"There are others who are more patriotic than I am”. Constructions of cultural identities in L2 interactions among adolescents with and without migrant backgrounds

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The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages argues that by teaching languages, teachers should lead students also towards developing intercultural competence. In accordance with this view, the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK) suggests that the development of intercultural competence is one of the key responsibilities of L2 teaching at schools. The curricular framework of Swiss high schools even goes one-step further and suggest that L2 classrooms should offer students the possibility to relate ”otherness” to their own developing cultural identity; this would guide them towards real intercultural competence.

Policy makers seem to perceive L2 classrooms not only as sites where languages are learned. According to their views, they are sites where students are guided towards intercultural competence and acceptance of diversity, and where they can explore their cultural identities. However, guiding students towards intercultural competence and helping them to construct cultural identities presupposes the application of complex notions of culture and cultural identity.

In L2 theory and research, the concept of culture has drastically changed over the last three decades, and new approaches have emerged. According to these newer, ”late-modern” approaches, culture is fragmented, denationalized, deterritorialized, and very dynamic; and so is cultural identity. However, often language teachers and students still operate with simplified notions of culture and cultural identity and equate, for example, culture and nation. This is not only a conceptual problem, but has rather serious consequences in classrooms in post-migrant societies where a high number of students have a migrant background and where cultural identities can no longer be constructed simply according to country’s frontiers.

In my presentation, I will draw on a corpus of audio- and videotaped interactions that stem from 11th grade L2-classrooms at a bilingual high school (”collège” or ”Gymnasium”) in a bilingual city in “post-migrant” Switzerland. Applying multimodal interaction analysis and membership categorization analysis, I demonstrate how students with and without migrant background categorize themselves and others in terms of cultural identity. I show that and how they operate with simplified notions of culture and rigid categories of cultural identity, yet how they attempt to move beyond these categories. Thereby, my analyses do not only demonstrate that these students lack the conceptual instruments to construct transcultural identities, yet they are also evidence of students’ attempts to build solidarity among themselves.

*Presenting author
100 years’ perspective in interpretation of otherness: cultural, historical, religious factors that influence contradiction in communication among individuals

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Life story research method provides possibility for researcher during the in-depth interviews to receive from informants reflections on the important events, decisions that have been some time ago. People are telling stories about some pieces of their lives, life of other people. Life stories about the important events are constructed based on some archetypes and has connections with collective memory. As Atkinson stated, "Stories help us understand our commonalities and bonds with others as well as our differences. Stories foster a sense of community.” (Atkinson, 2002, p. 122) Life story as a method to research relationships and interaction between different groups was used by sociologists. "Narrative inquiry is an umbrella term that captures personal and human dimensions of experience over time, and takes account of the relationship between individual experience and cultural context”(Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). From the historical research point life story research, or in other terms – oral history – method could be used to gain not only information about most important influences, experiences, circumstances, issues, themes, and lessons of a person’s lifetime, but as well to get the narrative highlights of the subjective interpretation of important events, of factors that have had influence interrelation with other persons, especially those coming from other countries, with different cultural, religious background.

In this paper the life story (oral history) method would be used through the filmed in-depth interviews with persons of 100 years (for the research the stories of 4-5 persons would be analysed). The informants were chosen to get information and their personal reflections on the events that had happen through the last 100 years (1918 the Lithuanian state was announced, 1940 occupations, 1941 war and occupations, 1945 occupation and sovietisation process, 1989 Sajudis and 1990 Restoration of Lithuanian state). The age of informants provide a possibility to see experience and memory related with people with various cultural and religious backgrounds (Russians, Polish, Jewish, German, etc.) and in their relationship to Lithuanians and Lithuanian state.

Life story method was applied in the way where research participants were invited to recount their lives usually in relation to a particular aspect with a minimum of guidance and intervention from the interviewer (the research methodology was adapted from Brannen, 2012)

During the research, it is planned to study and analyze the discourse of Lithuanian statehood: key figures, themes, context, and to expose the issues related with cultural dimensions in evaluation of important events. During the analysis of the narrative there would be taken to account the interaction between personal and "official" (public) narratives.

*Presenting author
A Qualitative Study of Intercultural Empathy Among Palestinian and Israeli Individuals

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This study addresses intercultural empathy as a concept, and if or how it can be present among conflicting parties, specifically between Palestinian and Israeli individuals. Since there are many definitions of the word "empathy," the researcher examines previous definitions of this term, how it relates to intercultural empathy, and then offers a singular definition for the purpose of this study. Previous research has examined empathy in relationship to other familiar words, including "sympathy" and "compassion," though there has been little research done on the term, "intercultural empathy," as a whole, nor has it often been studied between specific conflicting parties. Through interviews, either in person or over Skype, as well as through open-ended survey questions, the researcher analyzes how Palestinian and Israeli individuals perceive the "other" in relationship to the amount of contact they have had with the "other," and whether or not their perceptions might shift after getting to know a specific "other" personally. It is intercultural empathy that might enable us to better realize our shared humanity.

References


*Presenting author


Assessment in a multicultural classroom: the journey from ’do it our way’ to the informed dialogue method

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The aim of this presentation is to illustrate both assessment challenges and a possible solution for the multicultural classroom. This case study reveals consequences of assuming the academic writing skills of a diverse student body. In response to acknowledging the diversity of educational traditions, the informed dialogue method sets out to clarify the relation between critical reflection, the use of academic sources and responsible writing skills.

JAMK University of Applied Sciences in Jyväskylä, Finland has gone, within a relatively short amount of time, from a predominantly Finnish oriented educational institution to a school that places a strong emphasis on internationalization. In the past, the majority of students came directly from Finnish high school and the level of writing skills of those students who passed the national matriculation examination was of a relatively homogeneous level. The reality in the classroom today is that the students may represent more than ten nationalities and various educational norms. Assigning an academic essay as the main evaluation tool for a course may assume writing skills that not all students possess.

The delicate balance between upholding the traditions of the host school while at the same time recognizing the heterogeneity of the multicultural student body was the impetus for the informed dialogue method. This two-columned task provides a sharp distinction between the voice of the student and the voice of external sources. This visual flow may enhance dialogue and illustrate the development of the student’s ideas. External sources and retrieved information are in a quantifiable form for evaluation and unintentional plagiarism tends to be avoided.

Critical reflection was chosen as the assessment method due to the interaction of experience and knowledge. Ash and Clayton (2009) see critical reflection as a process that seeks to develop the level and association of thought and action. When successful, critical reflection ‘generates, deepens and documents learning’ (27). Service learning has had an important role in this case study. Critical reflection provides fertile ground to connect what has happened in the field with the learning goals of personal growth, civic learning and academic enhancement (Bringle, Hatcher, Jones 2010, 151).

The presentation will include the results of a survey about the educational traditions of various international JAMK student groups.


