



JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO  
UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

# Encountering a new culture ?

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# Internationalisation

What is internationalisation on a personal level?

*“According to the JYU strategy, all students at the university develop a JYUIdentity, which, among other things, includes strong interaction competence, language skills and cultural awareness as well as global and ethical responsibility.”*

*(Strategy of the University of Jyväskylä 2019–2030)*

*“Internationality means that you learn to communicate effectively in various situations in cooperation with people from different cultural backgrounds and starting points. Internationality is a skill as much as any other, and you can learn it and develop in it.”*

*- Tomislav, IT student*



# Multilingual and intercultural communication competence, MICC (©Movi, JYU)

- A framework of competence (not a measuring tool!)
- Based on existing theories and studies (tools)
- What is different / new:
  - Competence as situated and contextual
  - Only a tool for reflection and feedback
  - Based on communication (not for example personality traits)
- 22 elements divided into 1) attitudes/motivational factors, 2) knowledge, and 3) skills.
- References and further information: Kokkonen, L. & Natri, T. (2024). Framework for multilingual and intercultural communication competence: Bringing forward a pedagogical perspective and assessment for learning. *JYU Studies*. 19-44.  
<https://jyx.jyu.fi/handle/123456789/96336>





# Examples of elements of MICC

- **MOTIVATION and ATTITUDES: Empathy**
  - I am willing to step into someone else's shoes
  - I am motivated to imagine as well as intellectually and emotionally participate in others' experiences
  - I want to understand others' experiences and worldviews
- **SKILL: Flexibility and adaptability**
  - I can adapt my verbal and nonverbal communication according to the situation, context, and participants
  - I am able to take into consideration multiple perspectives
  - I can process and react to new and novel information
  - I am able to adapt language use to new situations and formulate thoughts in different ways
  - I can shift between languages to have situational flexibility and adaptability to contribute to understanding and the participation of members with diverse multilingual and multicultural profiles





# An example of MICC: KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge of one's identity, values, norms, and behaviour
  - I am aware of my values, attitudes, norms, and behaviour as a representation of my identity





# Please write 5 sentences that all start I am...

- Our communication is dependent on:
  - Culture(s)
  - Previous experiences
  - Personality traits
  - Communication style
  - Context
  - Situation
  - Etc.





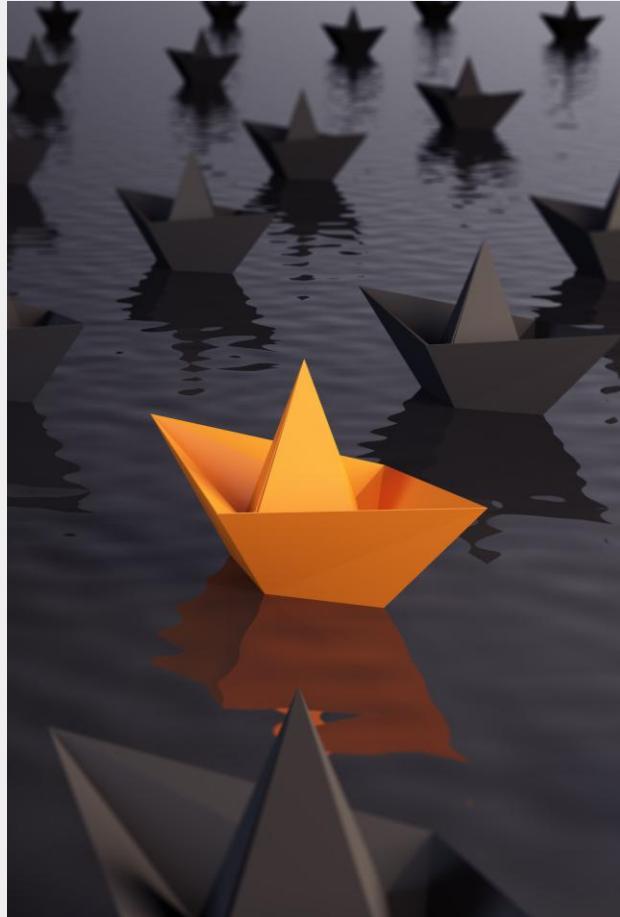
# How to enhance MICC: Reflective questions and more...

- Knowledge of one's identity, values, norms, and behaviour  
(I am aware of my values, attitudes, norms, and behaviour as a representation of my identity)
- Reflective questions:
  - How would you describe your identity and its linkage to cultures and languages?
  - What are your values, attitudes, and patterns of interaction and how are they formed? How do they manifest in your interactions?
- **WHAT ELSE?!** Just spending time together?





