

Pedagogical practices to improve academic success and inclusion of international students

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Student Mobility in Numbers

○ The world situation:

- In 2013, 4.1 million International Students at the graduate and post-graduate level against 2 million in 2000
 - Doubled in less than 15 years
 - Majority of students go for graduate and post-graduate studies

○ The situation in Canada:

- In 2017, 370,975 international students doing graduate and post-graduate studies. 20% increase compared to 2016. Six times more than in 2000
- In 2014, contribution of International Students of about 11.4 billion (registration fees and other expenses), with 9.3 billion in GDP
- In 2010, Canada ranked 7th best host country for International Students

○ The Situation in Quebec

- In 2015, ranked third best province, behind BC and Ontario, with 50,140 International Students, of which 42,390 are doing graduate and post-graduate studies in 2017 only
- Doubled since 2006

○ The situation at UQAR

- 45 International Students in 1993 against 404 in 2018

Existing Services

- Welcoming and integration:

- Services to students

- Initial welcome (important information, city tour, first steps)
 - Psychological support
 - Student life (sports clubs and other associations)
 - Orientation for immigration procedures
 - Support for building resume and cover letter and job search

- AGECAR (Student Association at UQAR):

- Information and support living in Rimouski and being at UQAR
 - Defending student rights

- Academic:

- Help center for success of students (support in French, math and one-off workshops)
 - Within departments initiatives (but not structured)

Several Observations

- Few students use these support services...
- Of all Francophone universities in Quebec in the last decade, the success rate for international students is lower by 16% on average compared to so-called national students.
- Several identified situations to understanding this gap:
 - Cultural shock, marginalization, isolation, difficulties in creating social networks outside of their national community

Among all services already in place, areas to invest

How to participate in the effort to promote the success of the academic project and the social inclusion of international students in our region?

- Provide a training session to allow students to better understand the culture which they are experiencing and to find the resources necessary to carry out their studies;
- Foster safe spaces for meeting, dialogue and effective networking in order to develop each student's capacity to evolve in increasingly complex contexts from a cultural point of view.

Two promising areas:

Train in cultural analysis

Develop cultural competences

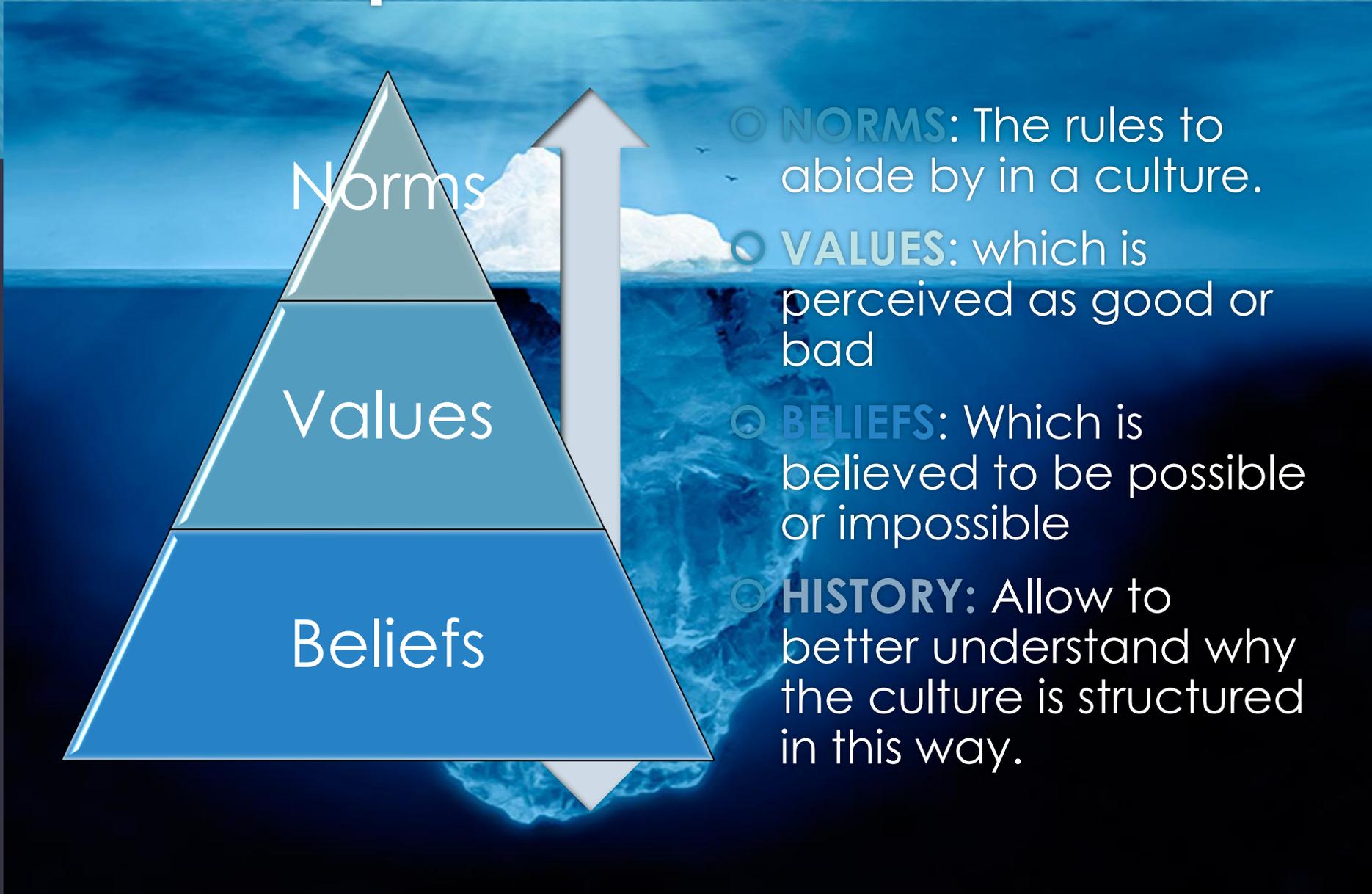
(according to the research of Kalpana Das and Roger Parent)