*Presenting author
Blaming the State: Negotiating Latvian and Bulgarian Economic Emigrants’ Identity in Public Broadcasting

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In this comparative study (Latvia and Bulgaria) we address the role of communication in the construction and managing of larger conceptualizations of the relationship between individuals and their State in the context of economic despair. Our analysis of the public media discourse builds on Ethnography of Communication (Hymes, 1962), Cultural Discourse Analysis (Carbaugh, 2007), as well as Verdery’s (1996) anthropological investigations of post-socialism. The research is motivated by the following questions: (1) what is the nature of the relationship between economic emigrants and the State they left, and (2) what similarities and differences the studied discourse contains in relation to Latvian and Bulgarian identity constructions? The media content examined includes broadcast from Latvian public radio, LR1, part of the weekly broadcast called Twenty First Century Latvian (21.gad-simta latvietis), aired in 2012, and episodes from a Bulgarian broadcast “Miroluba Benatova presents” originally aired by the national Bulgarian television, NOVA TV, in 2015. The programs are comparable as both engage with discussions with Latvians and Bulgarians who live abroad for a wide variety of reasons, and explore how the events and challenges of 20th and 21st century affect the creation of new understandings of the relationship between State and notions of Latvian-ness/Bulgarian-ness respectively.

We examine discourses on emigration in relation to the ways national identity is constructed in social interaction, as a product of the particular socio-economic context in each country, and the larger narrative each country reconstitutes in order to culturally reinforce underlying values, premises, and norms for acting, and being within the particular local environment. We explore the way public discourse functions within media content for both communities in a way that enables or restricts, legitimizes or sanctions agency in relation to the State. To do so, we examine the larger historical contexts of oppression, Communism/Socialism vs. Democracy/Capitalism, agricultural developments, and understandings of work ethic, common for both countries, which are employed in order for community members to make sense of the continuous challenging economic transitions.

Preliminary results show commonality in the articulation of strong negative feelings towards one’s state/government. In the Latvian case, in its extreme, it signals the presence of a ritualized blaming. This functions to confirm a particular economic emigrant identity as well as provides the communicative resources for culturally acceptable justification of one’s absence from the country e.g. to mask the culturally expected yet non-existing intentions to return or the lack of culturally appropriate feelings towards one’s homeland. In the Bulgarian case, on the other hand, similar ritualized “blaming” of the State is enacted, in which said State is used to legitimize the need for emigration and even highlight that “good Bulgarians should leave the country”: success in Bulgaria is described as happening really hard, and that there are no conditions to help individuals, and that those who succeed are often a “product of the old structure” alluding to nepotism, corruption, and socialist ties.


*Presenting author

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Building a happy community: Challenges in international students’ wellbeing at a Finnish higher education.

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In the era of high student mobility, international students are hoped to be integrated into their new home institutions for better commitment to their academic work, and for their own wellbeing. International students’ wellbeing is studied from various perspectives, often using concepts like adaptation and integration that are highly controversial and polysemic concepts (Dervin 2011). Overall, it seems that transition into a new cultural studying environment is a challenging process (Zhang & Goodson 2011). Challenges for international students’ wellbeing include, for example, loneliness, lack of social support, lack of social relationships with the locals, culture shock, discrimination and racism, inadequate language proficiency, unrealistic expectations, and different learning and teaching styles (Russell, Thomson & Rosenthal 2008).

University of Jyväskylä (JYU) has developed a Student Life – operating model that joins the forces of the University and its local partners to promote the overall wellbeing of the students (https://www.jyu.fi/studentlife). Operating model is also offered to JYU’s international students as Goodie – operating model aiming at easy access to wellbeing counselling for every need and phase of their studies (https://www.jyu.fi/studentlife/studentlife/en/goodie).

In this presentation I will present the Goodie – operating model, but I will also discuss the challenges that international students face while studying at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. This is done by using data from a qualitative study conducted during the pilot period of the Goodie – operating model (1.1.2016 – 31.9.2016). The data consists of 24 Goodie – visit reports and Goodie wellbeing advisers’ interviews (8). Goodie advisers are University staff members, who have been selected and trained to support the wellbeing of students. The data is analyzed by qualitative theme analysis.

The results show that the most common reasons for the international students at the JYU to seek support through Goodie – visits, are issues related with studies, social relationships, and mental stress. Also culture shock, home sickness, own and other’s medical issues, difficulties in getting a job and finding accommodation were issues that were listed in the reports. The reasons for seeking support were in most cases many and often intertwined. Complexity and broad spectrum of challenges facing international students’ wellbeing raised professional and ethical questions among Goodie advisers.

In this presentation I will also discuss how social support system, like Goodie – operating model, can help to enhance the sense of belonging and community among international students and staff member alike.

References


During last years increased number of asylum seekers have come to Europe due to chaotic and dangerous situations in their home countries. Many countries – including Finland – are facing new situation in receiving them. New reception centres are founded and new staff recruited. At the same time, the attitudinal climate in Finnish society has changed into more “immigration critical” (as different anti-immigration groups call it) resulting racist voices manifesting themselves in (social) media, widely in public sphere and even leading to occasional violent attacks towards the centres. Populist, nationalist party being in the government since April 2015 has had a direct effect on the Finnish immigration policies. While racist undertones have become evident both in policies and institutional practices, as well people the human-right activist and people wanting to show justice and solidarity, have started to be vocal in public discussion with appeals, demonstrations and public participation. In this contested environment reception centres are living their everyday reality. In my PhD project (in process) I am examining the everyday intercultural encounters in these centres.

Primarily I am looking people in exceptional and vulnerable situations, fleeing the dramatic contexts of violence and war, and people working with them. It is important to ask what kind of impact this time spend on reception centre have on people, to what extend they survive with the capabilities they have and, if not, how they are able to develop new strategies and resources in such a stressful phase of their life. Even in quite different way, work in reception centre impacts also workers. Their emotional resilience and professional competence including (intercultural) communication skills and ability to encounter, guide and support people in vulnerable and traumatic situations are tested. What kind of (cultural, professional) resources and strategies they use to get along?.

This exploratory study aspires to deeper understand the dynamics of everyday living and (intercultural) encounters in reception centres. Specifically it will examine the ways in which both asylum seekers and grass-roots workers experience the life in reception centre, what kind of (cultural) strategies and (cultural) resources they activate and further develop in order to cope the adversities individually. As well I am interested how the organization manages this diversity of languages and cultures. By amplifying the voices from grass-roots and make their experiences, emotions and learnings visible, it is possible to use them to evaluate and develop the policies, practices and competences concerning asylum seeking.

This is an ethnographic study of everyday life encounters in the centres and it includes:

1) participant observation in the centre and other locations of frequent everyday encounters where asylum seekers of the centre are involved

2) thematic interviews of social workers, asylum seekers, volunteers and other stakeholders that influence in one way or another in the everyday life encounters

3) analysis of the documents that regulate or define these everyday life encounters

*Presenting author
During the time of presentation, I will be in the midst of doing my fieldwork and thus, be able to present some initial findings.
COMMUNICATION AND EMOTION IN THE INTERCULTURAL MEDIATION

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Long and authentic intercultural relationships could not exist if the main tool of the relationship – which is the communication – would not exist.

