do you include activities that ...

Skills	AEL
Listening	48,4%
Speaking	28,6%
Reading	43,9%
Writing	41,2%

Discover and learn about ...	ExImp
... British and Amercian cultures	55,5%
... different English-speaking cultures	55,5%
... own culture(s)	59,3%
... other cultures	52,2%
... and compare own and other cultures	59,1%

Key:

= Opinion

= Practice

ExImp = Extremely Important

AEL = Almost every lesson

Results: Which resources? Which culture?

How important is it to ...	How often do you ...
----------------------------	----------------------

Use ...	ExImp	AEL
Children's songs	86,3%	45,1%
Traditional children's rhymes	68,5%	23,6%
Traditional children's games	55,0%	21,4%
Traditional stories / legends	80,2%	17,0%
Contemporary picturebooks	61,0%	15,4%

Bland, 2013
 Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 2002
 Curtain & Dahlberg, 2010
 Dunn, 2012
 Morgado, 2019
 Mourão, 2015
 Pinto & Ferreira, 2018

Resources: Which culture?	% respondents
British and Amercian cultures	8,2%
Different English-speaking cultures	51,1%
Any culture, including own culture(s)	40,7%

Key:

	= Opinion
	= Practice
ExImp	= Extremely Important
AEL	= Almost every lesson

Results: Which topics? Which culture?

Have you ever ...	
Included ...	Yes
Home and school life	100,0%
Holidays and festivities	99,5%
Forms of greetings	98,4%
Patterns of politeness	98,4%
Meals and eating practices	97,3%
Playtime and recreational activities	94,5%
Traditional clothing and outfits	90,7%
Family structures	83,0%

Key:

	= Opinion
	= Practice

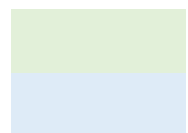
Resources: Which culture?	% respondents
British and Amercian cultures	8,2%
Different English-speaking cultures	51,1%
Any culture, including own culture(s)	40,7%

Topics: Which culture?	% respondents
British and Amercian cultures	5,5%
Different English-speaking cultures	26,4%
Any culture, including own culture(s)	68,1%

Results: Attitudes - opinions and practices

	How important is it to ...	How often do you ...	
... include activities which develop these attitudes?	ExImp	AEL	
1. Being open and respectful towards others	95,1%	28,6%	
2. Establishing a positive relationship with others	94,5%	21,4%	
3. Valuing diversity	93,4%	33,5%	
4. Taking the perspective of others	92,9%	32,9%	
5. Valuing human rights	89,6%	23,6%	
6. Being able to cope with unexpected situations	80,2%	33,5%	
7. Being analytical and critical	73,1%	37,9%	

Key:



= Opinion

= Practice

ExImp = Extremely Important

AEL = Almost every lesson

Results: Confidence

Confidence regarding	... the term 'intercultural'	... developing the intercultural domain in class
A little confident	5,5%	11,6%
Confident	68,1%	68,7%
Very confident	26,4%	19,8%

Finding resources?	% respondents
Difficult	19,8%
Neither difficult or easy	33,5%
Easy	40,1%

Results: Actual practices

n= 99 / 182 responses [54%]

Prevalence of Five Fs (n= 49)

‘Intercultural’ seems to equal cultural content / national cultures

- ❖ Festivals (n=29) [Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, Pancake day, St Patrick’s Day, Easter]
- ❖ Food (n=12) [5 o’clock tea, traditional dishes, breakfasts, lunches]
- ❖ Fashion / clothes (n=6)
- ❖ Famous persons / monuments (n=5) [e.g. Loch Ness monster, kilts and pipes, monuments in London]
- ❖ Flags (n=3)

English speaking countries (n=21) ex. Refer to “Anglo Saxon cultures” or UK and USA

Different countries, languages and cultures (n=11)

Results: Actual practices

Looking for similarities and differences (n=11)

- Festivities / Expressions
- Use of words like: *confront, contrast, compare, parallelism, relate*

Resources / approaches

- Videos (n=16) [*we watch / I showed*]
- Stories (n=10)
- Students in the classroom (n=9)
- Project work + presentations (n=7)
- Music (n=5)
- Digital tools (n=3)
- eTwinning (n=1)

Picturebooks mentioned

- ✓ *Yo!Yes?* (Chris Raschka)
- ✓ *Handa's Surprise* (Eileen Browne)
- ✓ *All are Welcome* (Alexandra Penfold)
- *My cat likes to hide in boxes* (Eve Sutton)
- ✗ *Brown Bear, Brown Bear what do you see?* (Bill Martin Jr & Eric Carle)

Conclusions and what's next?

- ✓ Positively disposed
- ✓ All cultures, including own
- ✓ Attitude development through English
- X Teacher centered
- X Missing affective and pragmatic components
- X Inability to select and use appropriate activities and resources

- ✓ Recommendations for teacher education and professional development
- ✓ Approaches to material design and its implementation

More robust data:

- ✓ Follow up with focus groups / interviews
 - ✓ Mentoring teachers after professional development
 - ✓ Classroom observations (if possible)
-

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Thank you!

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