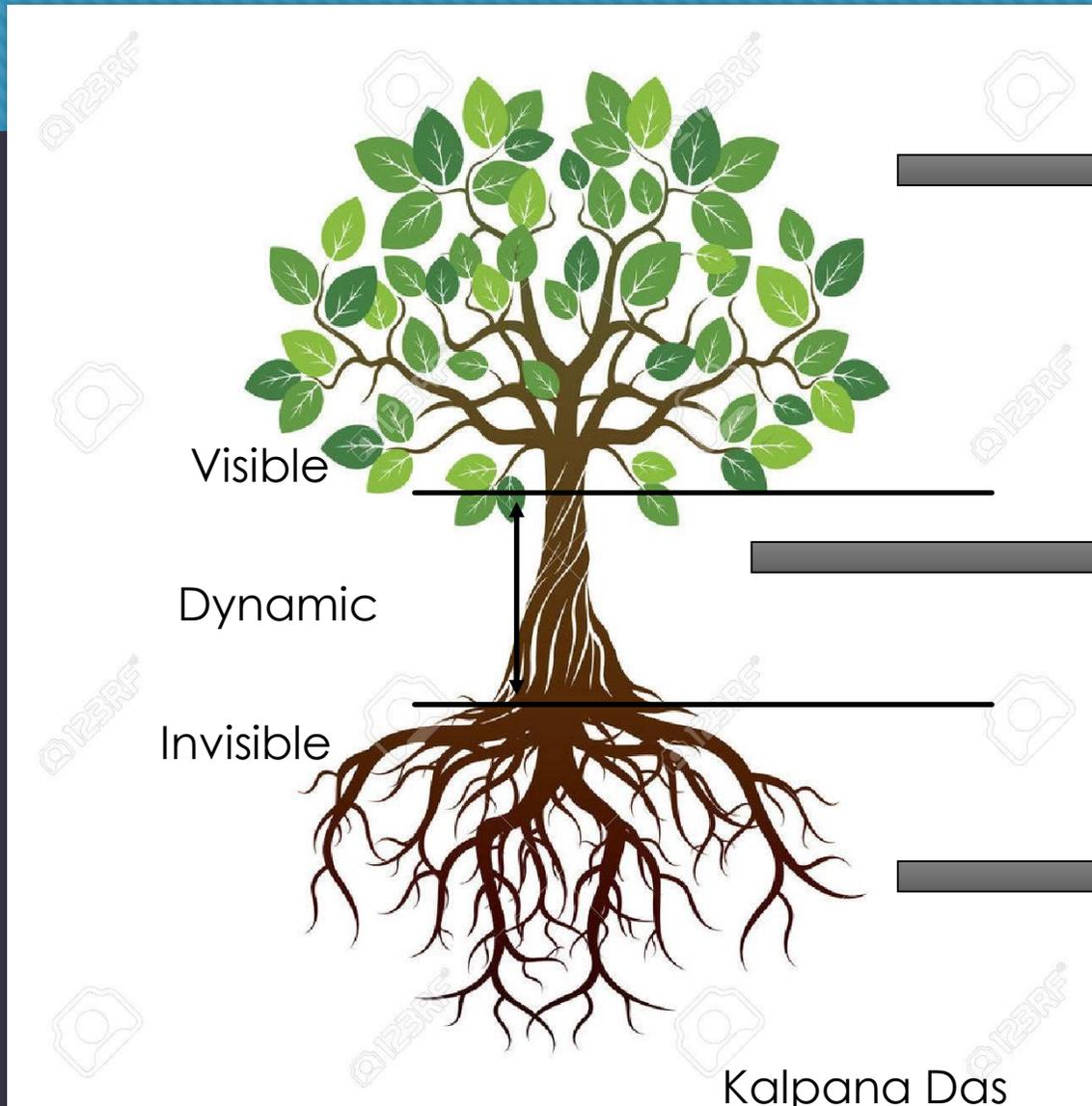
Cultural Analysis

A framework to understand one's culture and the culture of the Other
To transform cultural conflicts into an intercultural exchange opportunities

Basic Conceptual Framework



A Multilevel Analysis



Morphological Level:

History, language, arts, technology, food, behaviors and customs

Structural Level:

Individual, family, community, society, nation
Social and practical organizations
Religious practices, norms, rules and codes of conduct

Horizons of Meaning, Ways of Being and Understanding Level:

Cosmovision (nature, humans, sacred, time and space)
Mental frameworks, knowledge system
Beliefs and symbols

Cultural Competences

Transversal skills for the world of today and tomorrow

Essential Intercultural Skills

- **Respect for** "the difference and valorization of others";
- **Self-awareness / identity** "understanding the prism through which each of us perceives the world";
- **Ability to look at things from a different angle / point of view** "recognizing the similarities and differences between these points of view";
- **Listening** "to participate in an authentic intercultural dialogue";
- **Adaptation** "to be able to temporarily adopt another perspective";
- **Ability to build relationships** "to build lasting transcultural personal relationships";
