

LEARNING TO BE INTERCULTURALLY COMPETENT: NEW FRONTIERS FOR ITALIAN L2 COURSES FOR STUDENTS WITH INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY GRANTS

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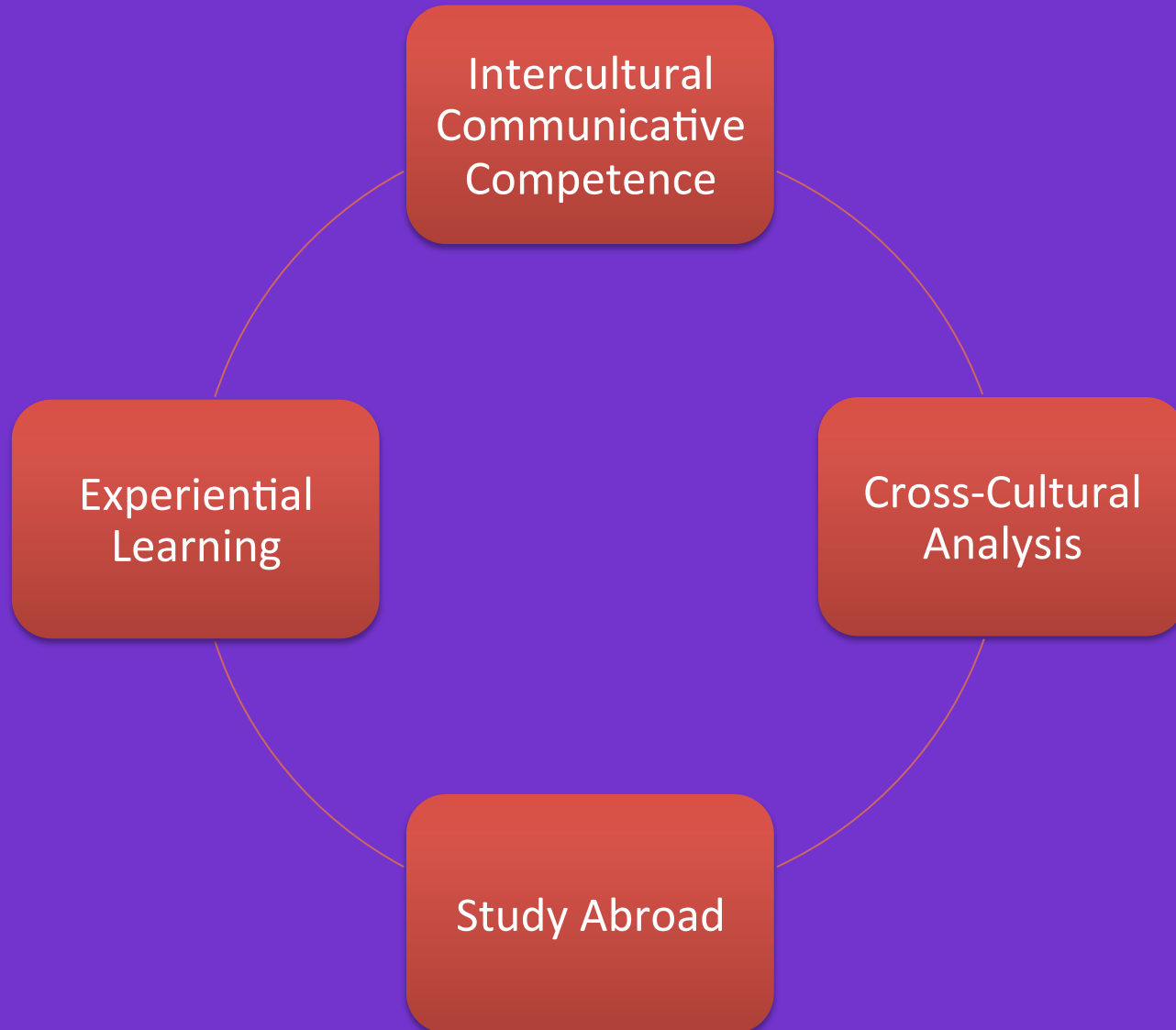
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Objectives and Index