As such, the communication process implies 2 aspects: to know how to express our own needs, taking into consideration the others and to be able to listen to the needs the others may express.

Although such expression of needs involves an emotion. As such, whether it is positive, emotion engages dialogue but whether it is negative, emotion may generate conflicts or misunderstandings.

It goes the same for communication, as communication is culture and culture is communication: whether it is effective, then communication commits to engage dialogue. But whether it is ineffective, communication is the origin of the conflict.

Using a multi-method research strategy included a qualitative and quantitative approach, case study and model building, it makes sense to affirm that communication and emotion may become sources of misunderstandings, of conflict.

Specific literature, parallel analysis allowed to discover that whether both factors are properly managed and regulated, communication and emotion may become the keys to resolve the conflicts or misunderstandings.

This is the reason why the approach to resolving conflicts has a name well known: it’s called intercultural mediation.

This implies that the interculturalist/mediator knows how to « manufacture » and make adequate use of 3 heads and 3 hearts!

Intercultural mediation leads to language integration.

Keywords: communication, emotion, conflict, mediation, language integration
Case Study: Negotiating the borders between life as a refugee, student and ambassador for an Open Class for Refugees university program

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The apparent social normality of border crossing from an EU context is becoming alarmingly contradictory in light of current tendencies towards a more restrictive closing-off of borders, both physically and psychologically, to both refugees and migrants. This has resulted in a situation whereby it is becoming increasingly necessary for both individuals and societies to focus on bridging the borders between these diversities and cultural identities. Against this background, the case study presented here highlights the key role individuals can play in negotiating the boundaries between refugee or migrant communities and host communities or other institutions and organisations.

This case study centres around and is coproduced by Khulood, a female Iraqi refugee studying in her third semester for a bachelor business degree at an Austrian university. The case investigates some of the struggles and opportunities involved in negotiating a hybridized identity, while performing multiple roles in multiple contexts. The specific issues Khulood faces in consciously or unconsciously acting as a bridge person negotiating between different groups and widely diverging situational contexts are identified. The case examines the expectations, demands and challenges experienced by Khulood, as a refugee spanning the gap between these divergent personal, social, institutional and educational contexts.

The purpose of this case study can be seen as twofold. On the one hand there is a clear focus on investigating how Khulood negotiates her own hybridized identity, while acting as a bridge person between the different communities and institutions in her current cultural space (Martin and Nakayama, 2004). This requires Khulood to engage in a dynamic process of shifting between and negotiating different frames of reference and different realities, while simultaneously assuming a variety of roles, such as that of intercultural translator, cultural bridge builder and cultural broker. The case highlights the value of perceptual agility and code switching in negotiating between different identities and groups of people in different contexts. It suggests that hybridized identities display this cognitive agility particularly well, learning to (consciously or unconsciously) shift between the different frames of reference and make use of multiple perspectives.

A second point of interest looks at how the educational setting in which Khulood is studying both reacts to and is unexpectedly impacted by the current wave of migration in its local/regional context. Here the intention is to outline the development of the relationship between Khulood and the educational institution at which she studies, again emphasizing the impact of this relationship on Khulood’s identity, while also pointing to how this relationship can influence the educational institution.

The case study analysis clearly points towards the increasing need, particularly in the current climate, for not only individuals and societies, but also more specifically institutions and organisations to practice flexibility, perceptual agility and openness for change.

Changing cultures, changing minds: Understanding the power of human communication beyond fixed realities and constructed positions

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This paper discusses a PhD project which investigates the concept of cross cultural communication in Australian multicultural society across differentials of power. The project applied a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to three case studies to explore the communicative experiences between people in mainstream society and 'cultural others'. Theory was based on the disaggregated terms of 'culture' and 'dialogue' both of which have been subjected to intense conceptual analysis. A critico-constructivist orientation to culture may be viewed in terms of the production and reproduction of knowledge contextualised by the power of members of one group or another to construct meanings which impact on others' lives (Barth 2002). Dialogue, in contrast, may be viewed as a multi-vocal form of communication aimed at arriving at mutual learning across difference (Besley and Peters 2011). Intercultural dialogue always contains an inherent tension as one's own meanings are challenged and changed in interaction with the meanings of others (Bohm 1996, Freire 1970). The construction of a shared, multi-vocal story requires us to undertake the difficult task of questioning our assumptions including those we make of ourselves (Silvestri, 2010).

Case studies were situated within a) a refugee support program run by a Non-Government Organisation, b) an English language program for long term unemployed migrants and c) the treaty process between Aboriginal people and the government in the Australian state of Victoria. While each case study was different they were bound by a communicative ethos between members of a culturally vulnerable group (refugees, long term unemployed migrants and Aboriginals) and mainstream community members. Interviews, focus groups and personal reflection were the main data gathering tools.

Findings indicated that broader understandings of humanity lie in tension with discourses of cultural difference. In the three case studies institutional structures frequently worked to maintain power differences between those belonging to the mainstream culture and cultural others resulting in static identities, fixed positions and restricted inter-cultural communication. Where human elements trumped constructed realities, communication became a shared experience of mutual learning under the banner of a shared vision. Deep levels of dialogue occurred when people challenged pre-held positions and institutional agendas resulting in alternative narratives in how they saw themselves and others. In the context of a developing multicultural society, such as the one studied in this research project, integration of minority groups within a broader society is a journey best travelled together where people can learn from the other and in so doing learn something of themselves.


Cultural diversity and Schools of Music and Art. How can the Norwegian Municipal School of Music and Arts foster inclusion and social justice in the local community – what competences does the teachers need?

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It is commonly agreed that there is a huge potential in music and other arts for fostering inclusion of immigrants in the majority society. This is recognized and explicitly expressed by different Norwegian authorities through white papers and in debates. According to The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS), the Norwegian Municipal School of Music and Arts (hereafter use the Norwegian word kulturskole) is seen as an important arena for inclusion of immigrants into the municipalities.

In Norway, there is a strong tradition dating back to the 1940/50-ies where municipalities provided affordable extra curricular high quality music education. Since 1997 all municipalities are obliged by law to have a "kulturskole". Aspects of democratisation of culture and access for all have prevailed in the legitimisation of these institutions, expressed in the slogan "Music and arts education for all". Approximately 15 % of the children in school age attend to kulturskole, but for immigrants and children with immigrant parents the percentage is far below (There has been no national mapping of this, but some research on regional level indicates that only 8 % of immigrant children or children with immigrant parents attend kulturskole.) Statistics, research and reports documenting how the kulturskole actually includes immigrants, and how it contributes to integration in the Norwegian society is quite discouraging, despite a great wish to do so. This year the Norwegian Council for Schools of Music and Performing Arts has released a strategy for work with inclusion of immigrants. This strategy identifies teacher competence as one of the key areas that has to be fortified. The paper discusses what this intercultural competence might consist of.