- **Cultural humility** "combining respect and self-awareness" (UNESCO 2012)
- **Curiosity for the Other** (Skill added by the students of the cohort of winter 2018)

Examples of Pedagogical Practices

○ Exploring the culture “of which I am made”

○ Narrative Practices:

- Phenomenological narratives like "I remember" (Galavani, 2004)
- Biographical approach: to describe the aspects of one's culture through memories, dance, music, songs, symbolic objects, etc.
- Tell what I am thinking about a news event (e.g. attack at the Islamic Cultural Center in Quebec City)

○ Listening and understanding cultural diversity

○ Dialogical Practices:

- Group instaurative hermeneutics (Galvani, 2004; Michaud, 2017)
- Sharing experiences and memories
- Speaking Circles: Speaking in the first person, from experience and listening to the Other
- Co-development (Payette and Champagne, 1997)

○ Put into practice in the field:

- As a team, set up an out-of-class activity that includes aspects of cultural analysis (Parent, 2009; Parent and Torop, 2012) and intercultural exchange (Parent, 2009)

Future Prospects

- Integration of the course in the Bachelor of Psychosociology
- Reflections on the development of a program in intercultural intervention open to stakeholders from diverse fields
- Networking and supporting student initiatives (support for empowerment)

The end

Thank you for your attention