

# Intercultural competent teachers

In the Netherlands most higher educations are competence based. So are almost all teacher training colleges. They've worked out together a profile of competences for starting teachers. These so called SBL-competences are divided in 7 fields of competences. On the following pages we shall give a summary of the content of the seven competences. For the TICKLE-project we have extended the fields of competences with an intercultural perspective. These extensions are written down in italic after each competence.

## 1. Interpersonal competence

An interpersonally competent teacher displays good leadership. He/she creates a friendly and cooperative atmosphere and stimulates and achieves open communication. He/she encourages the students' autonomy, and in his/her interaction seeks the right balance between:

- guidance and counselling
- steering and following
- confrontation and reconciliation
- corrective measures and stimulation

*Intercultural perspective:*

*The intercultural competent teacher knows and appreciates the different backgrounds of the pupils. He is aware of his own culture and from this point of view able to open up to people of other cultural backgrounds. The teacher is also aware of the fact that he will have prejudices. He shows this described attitude in the classroom working with the children. He enables moments in his daily program in which the children can meet each other's cultures. Differences and similarities are discussed openly, so prejudices can be discovered.*

## 2. Pedagogical competence

A pedagogically competent teacher offers the students a safe learning and working environment, where they find their hold and a structure for social, emotional and moral development. He/she makes sure that the students:

- know that they belong, that they are welcome and appreciated
- treat each other in a respectful manner and are challenged to take responsibility for one another
- can take initiatives and can work autonomously
- learn to discover their affinities and ambitions, and from there make their choices for study and career.

*Intercultural perspective:*

*The intercultural competent teacher is (also) able to be empathic to the lives of children of other cultures. He creates a safe environment in which children dare to show their own culture. If necessary (cultural) conflicts are discussed openly so a constructive resolution can be found together. The norms and values underneath the conflict will be explored and related to the rules of the group.*

## 3. Knowledge of subject matter & methodological competence

A methodologically competent teacher with a thorough knowledge of subject matter helps his/her students to acquire the necessary cultural baggage knowledge every citizen needs to function as a full member in our society. He/she:

- gears the curriculum content as well as all his/her doings to the students and is considerate of individual differences
- determines, together with the student, an (individual) learning route with for instance possibilities for extra-curricular activities, and learning in the context of professional practice
- motivates the students for their learning and working tasks, challenges them to do their best, and helps them accomplish their tasks successfully
- teaches the students how to learn and to work, both from and with each other, in order to enhance their learning autonomy

*Intercultural perspective:*

*The intercultural competent teacher knows several didactical models for intercultural education. Starting from a standpoint on education and society he is able to choose a suitable approach for his group. Further he makes sure the learning environment is rich and a reflection of the intercultural society. This matters to the decoration of the classroom, but also to the working materials (for example books) of the children.*

#### **4. Organizational competence**

An organizationally competent teacher makes sure that his/her students can work in an orderly and task oriented environment. He/she sees to it that they:

- know where they stand and how much play they have for initiatives of their own
- know what they must (or can) do, as well as how and with what aim in mind they must (or can) do it

*Intercultural perspective:*

*The intercultural competent teacher is able to manage his classroom in a way so pupils of different cultures can meet and get to know each other. In his program the teacher pays attention to the different cultural backgrounds of the pupils (for example cultural festivities). About rules of the group or school which (can) lead to conflicts (for example wearing head scarves during gymnastics) he will go into dialogue, so he can make a decision which suits his group best.*

#### **5. Competence to cooperate with colleagues**

A teacher who is competent in collaborating with his/her colleagues makes a contribution to a good pedagogical learning climate in the school, to a good mutual cooperation and to a good school organization, which means that he/she:

- communicates and cooperates effectively with his/her colleagues
- makes constructive contributions to meetings and other types of consultations within the school, as well as to activities that have to be performed to run the school well
- makes a contribution to the development and improvement of his/her school

*Intercultural perspective:*

*The intercultural teacher is able to invite colleagues to go into dialogue together about intercultural questions and situations in society and school. This means he can talk with teachers of other cultures, being aware of his own culture. He is able to receive feedback on his way of dealing with intercultural situations openly. In exchange he can also give feedback respectfully to other people about their way of dealing with intercultural situations.*

#### **6. Competence to cooperate with the school's working environment**

A teacher who is competent in cooperating with people in his/her working environment realizes a good communication, involving the students' parents or

guardians, as well as the companies or institutions the students have dealings with as part of their education or training. He/she makes effective use of the school's professional network where the student's education, training or other concerns are at issue. He/she handles the contacts he/she keeps on behalf of the school with responsibility and care.

*Intercultural perspective:*

*The intercultural teacher is able to cooperate with partners of other cultures outside the school. He can work together with centres for cultural groups, to enable the pupils to get in contact with a diversity of (other) cultures. Starting from the awareness of his own culture and respect towards other cultures, the teacher can encounter parents of other cultures openly. He looks at them as being partners in educating the pupils, so he works together with them to prepare, execute and evaluate the program of education for the group.*

## **7. Competence for reflection and development**

A teacher who is competent in terms of reflection and development gives regular thought to his/her professional views and competence. He/she keeps his/her professional practice up to date and improves it. He/she:

- knows what is important in his/her professional practice and what the underlying standards, values and educational views are
- has a pretty good idea of his/her own competences, strengths and weaknesses
- works on his/her professional development in a systematic way
- gears his/her personal development to the school policy and avails him-/herself of the opportunities the school offers for his/her personal development.

*Intercultural perspective:*

*The intercultural competent teacher reflects on his knowledge, skills and most of all attitude regarding his intercultural education. He is able to acknowledge his strengths and weaknesses to start his own development. He constantly reflects on both his professional as his personal way of dealing with pupils of his own culture as well as pupils of other cultures. The teacher is (re)searches the (intercultural) situation of his group systematically and goal oriented. He asks for feedback (also) to people of other cultures.*