The paper draws on two metaphors on cultural diversity derived from Lundberg et all (2000, p.38/39), to shed light over different types of competence that might be needed in the kulturskole, respectively the mosaic metaphor and the garden metaphor. The ideal cultural diverse society can be seen as a mosaic, where difference is framed, and fair and just representation is important. Or it can be seen as a garden in which there is a diverse flora, which mixes and grows. Taking the two metaphors on cultural diversity as a starting point, I will discuss what kind of intercultural competence the teachers in the kulturskole need in order to have a greater impact in the creation of more inclusive local societies.

The paper suggests an understanding of intercultural competence as a more practical pedagogical approach where the focus is not the competence about cultural content, but to create areas for joint and meaningful creative activities where social interaction between groups and individuals happens.

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*Presenting author
Defining Austrian values: An analysis of official teaching materials for refugees in Austria

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The recent refugee and migration flows to Europe have fueled discussions and reflections on cultural identity in many European countries. What constitutes a country’s cultural identity, what are the values and guidelines woven into the tapestry of a society – and, equally important, who defines and owns them? In Germany, for example, the introduction of the term ”Leitkultur” (guiding culture) has led to heated debates (Greven, 2017). In November 2015, the Austrian government presented a 50-items plan for integration. A concrete outcome of this document was the introduction of value and orientation courses (Werte- und Orientierungskurse) for newly arrived refugees and migrants.

Cultural identity is one element of an individual’s identity, as are other experiences such as gender, language, socio-economic background, urban-rural dwelling, education and religion. Depending on the context and also throughout a person’s lifetime, the hierarchy and combination of affiliations making up an individual’s identity can change (Maalouf, 2002). Identity is, therefore, not a fixed construct: identities are constantly evolving, adapted, re-negotiated. We want to analyze the depiction of Austrian cultural identity, its perceived values and rules through the teaching material used for the value courses.

Our presentation will be based on an analysis of the main document for the Austrian value courses, called ”Mein Leben in Österreich. Chancen und Regeln” (My life in Austria. Chances and rules). In addition, we hope to conduct qualitative interviews with participants and lecturers to inform our presentation. The purpose of the presentation is to assess the Austrian model of value courses from the perspective of intercultural communication, contribute to the on-going discussions around cultural identity in Europe and identify questions for further research.

References:


Authors:

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Doing business with Chinese: stereotypes, perceptions and attitudes of Belgian business representatives.

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Differences in culture and socio-economic environment increase the complexity of business encounters. When cultural distance is high, as in the case of Chinese and Flemish business partners, people will encounter more difficulties with assessing the nature of particular behaviour (Kumar & Patriotta, 2011). When faced with a cultural ambiguous or unfamiliar situation, people tend to categorize data (things, people, events) in order to make sense out of it. Without mental categories, nothing would be meaningful and we would not be able to communicate to each other. As Beamer (1995) puts it, without knowledge about the other culture it is impossible to communicate successfully with that other culture. However, in intercultural situations characterised with a high level of ambiguity and when feelings of anxiety and insecurity come into play, people may unconsciously fall back on their stereotypical conceptualisations and preconceived knowledge about the other to interpret unfamiliar information. Although stereotypes serve as important functions in intercultural communication, they may become problematic when one fails to acknowledge counter-stereotypic information (Snyder 1992, as cited in Ruble & Zhang, 2013).

This paper investigates the stereotypes Flemish business representatives hold about their Chinese business partners. Stereotypes can have a discouraging effect on the interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds. They are often ‘a very partial and inadequate way of representing the world’ (Lippmann, 1922, p72), which not only affect our attitudes, but also influence our expectations about the other’s behaviour. And consequently shape the way we interact with our culturally different counterparts (Hughes & Baldwin, 2002). This could limit the appropriateness of the encounter and could even negatively impact the international collaboration and lead to critical incidents (e.g. Peng 2010, Spencer-Rodgers 2001).

Therefore it is crucial to never take stereotypical assumptions for granted, but instead be critical and question their relevance and appropriateness. But in order to do so, people first need to be aware of the kind of stereotypes they use to make inferences about the other culture. This is exactly what this paper aims to uncover in the context of Flemish-Chinese business interactions.

Twenty interviews with Flemish business representatives, who just started doing business with Chinese, were conducted to identify stereotypical content. The purpose of this study was not only to uncover traits and attributes that are believed to characterize Chinese business people, but also special attention was given to attitudes and cultural preferences that impact the way stereotypical views are adopted by Flemish representatives, and which indirectly impacts the way they behave in encounters with Chinese.

As research on the role of stereotypes in intercultural interactions is limited – particularly in the context of Chinese-Flemish business encounters -, this study aims to contribute by finding out the stereotypical representations Flemish business people use to make inferences about their Chinese counterpart’s behaviour. Knowing what stereotypes they use, is valuable to understand the experience of Flemish representatives and provides implications for intercultural communication.
This session presents results from an ongoing applied research and development project focusing on ethics and responsibility at JAMK University of Applied Sciences (JAMK) in Jyväskylä, Finland. In recent years, JAMK significantly increased the number of foreign students in several of its schools, particularly the School of Business. Subsequently, administrators noted an increase in the number of reported incidents related to plagiarism, cheating on exams, group work processes, and student behaviours on campus and in the classroom.

The first phase of the project explored the phenomena across the campus, focusing on administrative processes, activities of the student union, and teacher and student experiences (Niemi, 2015). It was concluded that JAMK’s campus is dominated by Finnish employees and students, and the data suggested that the local expectations and practices regarding student behaviours on campus are driven by certain Finnish values and traditions. Recommendations from Niemi’s research advanced the creation of a student-centred guide to ethics and responsibility on campus (JAMK, 2015), spearheaded by and for students. Published on the university’s intranet, this guide is readily accessible to teachers and students.

Phase Two of the project measured the receptivity and effectiveness of the guide (Ceesay, 2017). The results enabled Ceesay to develop a descriptive model, The Ethics Triangle, that provides a holistic view of ethics and responsibility on campus. Phase Two resulted in a revised version of the student guide, Academic Integrity at JAMK: A Student Perspective (JAMK, 2017). Of particular interest to interculturalists is that the project workers for the second guide chose to communicate expectations about ethics and responsibility through the lens of Finnish culture. The approach predicts that when students are familiar with the underlying cultural assumptions for expected behavior, then understanding and adapting to those assumptions is made easier. This may be a unique approach to communicating about ethics and responsibility on a university campus because no evidence has emerged about similar approaches. As well, by taking a student-produced and student-centred approach to creating the guide, more students are expected to take personal responsibility for their behaviours.

Our presentation at NIC 2017 will focus on the student receptivity to the second version of the guide and its effectiveness in developing a common set of ethical guidelines for all students at JAMK. We will report findings concerning the effectiveness of framing those guidelines based on Finnish cultural values and traditions. Educators will take home ideas and approaches that might serve their own schools.

