

Where do we go from here?

Intercultural competence in Germany's teacher education

In light of increased migration movements, globalization and mobility in Germany, political parties and school administrations have come to the conclusion that intercultural communicative competence needs to be an integral part of teacher training programs. However, there is no overall strategy or concept of intercultural communicative competence for future teachers. As for now, the current "mainstream" concepts of intercultural competence are much criticized for reinforcing stereotyping and generalization since they are often based on a concept of culture which suggests separation (among others: Mecheril 2004; Mendoza 2005; Martin and Nakayama 2010). This conceptual understanding frequently leads to perceived intercultural conflicts between teaching staff and the alleged "culturally other" student. Therefore, several studies underline the need for teaching personnel that is sensitive toward the wide diversity in today's schools (among others: Triantafillou 2004; Ding 2010). Despite political agendas and national-wide education standards, however, intercultural education of prospective teaching personnel is far from satisfying. This is especially true for the practical education segment in schools after teacher education at university. Firstly, this paper aims to give an overview of the current situation in Germany's teacher training programs focusing on the federal state Baden-Wuerttemberg which takes up a special role due to its unique educational structures. Secondly, the paper analyzes materials and concepts used in teacher training programs and its implication for the development of intercultural communicative competence.

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