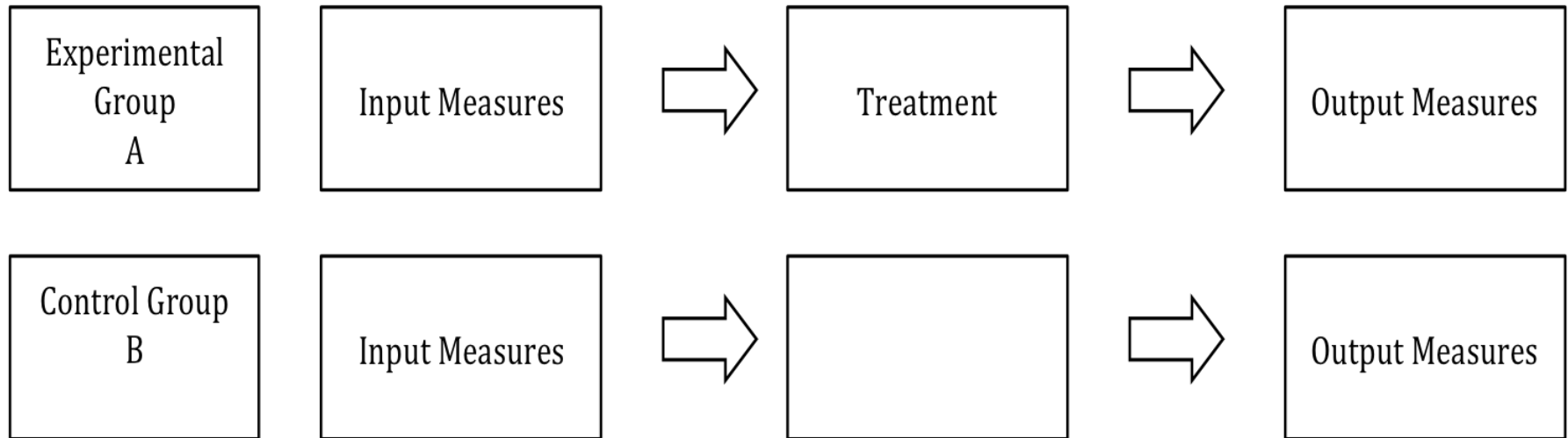
- What learning activities to improve ICC?
- The research project (design, sample, treatment, results)
- Focus on treatment
- What next?

The theories of the Research Project



The research design

A quasi-experimental investigation with two convenience samples: a control group and the experimental group.

