

Critical Review of the Nexus between Globalization and Intercultural Competence: A Narrative Approach

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Abstract: *The paper explores the nexus between globalization and intercultural competence by analysing the narratives globalization provides in intercultural competence and studying the ideological and political factors hidden behind them, according to the current situation we face today, such as conflicts between countries and regions, hot wars, etc. It begins by exploring globalization as a background in intercultural competence and observing the myth of globalization embedded into the intercultural concept. This is followed by a critical discussion of cultural homogeneity brought about by globalization, which reveals why and how globalization makes intercultural competence necessary and the role intercultural competence plays in the process. Based on this, it is possible to understand the nexus between them, how it is constructed, and what it serves.*

Keywords: *Globalization; Narrative; Capital; Ideological; Intercultural Competence*

1. Introduction

This paper employs narrative analysis to review common descriptions of globalization and intercultural competence, and uses this as a basis to explore the deeper underlying logic behind these descriptions, which also provides a different perspective for in-depth research on relevant concepts in intercultural studies.

Globalization is frequently presented as a backdrop and regarded as a neutral driving force behind intercultural competence, while few discuss the underlying complex correlation. Scholars emphasize its importance, with education playing a key role in developing tolerance and adaptability. UNESCO (2013) highlights that globalization brings cultures into closer contact, making intercultural competence a necessary skill in today's world. However, growing global conflicts, such as the U.S.-China trade war, the COVID-19 pandemic, and geopolitical tensions, challenge the ideal of intercultural harmony. These crises reveal deep-seated injustice, xenophobia, and racism, raising doubts about whether intercultural competence has effectively addressed such issues. Globalization is not a neutral backdrop for intercultural communication, but brings inequality, exploitation, and hegemony, which are often overlooked. Ignoring these factors leads to a superficial understanding of intercultural competence. This paper aims to critically reassess the nexus between globalization and intercultural competence by analyzing the predominant narratives of globalization embedded within intercultural concepts.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to re-examine the nexus between globalization and intercultural competence by analyzing the dominant narratives of globalization embedded within the intercultural concepts. This will be approached mainly from three aspects: 1) the narrative of globalization as a background for intercultural competence, including the development and assumptions of the concept of globalization; 2) the analysis of the myth of globalization in an intercultural context, including the construction of global identities, and the impact of media on time and space, among others, etc.; and 3) viewpoints on the cultural homogenization brought about by globalization and the ensuing cultural issues. Through these analyses, the nexus between globalization and intercultural competence will be reconsidered.

2. Narrative, Analysis and Discussion

2.1 Globalization as A Background of Intercultural Competence Development

Brzezinski (1982), the national security adviser to President Carter of the United States, was the first

to put forward the concept of globalization. He mentioned globalization for the first time in his book *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era*, arguing that people no longer need to talk about imperialism because the world is developing towards a globalized society. In 1983, U.S. researcher T. Levitt (1983) used the term in his paper *The Globalization of Markets*. The concept of globalization mentioned by Levitt described the tremendous changes in the international economy in the past few decades: the diffusion of goods, services, capital, and technology in world production, consumption, and investment.

Due to its high degree of generalization, this concept has been widely used in economics, political science, sociology, etc. (Liu, 2007, p. 81). In terms of the time dimension, some scholars divide globalization into different stages, such as the budding stage, initial stage, takeoff phase, hegemony stage, uncertain stage, etc., while others divide it into the three stages of pre-modern globalization (about 1500-1850), modern globalization (about 1850 -1945) and contemporary globalization (1945-) (Shen, 2003). According to Chen (2009, p. 140), these three stages historically correspond to, respectively: globalization of global voyages and simple barter trade (marked by Zheng He's voyages to the West and Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan's world expedition); the globalization of industrial production and global economy (marked by the British Industrial Revolution and capitalistic mode of production); the globalization of capital values and culture (marked by Western modernity and so-called cultural imperialism).

Furthermore, there are multiple scholarly perspectives on the relationship between globalization and modernity. One is that globalization is the expansion and the consequence of modernity. Anthony Giddens (2000) is the representative of this point of view. The second is that globalization shapes modernity, and modernity is formed and developed in globalization. This view is expressed by Roland Robertson (2000) and representatives of the world system theory, who have expertise on globalization in the United States,. The third is that globalization means the end of modernity. For example, Martin Albrow (2001) believes that globalization is a significant epoch-making profound change, which means that the modern era is a thing of the past. The fourth is that globalization and modernity are intertwined and shaped by each other. This is a perspective highlighted by some Chinese intellectuals in domestic discussions in recent years (Wang, 2007, p. 122).