# The myth of physical mobility: the assumption that studying abroad and/or in multicultural group leads to the acquisition of intercultural competence



- Students will not develop the required competencies merely through contact if the programs are not intentionally designed to address these competencies (see Helm & Guth, 2022; Varela, 2017).
- More diversity on campus does not necessarily lead to meaningful intercultural interactions, and students may experience overwhelming difficulties associated with intercultural group work (e.g., Harrison & Peacock, 2010; Summers & Volet, 2008).
- Asking students to simply interact within diverse contexts, situations and relationships can possibly lead to undesirable outcomes like enhancing stereotypes (e.g., Holmes & O'Neill, 2005).
- A dramatically increasing number of young people experiencing social anxieties (Jefferies & Ungar, 2020; Ranta et al., 2024).



# Encounters

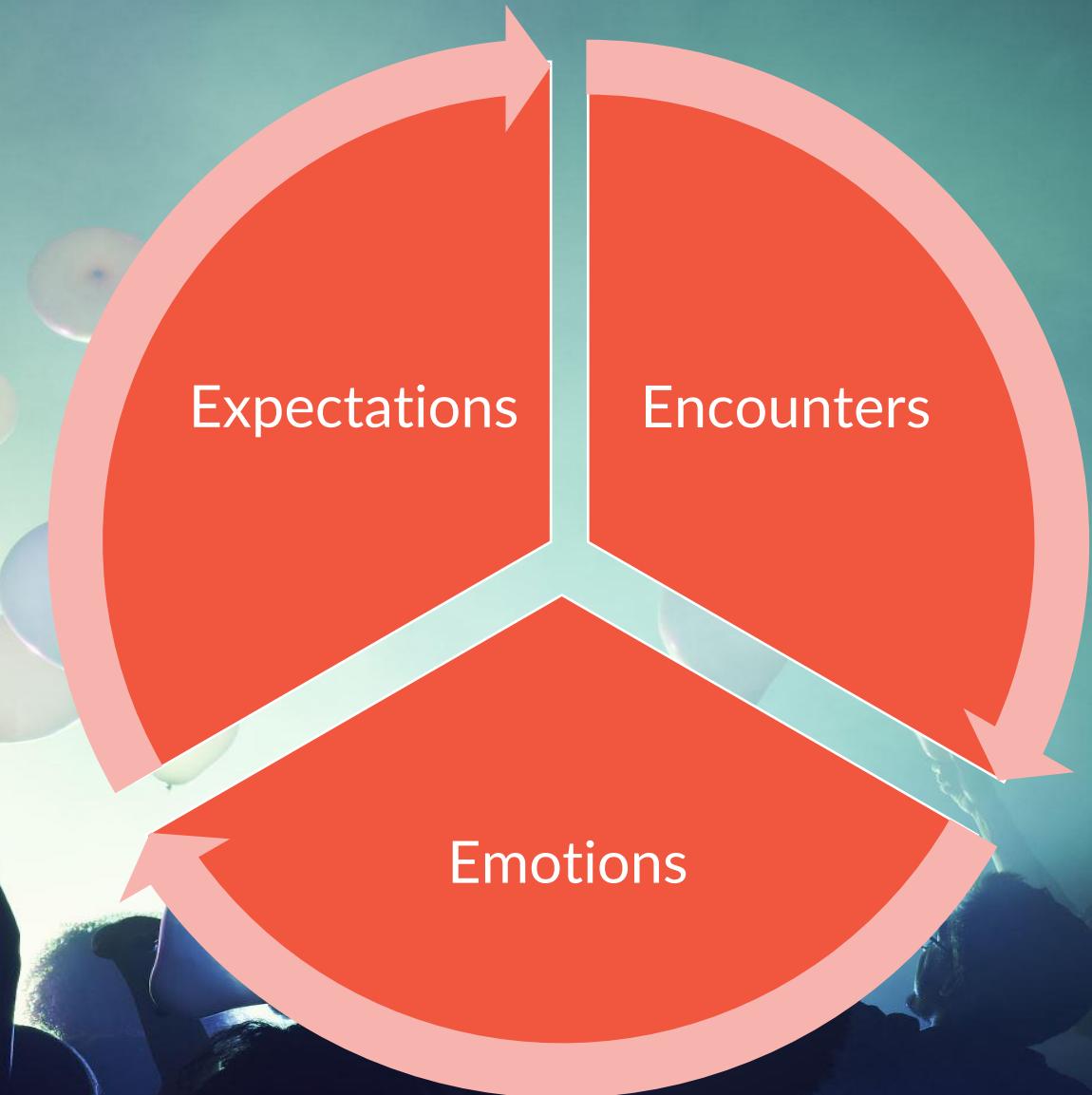
- What is a/ the new culture that you are about to encounter?
- Who do you think that you will encounter?

**“Cultures Don’t  
Meet, People Do”**

Unni Wikan 2002, 83

“First, cultures do not interact – people do. Culture only matters to the extent it is manifest in and through people in interaction.”

Brian Spitzberg 2015, 24.