References


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History Teaching and Identity Faced with Global Migration

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The traditional role of education in many contexts has been to construct and strengthen national identity (Banks 2016; Osler 2016). With global migration, there is a need for the construction of more inclusive national and cosmopolitan identities. In a recently published Norwegian white paper, the role of human sciences in school are discussed, focusing among others on their contributions to understand identity to face global migration (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). At the start of the document, core issues to ensure representative democracies are raised: the importance of literacy giving the ground for an enlightened publicity, and knowledge about history and international affairs. From a critical literacy perspective, this research aims to understand how literacy practices in history classes in Norwegian schools contribute to identity construction. A critical approach to literacy does not only consider the coding and decoding of texts, but takes into account the political and social contexts and how texts are understood and interpreted (Papen, 2005: 9-11). Literacy is defined by Barton and Hamilton as a set of social practices embedded in broader social goals and cultural practices (Barton & Hamilton, 1998: 7). There are different forms of literacies and some become more dominant than others. School literacy is dominant, according to Street and Street, who highlighted the relationship between literacy and nationalism (Street & Street, 1991). To study this relationship leads to questions of identity, culture and the struggle between different identities and cultures. In school, what the authors call a pedagogisation of literacy takes places, which is considered "... a social process: They contribute to the construction of a particular kind of citizen, a particular kind of identity, and a particular concept of the nation" (Ibid., 1991: 163). How do literacies provided through history teaching in Norwegian schools help construct identities, citizens and concepts of the nation? This question will be approached through qualitative interviews with teachers and observation in school.


*Presenting author
How may the actor’s literacy vs. illiteracy affect development assistance aimed at Indigenous Peoples?

*Live Danbolt Drange

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In the year of 2000 eight Millennium Development Goals were adopted by world leaders gathered at the United Nations. The objective was to end poverty, a world with universal literacy, access to quality education at all levels and where social well-being is assured. By 2015 improvement has taken place, but the targets have not been achieved for all. Several reports within and outside the UN framework confirm that, despite two decades with special focus on the World’s Indigenous Peoples, they have not been granted enough attention in the MDG-related processes and are still one of the groups more severely affected by poverty and human rights abuses.

To reach the goals, development assistance has been offered to countries and peoples one has considered will not attain the objectives without support. Money has been invested in many projects aimed at Indigenous Peoples over these years without having eradicated poverty and illiteracy in this group. Why is one still at a loss to this group of people?

Development assistance in the global south is usually an intercultural encounter between actors that are based in different cultures with different worldviews and values (Dahl 2013). Well educated development workers go to the global south with values based in a Western worldview and meet illiterate and semi-literate indigenous peoples with worldviews and cultures that are quite different and with a different understanding of the meaning of key concepts in their context (Jøssang 2012). Walter Ong states that for a person from a written culture it is difficult to understand what it is like to be illiterate. It is an incomprehensible thought to be totally dependent on hearing and not be able to take notes to rely on. "Persons who have interiorized writing not only write but also speak literately, which is to say that they organize, to varying degrees, even their oral expressions in thought patterns and verbal patterns that they would not know of unless they could write" (Ong 1982, 56f).

In the paper, I will consider how literacy vs. illiteracy and different worldviews may affect the outcome of development assistance to Indigenous Peoples in the Andean region. The paper is based on relevant literature on the non-literate mind by Walter Ong, communication and on the Andes, qualitative research on longer and shorter subsequent fieldworks, personal experiences from development assistance in the region and interviews and conversations with local recipients and former development workers. I have also revised several evaluation reports on development projects where Norwegian institutions have been involved.


*Presenting author
How to become a global citizen? A presentation of the Mittweida Certificate of Intercultural Competence

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The impacts of globalization are challenging the institutions of higher education worldwide in the 21st century like no period before. Universities need to offer their students possibilities to qualify them as Global Citizens by enabling them to deal with the challenges and uncertainties of a world that is networked beyond borders. Accordingly, a broad-based understanding of internationalization is needed with comprehensive study programs that embrace the diversity of perspectives afforded by globalization. Especially by internationalizing the curricula students should be enabled to communicate interculturally and to develop intercultural competences which necessarily include the process of (culture) identity building and maintenance.

The underlying concept of identity is understood as something which is repeatedly reconstructed, plural, unsteady and highly dependable on the interdependency between individual and environment (Habermas 2007). Thus, individuals have multiple, socially constructed identities, which change over time depending on the context. Cultural identity refers to those aspects of identity shared by members of a certain culture and is constructed and reconstructed through communication in intercultural interactions (UNESCO 2013). This approach requires a procedural understanding of culture as a dynamic flow and ongoing process of negotiation between norms, values and lifestyles. It corresponds with an understanding of intercultural competence as the ability to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural interactions (Deardorff 2008).

Considering the above mentioned responsibility of institutions of higher education for educating their students as Global Citizens and following the assumption that the development of cultural identity is constantly in flux, our students need to develop the ability to deal with this continuing processes. The acquisition of intercultural competence is hence complex and multidimensional and, depending on the intercultural situation, can take on a variety of forms. Conversely, intercultural competence is not acquired automatically by visiting a foreign country or the direct result of a single learning experience.

Based on these considerations the aim of the paper is to present how Mittweida University of Applied Sciences meets these demands providing an extracurricular program for developing intercultural competence. The Certificate of Intercultural Competence has been introduced as an interdisciplinary intercultural program which links academic components (language skills, courses with international focus) with intercultural awareness (intercultural training settings) and an ambassador experience (abroad or through international commitment). The certificate is seen as one means to sustainable develop the students cultural identity. Besides presenting the concept of the intercultural certificate, the limits and challenges are critically discussed such as using the potential of digitalization (e.g. virtual mobility) or lack of intercultural competence of staff (e.g. ethnocentrism).

References:

*Presenting author


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In numerous articles and research papers, as well as colloquially, one often refers to humor as a double-edged sword. The gist of this metaphor is that one can use humour to befriend people and evoke positive emotions; or one can use it to sting, tease and exclude others.

This metaphor seems to be especially adequate and applicable to describe humour in cross-cultural interactions:

On the one hand is the universality of smile and laughter – and indeed: humour, as a form of interaction, is ubiquitous. Humour owes it to its evolutionary roots we all share regardless of culture (Gervais & Wilson, 2005; Ekman, Sorenson, & Friesen, 1969). Oftentimes, smiling and humour serve to initiate contact where there is little common ground between people from different cultures (Rocke, 2015); or a as lifeline, when misunderstandings and miscommunications surmount because of language barrier (McGraw & Warener, 2014).

On the other hand, as most of humour is context based, involves language, and requires culture-specific knowledge, it gives way to number of pitfalls in to cross-cultural interactions (Bell, 2007). There can be different preference for appreciation and aversion for sexual humour, for example, in different cultures (Ruch & Forabosco, 1996); humour can be similar in content, but it may be used in different contexts in different cultures; also, language barrier is obvious but sometimes underestimated when it comes to humour (Bell & Attardo, 2010). On top of that, a lot of humour involves stereotypes and exaggerations, which play just too well when it comes to fuelling international biases and generalizations.