In the discussions on globalization, John Tomlinson (1999) brings culture to the fore. Culture thus becomes an essential focus of globalization, which, he argues, fundamentally alters the relationship between where we inhabit and our cultural practices, experiences, and identities. The link between culture and location is diminished, and the place is no longer a transparent identification medium. He describes cultural globalization as a process of deterritorialization and non-territorial expansion, that is, the unity of cultural localization and globalization. Therefore, globalization became an indispensable element in the rise of intercultural concepts. However, in intercultural studies, globalization, often used as a background to promote intercultural communication, is rarely explained clearly. This raises the question: Which dimension of globalization is put into intercultural concepts? What kind of globalization and what functions or influences are exerted on the intercultural area by taking globalization as a background to consider?

From a historical point of view, human beings experienced the first wave of globalization through the early colonization of Eurocentrism or Western-centrism, the globalization of industrial capital, and the globalization of financial capital. As Wen (2021) believed, three different endogenous contradictions in the three stages evolved into three different forms of conflict. The current struggle involves the creation of local conflicts and ideological battles in regions that continuously generate capital surpluses, facilitated by the profit-driven mechanisms of financial globalization. Capital becomes the most essential driving force for the development of globalization. It constantly promotes the progress of science and technology, and the result of the technological revolution is to connect the world as one; it internationalized production and forms international production relations; capital production globalizes commodity exchange, and the globalization of commodity exchange has made different cultures communicate closely with each other. Thus, capital has become the driving force of globalization (Ju, 1999, p.32). Political inequality, economic polarization, invisible cultural penetration, and ecological imbalance between man and nature are inevitable in the contemporary world (Chen, 2013, p.85). Racism, xenophobia, and people's insecurity are traceable to the crisis rooted in the capital relation itself (Hilbourne, 2002, p.36). Although describing globalization as a natural force, like the weather or gravity, makes it easier for globalists to convince people that they must adapt to the laws of the market to survive and thrive (Steger, 2014), competing in the world market may require policies that reduce public expenditures, potentially lowering national employment standards, health care, and education. In this sense, globalization is political, not natural (McMichael, 2004, p.157). Thus, globalization is by no

means the result of a natural law or some linear technological progress that cannot be selected, this is simply the inevitable result of a policy that has been consciously pursued in Western industrialized countries for a century and is still being pursued today (Hans, Schumann 1998). It is neither a simple breaking of boundaries between people to achieve global communication and interaction nor a neutral process of the time. On the contrary, it is an ideological process in which the country is the unit of competition, financial capital is the main means of competition, culture is the infiltration of soft power, and the competition for cultural discourse power is full of hegemony and inequality.

However, from much relevant literature on intercultural studies in the context of globalization, there is a simple assumption that globalization strengthens and promotes intercultural exchanges and interactions, promotes the process of cultural exchanges, and eliminates time and space barriers. People live in the same village. Thus, intercultural competence is essential. As a result, intercultural competence is often simplified as the ability to understand differences in different languages and cultures, as well as the ability to communicate. It assumes a general existence that globalization enhanced communication among people, helped people improve mutual understanding, eased the relationship between people, and became more harmonious, thereby reducing conflicts and contradictions. Its effect is positive. In the early times, also because of the popularity of McDonald's, Hollywood, MTV, etc., touted as the unmistakable sign of the fulfillment of Marshall McLuhan's prophecy about the global village (Kraidy, 2002, p.359), it supports such assumptions of simplified cognition. Such cognition ignores that globalization is embedded in a broader cultural and historical background, as well as an unequal power background and ideology. Today, few people will doubt the reality of globalization, but no one seems to know precisely what makes it a reality. As the scholar Pieterse (2019) has questioned, which kind of globalization are we discussing? Does it refer to a general, unrestricted trend or a specific economic and political project? Indeed, while globalization facilitates ever-faster, easier, and more profound human interactions across borders, it is not an automatic process either. As the initiators and rule makers of globalization, the developed capitalist countries try their best to set up an ideological trap of globalization and submerge the values of each nation and country in a beautiful myth created by the developed capitalist countries. With globalization, the expansion of ideology worldwide is nothing, but the domestic ideology of the capitalist class becomes international. Globalization expresses a conception of global political-economic power relations, that is, through hegemony, to rule out other possible considerations that differ from the premise of developmentalism (Li, 2005, p.62). The deepening of globalization has made the competition of comprehensive national strength with economic and technological strength become the main content of the competition between countries, which can easily create a false impression that globalization is not ideological or is constantly weakening ideology. If we lift the veil covering the relationship between countries and analyze what hides behind it, it is not difficult to see that globalization has an apparent ideological nature. It attempts to reframe the world according to a new global imagination and to reduce the resistance to the process by making it look very rewarding and unstoppable. In other words, like all social processes, globalization contains an ideological dimension filled with a range of norms, claims, beliefs, and narratives about the phenomena itself (Steger, 2014).