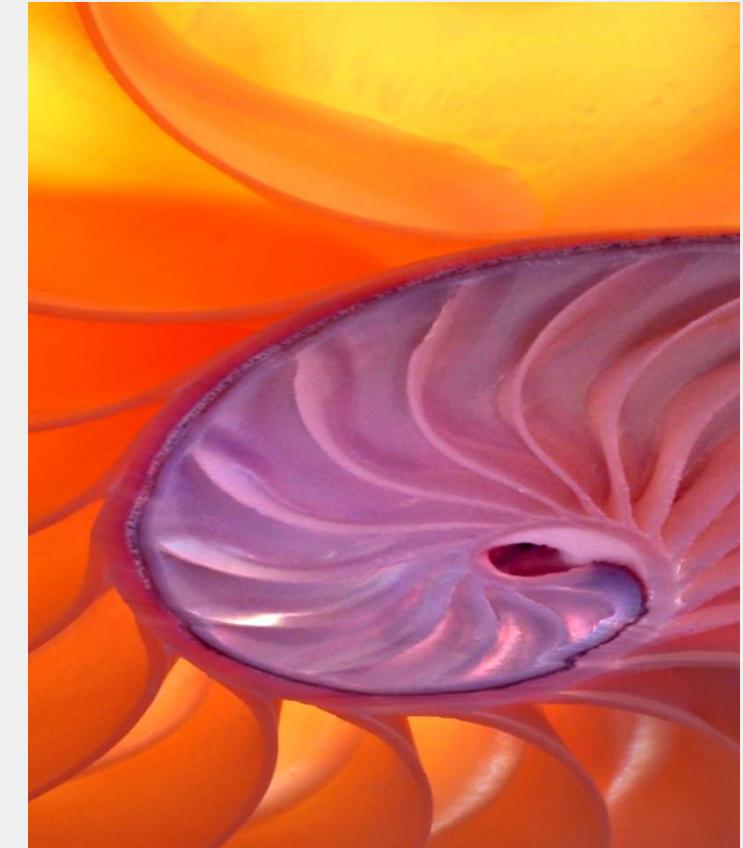
## Please discuss:

- What do you think that will be different?
  - 1 minute
  - What do you think that will be similar?
  - 2 minutes



## Strong feelings and emotions IC contexts

- Anxiety, ambiguity, uncertainty
- Reactions:
  - tiredness
  - burnout
  - avoiding contact
  - alienation
  - ethnocentrism and prejudice
  - blame the others of one's own bad feelings and problems
  - mild paranoia
  - psychosomatic symptoms, such as aches and pain





# Exchange experience: what makes your exchange experience unique?

- Length of stay
- Previous experiences
- Expectations
- Attitudes toward change
- Motivation
- Personality
- Own cultural identity
- Communication competence
- Watch: Chimamanda Adichie:  
The danger of a single story  
([https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story))





# Communication relationships and adaptation / belonging

- ❖ Communication relationships are often seen as a one very important factor in adapting to life changes in general
- ❖ Geographical places become homes through relationships





## Something to take into consideration:

- **KESKI-SUOMI** 3.1.2021 5:54
- **Ulkomaalaiset opiskelijat jäävät Jyväskylässä ilman suomalaisia ystäviä, edes yli vuoden kaupungissa asuneet eivät tutustu paikallisiin – suomalaisilta toivotaan aloitteellisuutta**
  - (Keskisuomalainen 3.1.2021)
- **"Foreign students are left without Finnish friends at Jyväskylä. "**





# Now that you are about to become 'international' how to make the most of it: Enhancing your multilingual and intercultural competence

- Becoming aware and reflect – if you have challenges, do not hesitate to seek help!
- Jump out of your comfort zone – emotional ride ahead of you!
- Get to know people
- Keep in contact with your social networks
- Courses offered by Movi



Are you interested in developing your understanding of intercultural communication?

## Fundamentals in Multilingual and Intercultural communication, XYHX003

The course runs 13.1. – 20.3.2026

**Registration ends 12.1.2026.**

Ready to enroll? Register in Sisu!





# Are you interested in developing your understanding of team communication?

## XVVB1005 Communication and Collaboration in Teams (3-5 ECTS)

Work in diverse project teams to analyze and reflect on communication practices, blending theoretical insights with practical applications.

### What You'll Learn:

- Group communication phenomena
- Diversity in teams
- Collaborative methods
- Assessing team communication

The course runs **26.1.-20.4.2026**.

Registration ends **16.1.**

Ready to enroll? Register in Sisu:

<https://sisu.jyu.fi/student/courseunit/otm-66693930-8331-4d48-b72e-0014e3f858ec/brochure>



I WISH YOU  
GOOD TIMES,  
LOT'S OF  
EDUCATING &  
EMOTIONALLY  
ENRICHING  
EXPERIENCES!



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