With large-scale migration within EU and globally, with refugee crisis and the recent raise in nationalism and right-wing ideologies, it seems relevant to discuss the role humour plays in enhancing and/or hindering inclusion processes. Humour can be a cultural and social factor that contributes to making newcomers and minorities feel more welcome; and it can be their tool to make gateway into the host culture. It can also be a way of excluding ’strangers’ – and apart from the obvious examples of intentionally deprecating humour, it can be done unconsciously.

How to it right? Political correctness is not really the only answer: it has a way of killing all humour and radicalizing those who disagree and feel marginalized. In words of Ricky Gervais, an English comedian, ”There’s nothing that you should never joke about, but it depends what that joke is. Comedy comes from a good or a bad place”. Can research give us more indication for what this ’bad’ and ’good’ places are especially in the context of cross-cultural interactions, migrations and minorities?

During my presentation, I will review theory and research pertinent to the abovementioned questions. I will also attempt to formulate some practical recommendation applicable in the area of cross-cultural teamwork – linking it to my own consultative practice – and daily social interactions.

For references follow: https://1drv.ms/w/s!Ani5bHQY1j97gdVSOeFdX8QJqqlZjw

*Presenting author
Innovative Technologies in Polycultural Education as a Practice of Development Balance between Cultural Identity and Diversity

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Concept “Polycultural education” was using by actors in Russian language during last 25 years. Polycultural education is education to conjugate various cultural traditions in curriculum, educational methods and forms for concerned in order to let a person admit both cultural identity and cultural diversity as a social standard and personal value (Khakimov, 2011). There are 3 stage of development the concept “Polycultural education” in Russia and organize practices respectively.

1) “Poly-(ethno)-cultural education” is education which makes recognition of ethnic cultures, respect for the cultural identity of students and the equality of different ethnic groups in society. Identity is “an expression for how a person or a group perceives himself or itself or what others perceive to be constant characteristics of the person or group” (Dahl, 2017, P 191)

Practice allows students to develop their own (ethno-cultural) dignity, to treat themselves as the bearer and continuer of cultural traditions (in the essential concept of culture). Results of Poly-(ethno)-cultural education are ethno-cultural identity and ethnic diversity of society. Ethnic diversity becomes a characteristic of education.

2) “Poly-(socio)-cultural education” is the desire for interactive cultural enrichment of education with representatives of different cultures (in the dynamic concept of culture). Results of Poly-(socio)-cultural education are multi-layered identity, ability to intercultural interaction and full diversity of society (Bondarevskaya, 2007). Diversity of society becomes a characteristic of education.

3) "Poly-(persona)-cultural education” is education as a way to student’s development of cultural layers like Artisan, who has competences to dialogue between cultures and discover in them, and becoming like Author of own culture (in the persona-centric concept of culture (Daniluk, 2014). Diversity of persons becomes a characteristic of education.

We analyse practices of the Polycultural education in village schools with minority groups and in city schools with migrants in Russian Federation (Republic of Bashkortostan and Udmurt Republic).

The schools are using the Innovative Technologies: Learning Management Systems (LMS); learning content is an e-learning course that teaches users of organizations; authoring tools are tools for developing educational content. These tools are used to create educational materials (electronic textbooks, presentations, tests, etc.), placed in the database LMS. In the framework of e-learning has developed an educational ”Cloud” Internet platform for students and teachers.

Results.

Learning process increases the level of intercultural competence of students by activating intercultural communication.

¹Presenting author
Teaching process uses of folk traditions proceeds and has an actual connection with the life of students.

Students increased motivation, interest and understanding of the goal of learning.

Some students show up harmonious balance between cultural identity, creative abilities and values of social diversity.

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Intercultural Capabilities for Global Futures

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The future is global, which means increasing trade, competition, political integration, global challenges, social and human mobility and consequently even more focus on intercultural communication. In order to meet these demands the Danish education system introduces internationalization as a common topic and a global dimension is offered in many classes. However, there is a lack of knowledge about how students actually learn (teach themselves) intercultural competences.

This paper presents some of the first results from the study: Intercultural Competence in Danish Efterskoler. The aim of this paper is to discuss how Danish Efterskoler are doing their teaching in intercultural competence. How does the schools present their aim for developing this learning; and how are the doings and sayings about intercultural competences related when it come to a) teaching and b) informal learning regarding. Furthermore the chapter discuss the possibilities for developing room for mutual intercultural learning, defined as a process when learning is relevant for both participants and it will discuss: Which intercultural competences students are to develop in order to learn from a personal cultural encounter? How a room for this kind of learning can be developed as a recognizable practice, which can be integrated in the teacher’s communities of practices?

*Presenting author*
Intercultural Communication in Multicultural Education Space

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Migration processes, including inner migration, serve as one of the specific features of the 21st century that necessitated revision of priorities in university communication practices. Traditionally it was common practice to prepare students for intercultural communication abroad while today Russia numbers hundreds of multiethnic and multicultural companies and organizations both in the private and state sectors. Schools and universities make no exception.

University authorities usually take certain efforts to help international students adapt to the new education space, but efforts aimed at preparing home-based students for facing the cultures represented by their peers from the various regions of Russia and other states is rather an exception than a rule. Like many other universities, Moscow State Institute of International Relations enrolls a substantial number of students from the post-soviet (Lithuania, Moldova, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, etc.) and the neighbour states (Finland, Turkey, China, Japan, etc.). Bearing in mind the cultural diversity of the Russian Federation itself with various, and often different types of culture, we can assume that a typical high profile university has a multiethnic student body.

The research carried out by the author rests on Edward Halls’ theory of high- and low-context cultures, G. Hofstede’s theory of cultural dimensions, F. Trompenaars’ model of national culture differences and the model of cross-cultural communication developed by Richard Lewis. With over 200 university students interviewed, it was possible to analyze the behavioural communicative practices of the respondents and define the types of culture they belong to: monochronous or polychronous, high-context or low-context, individualist or collectivist, linear-active, multi-active and reactive, high or low power distance, feminine or masculine. Among the respondents were representatives of Caucasian and Central Asian states, Turkey, Ukraine, Belorussia and Moldova as well as the Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Caucasian, Kalmyk, Tatar, Bashkir and Yakut cultures of Russia.

Professors often fail to realize that seemingly unenthusiastic classroom activities are often culturally motivated. While preparing the class for a discussion, the lecturer can hardly expect all the students to actively participate in it – that does not depend only and solely on the student’s readiness for the class, but mostly on the culturally determined communicative practice.

It is evident that cultural differences may lead to misunderstanding between communicants. In certain cases, the cultural clash may create barriers in academic communication and provoke intercultural conflicts between students as well as misunderstanding between students and lecturers. That is why, in the multiethnic education space it is necessary to expose the academic staff to the knowledge of the types and specifics of the cultures students belong to, which will help to overcome communication barriers.

Keywords: intercultural communication, multiethnic, education space, cultural diversity, types of culture, communicative practice, to overcome communication barriers.