2.2 The Myth of Globalization in the Intercultural Context

In the Intercultural context, globalization leads the world to become much easier for people to communicate and travel, and many goods from all over the world are distributed to different places, and people can buy goods from all over the world in the store or online. Lots of boundaries break under the background of globalization. Superficially, there have these widespread flowing phenomena in people's lives brought by globalization. And indeed, mobility is at the heart of much intercultural concept, but population mobility is caused by national and increasingly international economic, political, and cultural forces (Coulby, 2006, p.249). Moreover, this flow is not for homes or people but for capital expansion (Jin, 2013, p.132). Moreover, it does not result in the abolition of the state but the spread of centralization (Arif, 2007). Globalization has promoted a new geographical extension of state power or a scale shift in state capacity, but the state remains a carrier of globalization. Most territories are wrapped within a thick, highly formalized state framework marked by the state's exclusive authority. This is one of the main features of the current stage of globalization, which means that countries must participate in forming the global system (Saskia, 2003, p.6). Today, the state remains the concrete sphere and framework of political struggle. The participants in the global competition of contemporary capitalism are not individuals but countries.

According to the world-systems theory, different countries objectively divide into three types of positions in participating in global competition: core, semi-peripheral (semi-core), and peripheral, thus

forming a core-semi-periphery-periphery attachment structure, through unequal exchange and institutional exploitation, the interests of the semi-peripheral and peripheral regions unequally transmit to the core countries. In this process, the status of the core countries continuously strengthens, and the status of the peripheral countries is continuously weakened (Wallerstein, 2004). Therefore, geopolitical capitalism is still moving towards the monopoly capital in the stage of industrial capital and towards multinational corporations to form its interest distribution and industrial structure arrangements around the world. It can obtain profits from the world and strengthen its domestic industry upgrading to financial capital globalization and national competition. So we should abandon the deceptive image of the globalization process as freely flowing around the world, get rid of the idea that the world is a collection of nameable groups, and strive to move away from the knowledge habit of incorporating global practices, spaces, and countries into static maps of difference (Geschiere, Meyer, 1998), to uncover the myth that the so-called globalization causes the compression of time, the dissolution of space, the use of power and ideology to promote global identity and the dissolution of discourse, and then a collective identity shaped by advocating a global identity. As Roland Barthes said, the mythological rhetorician should avoid the whole group if one wants to eliminate the myth when the myth has touched the whole group. Any myth with little universality is ambiguous, as it reproduces human nature with nothing in itself and entirely borrows meaning from myth (Barthes, 1973). The myth globalization tries to build embraces the idea of a utopia that transcends cultural identity and seeks to reinvent its power beyond time and space, combining reality, illusion, and idealization in a truly mythical way.

First, what we think of time is not natural but the result of configuring time series data in a specific array to induce more interaction (Couldry, Hepp, 2020, p.68). For those forced into globalization, forced to begin the process of modernization, to be under the domination and compulsion of capitalism, their perception of time changes, and they have to accept new circumstances of existence. The question is, whose time are they living in? For some people, the so-called time of world history is their own time; for others, it is someone else's time. Once someone realizes this, something is wrong with his life world because he is living by someone else's time, or more profoundly, by someone else's values (Zhang, 2021, p.85). Likewise, for Bourdieu (1998), the word space is comprised of a variety of meanings and connotations, from the abstract to the concrete, from the social to the personal. The concept of space contains the principle of a relational understanding of the social world. It is related to social structure and revolves around power: the power of economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital. Space is relational. The relational aspect of space triggers the dynamics in the struggle for fundamentals of power by social groups. This view is echoed by Stoetzer (2008), who describes the essential elements of power as negotiable. Foucault (2007) similarly sees a close relationship between space and power. He believed space was vital in public life and power operations. In addition, in today's era of unprecedented technological development, the invisible space of media has become the space to which many scholars pay attention. However, the fact is that even though today's media has shaped a seemingly invisible and intangible space, it does not mean that it is a silent place. Media is a complex combination of time and space. It is an essential means of communication that affects the construction of the social world, especially the diversity of digital media, which fundamentally changes the spatiality of the social world. Various forms of media involve us in ever-changing relationships with space and place. Here, temporal relationships are constructed, as are spatial relationships, such as the concept of a platform being a constructed space (Couldry, Hepp, 2020).