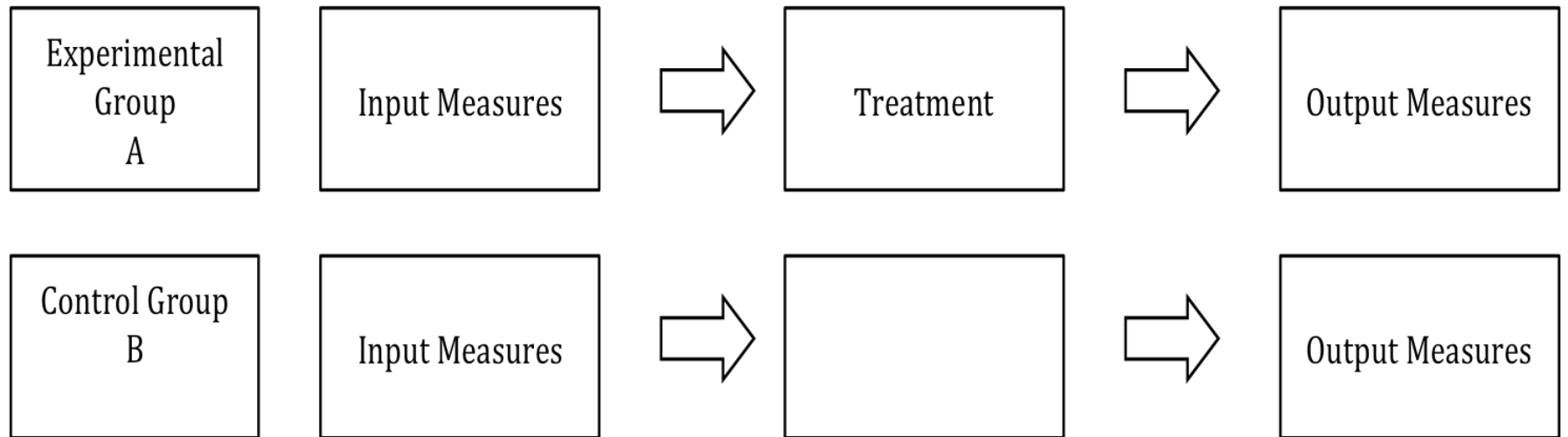


The research sample

	<i>Potential research participants</i>			<i>Participants in the pre-test</i>			<i>Participants in the post-test also</i>		
	<i>Exp.</i>	<i>Contr</i>	<i>TOT.</i>	<i>Exp.</i>	<i>Contr</i>	<i>TOT.</i>	<i>Exp.</i>	<i>Contr</i>	<i>TOT.</i>
Alpha phase	20	18	38	20	15	35	13	9	22
Beta phase	39	34	73	32	29	61	16	20	36
TOT.	59	52	111	52	44	96	29	29	58

The learning activities of the experimental group

Five 30-minute sessions integrated into an Italian language course for Erasmus at an Italian university, level B1/B2



The acquisition of intercultural communication abilities passes through three phases:

Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills

(Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010:419)

The experimental group will work to:

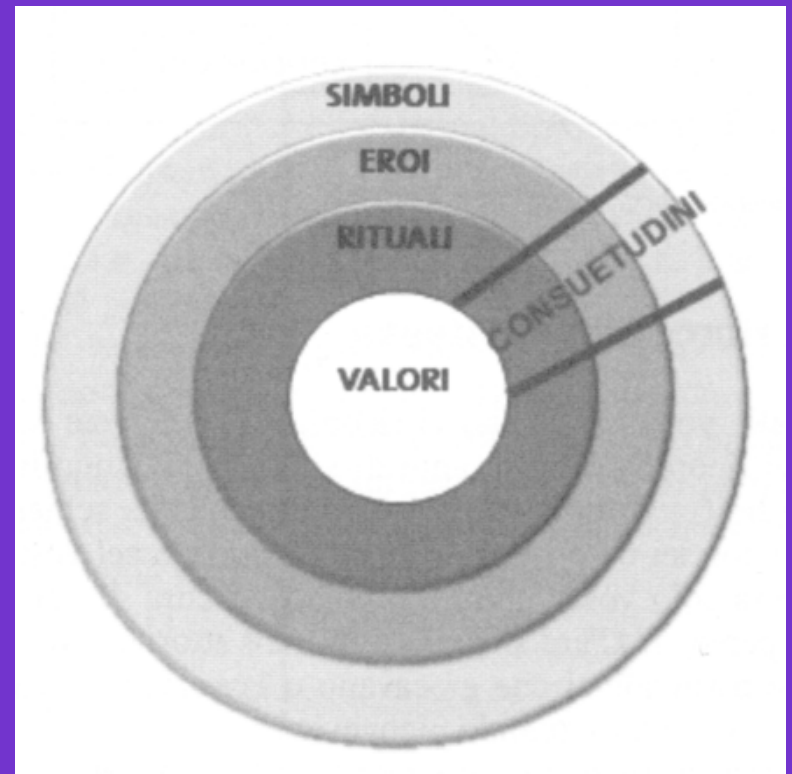
a) Develop the awareness (of the individual values, of one's culture, of the other culture).