* Presenting author
Intercultural Crisis Communication above clouds and beyond borders - A one size-fits all approach that in reality fits no one -

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The study aims to investigate, identify and understand cultural differences in crisis communication based on a variety of multimodal factors so that crises will be communicated more effectively in the future and tailored to the intended audiences instead of using a one-size-fits-all approach. A diverse group of 181 College students in London were shown two excerpts of press conferences that took place after a plane crashed (Germanwings U9525, Malaysia Airlines MH370). The aim is to understand what impact key variables such as home country, characteristics and qualities, posture & body language, choice of language, reputation etc. have on the evaluation process by audiences of a particular culture. The data is collected through a specially designed online questionnaire which invites the participants to evaluate the speech events of two senior executives who deliver the post crisis speech. Participants were chosen based on two criteria: 1) Home country 2) Currently living in the UK. One of the two plane crashes took place in Asia and was chosen for this research to further provide a much-needed extension of crisis communication research beyond its Western roots as suggested by Coombs & Holladay (2011) and discussed to some degree by Huang (2006). A total number of 32 Chinese, 31 French, 32 British, 27 German, 32 Malaysian and 27 Australian took part in the questionnaire which contains questions about intercultural aspects and how cultural sensitivity, attribution of responsibility and empathy matters when communicating a crisis at a press conference. The question whether sensitive information (i.e. passenger lists) should be available to the greater public or not was viewed differently by the participants and revealed statistical significance about how an airline’s reputation is affected by its organisational culture.

Preliminary analysis of the data confirms that there are significant cultural differences in perception of crisis communication and organisational crisis responsibility that can be traced back to multimodal factors. The results show that cultural background significantly influences what participants perceive to be successful crisis communication, causal responsibility and which qualities and characteristics are required to successfully communicate crises. Moreover, it became clear that the airline’s reputation varied significantly for participants before and after they watched the excerpts, proving the importance and power of multimodality in crisis communication. The findings confirm McLeod’s (2000) early approach to include aspects of culture and to shift scholar’s focus from developing universal laws or normative guidelines across time and space to the discovery of conditional scopes of theories in terms of particular locales and situations. The preliminary data analysis agrees with Lee (2003) and Frandsen & Johansen (2010, 2016) propositions that a more culture-specific, audience-oriented crisis communication must recognise stakeholders as culturally diverse and interpretative communities.

References:


*Presenting author


Intercultural communication training to support internationalisation in higher education at a university in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Internationalisation is an essential part of a university’s economic, academic and cultural vitality. It integrates an international and intercultural dimension into teaching, research and service functions within the university and is fundamental to its endeavours. It includes the engagement of staff and students with other cultures, exposure to the globalised economic and social environment, student mobility, building, developing and strengthening strategic relationships with overseas institutions and governing bodies, and high-quality pastoral care and support for international students and staff from other cultures. Although there does not seem to be consensus on a definition of internationalisation, Knight (2003: 2) defines it as ”the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education.” Knight’s (2003: 2) definition highlights a significant connection between international, intercultural and global dimensions that ”are intentionally used as a triad” and are significantly integral to the internationalisation equation.

In order to build Massey University’s internationalisation capability by raising awareness and enabling staff to appreciate different customs and cultures, an introductory intercultural communication training workshop was designed, developed and delivered to staff members. Before this there were no specific development opportunities to train staff with the basic knowledge and skills to support the University’s Internationalisation Strategy. As with many international tertiary institutions, Massey University has a rich mix of cultures so it is vital that staff can confidently engage with colleagues from other cultures, international students, and international stakeholders, both on and off shore.

The purpose of training is to improve the quality of the workforce by equipping staff with the required knowledge, skills and abilities in order to produce desired cognitive, behavioural and affective or attitudinal changes (Grossman & Salas 2011). Organisations invest large sums of money on training their staff so changes can be implemented in the workplace. Effective training should lead to improved work quality, higher staff motivation and higher productivity. The intention of this research was to find out whether any of the training undertaken by staff in the workshops had been transferred to the workplace.

At the end of the workshop, participants provided written evaluations based on their experiences on the workshops. A week after the workshop, participants received an online link enquiring about the one thing they had done differently in the workplace following the workshop. A month after the workshop, participants were invited to a one-hour focus group session to discuss their intercultural communication experiences in the workplace.

This presentation reports on the findings from data collected in the follow-up stages, as well as participants’ key recommendations. These recommendations are not only beneficial to Massey University, but also to other higher education institutions engaging with international staff and students.

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Intercultural survey on perceived voice likability

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The voice provides much information about the speaker. It tells about the speaker’s emotion, social status, character or even appearance. A likable voice is considered relevant in many professions (customer services persons, politicians, lecturers, etc.) as well as in different technical solutions (e-books, smartphones, cars etc.). Voice likability is considered a long-term personality trait (Schuller & Batliner, 2014: 23), and it is associated with trustworthiness and competence (see Nesler et al., 1993; Schuller et al., 2013; McAleer et al., 2014).

Voice likability may be culturally determined. As far as it is known, cross-cultural studies of voice likability have not yet been conducted (see Schuller et al., 2015). Therefore, our study focuses on the connections between culture and voice likability. The aim was to ascertain which male and female voices of Estonians and Finns are considered likable by Estonian and Finnish adult men and women, and to see whether there are any differences between the preferences of Estonians and Finns.

To assess the likability of the voice, we conducted four web-based listening tests, each of which included twenty 5-second speech passages: (1) Estonian female voices, (2) Finnish female voices, (3) Estonian male voices, (4) Finnish male voices. The listeners included adult Estonian and Finnish men and women (16 people in every group) in various ages who had to assess the likability of the voice on a 7-point scale, where 1= not likable at all, and 7=very likable. Every voice could be listened to as many times as wished. We compared the results of the four groups of listeners with each other, using R for an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

The results revealed differences in the voice preferences of Finns and Estonians.

References


Is Multi-culturality Socially Sustainable?

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The paper discusses whether multi-culturality can be socially sustainable by trying to find a path between the Scylla of assimilation and the Charybdis of segregation.

The paper starts with a discussion of cultural homogeneity and heterogeneity and then goes on to a discussion of types of cultural heterogeneity.

I then give a definition of multi-culturality and discuss what types of cultural variation are mostly accepted, followed by an analysis of what cultural norms we mostly believe should be shared.

I then turn to a discussion of the relation between multiculturality, integration and hybridity with regard to individual and societal culture.

Finally, I draw some conclusions about factors stabilizing and destabilizing multi-culturality.
Leadership and integration of immigrant workers in elderly in Sweden: 
Initiating a discussion from a communication perspective

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This article presents the results of a pilot study that proposed to study the constructions and perceptions of leaders and immigrant employees regarding leadership and integration in three senior nursing home units in a municipality of Sweden. The results draw from the analyses of 16 interviews with employees, 13 females and 3 males, with diverse cultural backgrounds than Swedish and 5 leaders and observations in 10 work meetings. These interviews are designed to understand from a communication perspective what are the factors related to leadership and communication dynamics that facilitate or/and hinder the integration of non-Swedish born workforce in the elderly care, more specifically in these nurse home units. The interviews and observations were conducted in 2016.