The myth of globalization fosters the illusion that individuals can exist in a world without boundaries. The concepts of deterritorialization and disorganization further reinforce this altered perception of time and space. However, this perspective overlooks the increasing complexity, interconnectivity, and multi-layered nature of contemporary business, organizations, information systems, and human mobility. It also diverts attention from the role of technology and the manipulative forces that shape its use. In the global media landscape, power remains pervasive, with media ownership becoming increasingly centralized and consolidated. Historically, corporations such as Time-Warner Inc., Bertelsmann AG, and News Corporation Ltd. dominated the industry, while today, technology giants like Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, Meta, Twitter, Tencent, Huawei, and Alibaba exert significant influence, particularly in China. This concentration of power has profound implications for public discourse. Beneath the seemingly unrestricted global flow of media representations and information lies a stark reality: the inequality of news production. The processing and filtering of information contribute to distortions in cognitive understanding, ultimately shaping public perception in ways that reinforce existing power structures. It is easy to overlook the role of capital and state power in shaping media landscapes when the media fosters an illusion of global interconnection across geographical boundaries. The extent to which media operations are constrained by economic and political forces is often ignored (Ferguson, 1992). Now, in the age of big data, many (physical, organizational, informational) spaces are codified, and our

dependence on data has become a necessity even though we still live in the social world. The Internet has developed into an information space. However, the data process itself is, after all, the product of mediation in various social, cultural, and political processes (involving humans to some extent). Data processing is a discriminatory technology. As Couldry and Hepp (2020) argued, the purpose of data collection is not neutral but precisely discriminatory: to coordinate and control people's access to goods and services in modern capitalistic economic life. Gillespie pointed out, algorithms affect how people seek out information, how they perceive and think about the outline of knowledge, and how they understand themselves in and through public discourse. Thus, despite the perception of boundless digital mobility, we remain embedded within the constraints of geography and history, fixed within specific socio-spatial and historical contexts. From a cultural perspective, the Internet can be seen as a space of consciousness, where various political, economic, and cultural forces operate beneath the surface (Jin, 2013).

As global competition intensifies, economic interdependence deepens, and power relations shift within the evolving world order, societies also grapple with the rapid development of emerging technologies and the acceleration of digital communication—trends further amplified in the wake of the pandemic. The media, including self-media, plays a pivotal role in this transformation, fueling the rapid spread of information. People are surrounded by an atmosphere of so-called globalization as if they all have the whole planet as their physical environment and everyone lives as world citizens, consumers, and producers with a common interest in collective action to solve global problems (Albrow, King, 1990). Everyone has acquired a new and equal identity in this description, a universal identity that transcends nations and is entitled to by everyone. It sounds like a relatively value-neutral account of a world of supranational media interconnections and the exchange of material and symbolic goods. But, on closer inspection, it reveals a wide range of causal assumptions, normative intentions, and value judgments (Ferguson, 1992). For instance, when proponents of cultural nationalism refer to collective identity, they frequently overlook the issues of whose identity is being defined, how it is defined, and who is doing the defining. Do historical specificities, shared images of spatial boundaries, and cultural symbols constitute these identities? Through the selective reconstruction of traditional and social memory, they are constructed and reconstructed in action in time and space (Schlesinger, 1991). Or, more to the point, in Smith's (1990) view, a global collective identity is impossible or problematic, which has essentially no memory or only negative collective memories, such as war. Even if we could negotiate a common identity, it would likely be too large and abstract to fulfill needs for belonging, meaning, and distinctiveness; a monolithic variable like identification with all humanity may be ill-suited to capturing people's multifaceted social, cultural, and political realities (Gerhard et al., 2019). Nevertheless, if globalization is to continue, there must be a phenomenon and proposition of cultural identity. Therefore, constructing this identity needs the help of culture and a narrative style that includes everyone worldwide. It is what globalization needs: a myth of global culture. Let the identity of a world citizen give the world an illusion that we are all the same, and such an identity can erase the bloody history and the complexity behind it.