b) Develop the ability to separate observation (of an event, a situation) from its interpretation.

c) Learn to observe cultures objectively.

a) Learning activities to develop awareness

- Reflection on the concept of culture
- List of cultural heroes and the values they represent and/ or reinforce



the 'onion' as a representation of the various layers of culture (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2014:27)

Vocabolario: ecco un elenco di aree valoriali che possono essere importanti nella tua esperienza all'estero, puoi aggiungerne altre?

Autonomia

Famiglia

Impegno nel lavoro/ nello studio

Onestà

Igiene personale

Uso di droghe

Tolleranza

Libertà di espressione

Tempo

Consumo di alcol

Religione

Sincerità

Word bank for the activity on cultural heroes

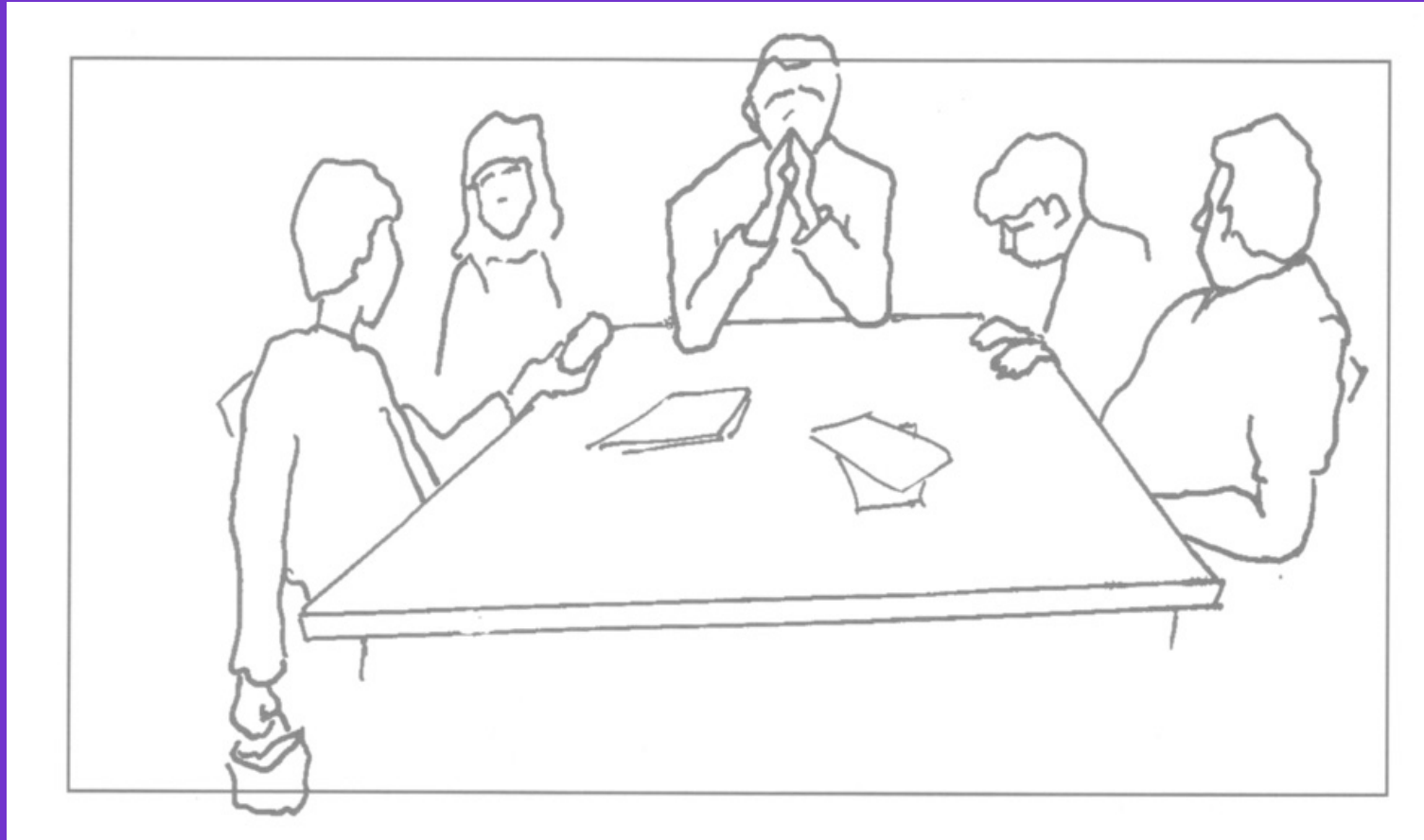
Coraggio
progresso
memoria
storica

tolleranza
unità
impegno nel lavoro
libertà di espressione
genialità
creatività

intelligenza
successo
amore per la propria professione
altruismo
onestà
sincerità

List of values /words emerged during the activity on cultural heroes

What do you see? What are they doing?



Example of an image to be used to raise awareness of the values (taken from Hofstede, Pedersen & Hofstede, 2002:10)



Example of an image to be used to develop intercultural awareness (<http://forum.santabanta.com/showthread.htm?112847-Politicians-Sleeping-In-Public-Places>, 5 November 2012)

b) Learning how to separate observation from its interpretation

Date:

Location:

OBSERVATION/ DESCRIPTION

On this side of the journal, describe what you saw. Anything that strikes you as different, funny, weird, sad, etc. is appropriate. Feelings, emotions, judgements should not be expressed on this side. Just stick to the facts.

OPINION/ANALYSIS

On this side, describe your thoughts, feelings, etc. about the event. Then try to analyze why you feel this way. What in your cultural makeup may be affecting how you feel? How is that different in the new culture?

The Model of Cultural Dimensions (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010)

<i>Basic Problem</i>	<i>Dimension of Culture</i>
Hierarchy	Power Distance (from small to large)
Identity	Individualism vs Collectivism
Gender	Masculinity vs Femininity
Truth	Uncertainty Avoidance (from weak to strong)
Virtue	Long-Term vs Short-Term Orientation
Subjective Well-being	Indulgence vs Restraint

c) Learning activities to observe cultures objectively

- Class discussion or written assignments based on questions such as:

“According to your experience in Italy so far, what aspects of Italian culture can you identify as evidence of a larger power distance or of a more collectivist culture? Make a list of at least three aspects/ behaviours that you observed or experienced first hand here in Italy “

How can we assess Intercultural Communicative Competence?

