

### **Track 3: Intercultural Dialogue in a Changing World**

#### **Beyond Language**

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This paper proposes that we do some "cultural re-thinking"(Swanton, 1998) in our approach to teaching languages in the context of business in a globalised world. The phrase is appropriate because it encourages all of us engaged in language teaching and learning to re-examine our own cultural standpoint, the goals of our work, and the quality of the education we offer our students. It also helps us to appraise, ever more closely, how all these fit into the wider socio-political picture.

Rather than dwelling on issues of language "competence", our argument will be that we serve our students' interests best by exploring new conceptual frameworks in order to meet the evolving needs of our students and the world in which they will be operating. Far more business deals have failed because of ignorance of intercultural communication and socio-pragmatic failure than from using the wrong word or phrase or grammatical construction in the new language.

We propose that a critical pedagogy exploring "difference" engages students in "deep" rather than "surface" learning. Interacting with other cultures, in a complex way, rooted in self-reflection, becomes a part of the students' life-long learning pattern. Rather than linguistic "competence" we recommend an approach to the teaching/learning experience which is more akin to a form of "transformation".

**Friday 8 October 1:30 – 3:00**