2.3 Cultural Homogeneity by Globalization

Due to the goal of establishing a global identity, one of the most striking aspects of the globalization debate is the gradual homogenization of culture as a way of life. This phenomenon has drawn significant attention from scholars. Zhang (2017, p.188) argue that the core issue of globalization is the standardization of world culture, which threatens the existence of national and local/native cultures. These so-called global challenges brought about by globalization are also closely linked to modernity. The appeal of modernity aligns with the expansion of globalization, which is largely driven by capital.

Since the scholar McLuhan put forward his global village prediction, many scholars have believed that a global culture is taking place. They believe that, on the one hand, the emergence of some global phenomena such as classic examples of Coca-Cola, McDonald's, KFC, and nowadays Google, Tesla, Chinese brand BYD, Xiaomi, and youth culture, pop music and movies, environmental protection, etc. On the other hand, the advancement of transportation and communication technology has made it feasible to connect all people on the earth, at least on a technical level. It is precisely the emergence of these unprecedented phenomena that include the world that some researchers believe human society has formed or is forming a shared cultural system (Zhang, 2014, p.52). In this process, some people believe that modernity and globalization are leading to the homogenization of local culture, which loses its vitality. This homogenization threatens cultural diversity, creativity, and innovation stemming from cultural specificity (Berenson, 2007). But is that the case?

In such a contemporary narrative, particularly within the context of consumerism, there exists a

widespread global consumption of pop music, digital culture, fast food, and similar phenomena. This trend toward global cultural homogeneity reflects the consumption of uniform media products and popular materials across diverse societies. Whether the focus is on fashion, automobiles, cinema, or other cultural products, a meta-structure emerges wherein collective identities are shaped by shared consumption practices, which may be influenced by personal choice, imitation, or strategic manipulation. Consequently, there is an increasing cultural internationalization, as cultural life becomes increasingly intertwined with the globalization of economic activities. But just like Zhang (2021) argues that such integration is merely standardization. The values globalization promotes—freedom, openness, inclusiveness, and universality—are meaningful only to those who align with the global order, while others remain excluded. Widespread influence does not equate to universality, as ways of life vary across regions and are shaped by the modern transnational economy. A single, unified culture does not exist; instead, individuals experience diverse cultural realities within the same world. This is especially true for those outside the globalization process, who perceive it only through globally produced media and symbols.

More precisely, the goal of globalization is not the homogenization of culture, or more accurately, the homogenization of cultural representations. It seeks to absorb external elements, transforming them from the outside into the inside, converting particularity into universality, and ultimately assimilating diversity into a unified whole. So, as Appadurai (1996) argues, both the bright and dark sides of today's global cultural process are the outcome of competition with homogenization and differences on the same stage. Therefore, globalization does not exclude differentiation, but the difference in globalization driven by capital is not the cultural differences, religious conflicts, or the diverse and pluralistic scene presented by global disintegration. The difference pursued by capital-driven globalization is at the level of production relations, which formed a contradictory but developmental relationship between capital and labor and between capital and capital. The capital and its owners hold political power and rights, control the economy's operation, and guide the direction of culture. In order to ensure the proportion of their products in the expanded reproduction of society, various capitals are unconventional, constantly creating their unique product brands and cultural concepts and creating what people perceive as dazzling diversity. The development of fast food, Nike shoes, Coca-Cola, and pop music is suitable proof. Take KFC as an example. In East Asia, it outwardly resembled the American model but also served different foods from the United States, catering more to local tastes. Carrefour, the leading French retail store, chose a more culturally appropriate name when entering the Chinese market, and the marketing model for the special days closely aligns with the local festival culture in China. Their acculturation just represents differentiation and diversity. It introduces more novel and mixed social forms (Pieterse, 2019). Therefore, it can also make people perceive that different groups of people and the whole society are full of diversity. Theoretically speaking, the nature of capital determines that in order to ensure the smooth supply of its reproduction conditions, capital will never stop changing all production relations and productivity that are not suitable for it—from politics, economy to cultural spirit, until an ultra-imperialism is formed around the world (Chen, 2013).