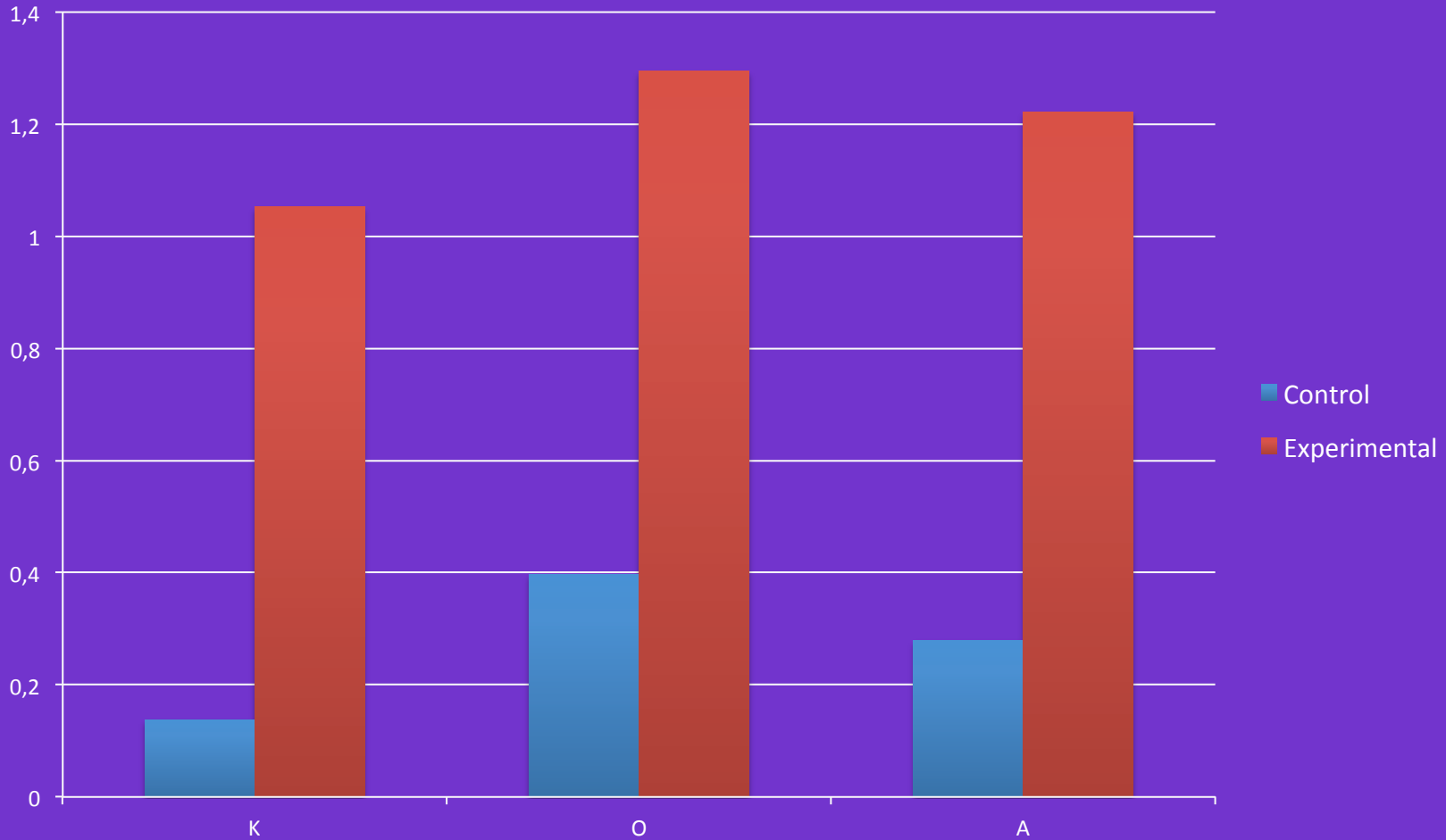
- The Intercultural Competence Assessment (INCA) portfolio (INCA Project, 2004)
- The INCA Portfolio assesses ICC in terms of 3 main components: Knowledge, Openness, and Adaptability
- The components are evaluated with a score of 1 to 5, based on the evaluation grid attached to the INCA Portfolio suitably adapted.

The test results

	Control			Experimental			Increase
	pre	post	DIFF	pre	post	DIFF	
<i>Knowledge</i>	2,017	2,155	0,138	1,603	2,655	1,052	0,914
<i>Openness</i>	1,655	2,052	0,397	1,603	2,897	1,294	0,897
<i>Adaptability</i>	1,802	2,081	0,279	1,681	2,902	1,221	0,942

Average values of ICC components.

The test results



ICC increase in Control and Experimental groups

The test results

Based on the comparison of the averages of the Knowledge, Openness, and Adaptability components and on the T-test results, it can be said that the treatment favoured ICC development.

What next?

- Raise awareness among language teachers and academic administrators on ICC
- Further explore the fruitful relationship ICC – foreign language learning
- Improve ICC assessment tools



Thank you!

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