From this process, it is not difficult to find that cultural issues of globalization diffuse into economic and social issues. The convergence between distinct layers of economics, culture, and politics and the enormous expansion of financial capital markets is a striking feature of this new economic globalization. British scholar Stuart Hall believes that culture does not reflect but constructs modern society, it has the same crucial constructive role as the economic, political, or social development process (Zhou, 2006). At the stage of social development of capitalism, all progress of civilization, or, in other words, any increase in the productive forces of society (or of labor itself), for example, science, invention, division, and combination of labor, improvement of means of transportation, the opening of the world market, machinery, etc., do not enrich the worker. Only capital enriches, i.e., increases the power over labor and increases capital productivity (Marx, Engels, 1979). In a sense, economics and politics have also become cultural issues. The economy seems to be constantly dissolving into other aspects of globalization: the control of new technologies, the intensification of geopolitical interests, and finally, the integration of culture into economics and politics due to postmodernity, or culture being coerced by economics and politics. This is consistent with Jameson's view (2018). He sees globalization as a communication concept, alternately covering and propagating cultural or economic meaning. One obvious way is to see globalization as importing and exporting culture into the economy. It is often seen as one of postmodernity's widely accepted features now economics, politics, and culture are integrated. Globalization has introduced a more intricate and interconnected form of competition, where culture has become intertwined with economy and politics. With the rise of China's economy, structural shifts in global capitalist economic and power relations, the global pandemic of 2020, the decoupling of China and the United States, and ongoing conflicts, power relations are under unprecedented tension,

globalization does not merely exacerbate the already high levels of inequality between individuals but also perpetuates inequalities and differences that continue to dominate the world today. Rather than fostering a unified global value system, globalization has led to increasing divisions. Moreover, it has resulted in the centralization, not decentralization, of power. Globalization does not decentralize; it consolidates power around one or more centers. During the course, the entire approach is deeply rooted in struggles over cultural discourse, and the competition for cultural discourse has become a crucial aspect of global rivalry, culture is recognized and defined as they seek their own subjectivity and voice. To establish cultural legitimacy, they universally express their distinct characteristics, engaging in a dynamic global competition driven by both conflict and convergence. While globalization requires a culture to promote and fulfill its mission to win the competition. The globalized context in which modernization takes place also requires this. At the same time, in response to intense efforts to depoliticize culture and knowledge by depoliticizing issues within the cultural sphere. More than that, it also demands education to react accordingly. Globalization requires education to cultivate a kind of competence to allow the public to accept and agree with its narrative mode, which be able to support the spread of its myth, thereby playing the role of ideological enlightenment. Therefore, education on intercultural competence gets attention.

3. Conclusion

Judging from the current narratives of globalization within the context of intercultural competence, it appears that both the East and the West seem to have erased globalization's negative, violent, and morally complex aspects. because most countries take it as a national competition. The version of globalization widely recognized today is one that selectively highlights its benefits while overlooking its more complex realities. Moreover, with the rapid development of technology and international trade, the continuous proliferation of financial capital promoted the new and rapid expansion of the capitalistic mode of production to the world, making the contradiction between the socialization of productivity worldwide and the capitalistic private ownership of means of production extend to a global scale and reached a new level. Then, the myth, which includes capital, modern space, and modern history, has been constructed teleologically. As a part of the model of capitalist production, globalization made intercultural competence necessary and inevitable. From this standpoint, intercultural competence is a byproduct of globalization, serving as a framework for understanding specific relations and modes of communication that are rooted in this myth. Simultaneously, intercultural competence itself functions as an extension of the myth, although not its original form. It thus becomes a mechanism for reinforcing the notion that globalization addresses particular needs. Consequently, intercultural competence has transformed into an instrument in the global contest for dominance over discourse, interests, and intercultural communication practices, marked by competition and strategic maneuvering. Therefore, while the concept of intercultural competence can be seen as a cultural construct, it is more accurately understood as a political and ideological one.

At the same time, it is crucial to recognize that intercultural competence is a modern construct. While cultural exchange and human interactions have existed throughout history, the concept as we understand it today is a product of modernity and globalization, specifically designed to advance globalization's objectives. It is neither neutral nor objective; it carries ideological implications. It conceals numerous underlying assumptions, including individual differences and the unique historical and national contexts of various countries. Moreover, it downplays critical issues such as colonization, oppression, power imbalances, inequality, and Western-centric perspectives. In this process, it not only conceals the immediate historical context but also depoliticizes the broader ideological framework that underpins it. Intercultural competence, therefore, seems to create a sense of consensus, encouraging the acceptance of a singular framework and perpetuating the illusion that globalization's intercultural concept leads to mutual improvement. It possesses a certain persuasive power that promotes the belief in global harmony and peace. However, if the deeper realities behind this narrative are ignored, this claim can be seen as a utopian ideal rather than an objective truth. Thus, the way we examine the relationship between globalization and intercultural competence should reflect the approach proposed by Roland Barthes (1973), who sought to "recapture the ideological fantasy embedded within seemingly self-evident narratives." This ideological fantasy is often concealed within the very fabric of the narrative itself.

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