With the recent waves of mobility in Europe, knowledge about how to facilitate or what factors hinder the integration and inclusion of immigrants in workplaces is relevant because these factors have an influence on workplace environments and on group efficiency. Relationships and effective communication contribute to an inclusive workplace and can be decisive for a lower staff turnover (Nishii, Mayer, David & Kozlowski, 2009), independent of the organisational members’ cultural background. All organisational members play an important role for an inclusive workplace environment, but there is specifically a strong expectation that the leader treats everyone fair in environments with diversity. Research indicates that “justice” is a central element to fulfilled expectations and personal results in a workplace with cultural diversity (Cross & Tuner, 2013). Leaders’ behaviour and attitudes affect employees’ satisfaction and willingness to stay in a workplace. Although leadership is a well-researched research field, studies considering leadership and communication dynamics of immigrants in workplaces are fairly rare in Sweden.

Integration and inclusion might be constructed through the perception of the strategic relationships in the workplace. Organisational leaders, for instance, are responsible for employees’ well-being in the workplace, and specifically for immigrants’ inclusion in the workplace. Considering that leadership is constructed in and through the interactions in the workplace (Fairhurst, 2007), the communication dynamics occurring in workplaces with heterogeneous groups in multinational workplaces (Magala, 2005) play a role in the inclusion of organisational members.

The findings showed that inclusion, or/and hindering immigrant employees’ integration and group inclusion within elderly care. Referring to leadership, the findings indicated that certain leaders’ attitudes and communication style facilitate inclusion. Leadership that influences the work environment positively is perceived when leaders work as a bridge to facilitate relationships, are supportive and emphatic them of participating. In addition, good relationship with colleagues is as important as with the leaders. Cooperation among colleagues and certain organisational conditions can facilitate integration and are related to aware and good relational dynamics within the workplace are certainly factors improving inclusion. The organizational work conditions are another important factor for favorable inclusion. These are not all factors influencing inclusion, but they certainly are making the difference.
There are several barriers to multiculturalism to be seen as an advantage in these workplaces. Mostly because good organizational conditions are missing to support it. The focus on language proficiency is needed. But all more important of all, employees should also have reduced workload to have more time to help each other.

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Lost in cultural complexity? Trust as enabling and hampering intergroup negotiations regarding hybridity in the context of leader-employee relations

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Our knowledge of leading and collaborating with individuals who identify themselves as being a hybrid in terms of ethnic or cultural belonging seems rather scarce. Most research addressing issues of culture in organizations refers to rather functionalistic understandings of culture, preliminary drawing on Hofstede (1994). These understandings conceptualizing culture as a rather static phenomenon on national or group level have been challenged by scholars taking a more constructivist perspective on culture (see e.g., Alvesson, 2002; Söderberg & Holden, 2002). However, when it comes to the notion of 'hybrid culture', the body of organizational research seems to be rather quite.

If organizational research addresses 'hybrid culture' it all, it predominantly seems to refer to a given organizational culture as a 'hybrid' (see e.g., Chin & Trimble, 2014), rather than seeing the individual employees as identifying themselves as hybrids in terms of their perceived and experienced ethnic or cultural belonging.

In addition, organizational research addressing cross-cultural leadership points to the importance of trust as enabling smooth collaboration across perceived cultural differences (see e.g., Saunders et al., 2010). Yet, while trust arguably is celebrated as the solution to almost all organizational practices as it seemingly embraces uncertainties and thus enables collaboration and negotiations with unfamiliar and dissimilar others (Hosmer, 1995), trust has also been found to having the potential to exclude the unknown other and thus, hamper social interactions (Tonoyan, 2005).

This working paper is based on a longitudinal qualitative embedded case study of multicultural leader-employee relations embedded in the context of an Ethnic Sales Department at a Danish SME. Taking a Bourdieusian perspective, the research addressed the interplay of structure and agency as underlying yet overlapping causes for the process of situated relational trusting between ethnic Danish leaders and their employees with ethnic minority Turkish backgrounds in one Austrian and two German sales subsidiaries. In this context, situations and practices can be identified which both enable and hamper the interconnected processes of trusting and negotiations of cultural identities.

References:

*Presenting author

Managing Diversity in the Hospitality Industry: Current Research Perspectives and Future Research Challenges

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Aim: This paper aims to examine how diversity management contributes to human resource strategies and practices in the hospitality industry. The purpose is to provide a synthesis of existing research on how diversity and diversity management issues are reflected in hospitality research. The findings are used to identify potential knowledge gaps and to point out key areas for future research.

Background: Diversity management is a central issue for the hospitality industry, due to increasing international workforce mobility. There is little agreement in the research literature on how diversity management can contribute to enhance the potential advantages of diversity and reduce its potential disadvantages.

Method: The review applies an integrative literature review that aims to systematically synthesize research on diversity management in the hospitality industry. A systematic literature search, including inclusion and exclusion criteria, resulted in 39 papers in the final analysis. A content analysis identified central diversity and diversity management issues in hospitality research.

Results: The papers included in the review address a number of relevant challenges for diversity management in the hospitality industry. However, very few studies address multiple demographic dimensions within the same study, and intersectional perspectives are to a large extent missing. The main diversity categories addressed in the 39 papers are ethnicity and nationality, gender, general diversity management, diversity management training, and recruitment and discrimination. A few of the papers address age, disability and sexual orientation in relation to recruitment and discrimination, but these diversity dimensions are otherwise underrepresented in hospitality research. Thus, current research on diversity and diversity management in the hospitality industry does not appear to reflect the complexity that is involved in a diverse work life, and also neglects to address relevant dimensions in today’s diverse work environment.

While 17 of the studies are US-based, the remaining 22 studies represent a wide range of countries from different parts of the world. Thus, the studies reflect the contours of a global perspective on diversity and diversity management. Half of the studies focus on managerial perspectives, while the remaining studies reflect employees or hospitality students as units of analysis. However, there appears to be little accumulated research, and most of the studies are independent. Based on the findings from the review, a future research agenda is proposed.

Keywords: Diversity management, hospitality industry, global human resource management, integrative review, systematic review

*Presenting author
Migration, integration and ICC in European and neighboring countries – A comparison and some challenges

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Migration issues have become a top priority in Europe. The need for ICC within and between European and neighboring countries has therefore increased. What are the policies concerning migration, integration and ICC in different countries and how similar or different is the migration situation? To what extent are we similar enough to adopt common policies and to what extent are the needs more diverse policies? Which are more common concerns and which are the main differences?

In the Erasmus+ Youth Mobility program, the project "Exploring the Advantages of Migration" focused on these issues from the point of view of a number of European and neighboring countries: Sweden, Italy, Spain, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. This paper raises and discusses a number of issues identified in the comparison of migration in the participating countries and related to policies involving ICC.

The migration situation is very different and the paper presents some statistics and ways of communicating about migration in different countries and some illustrating examples for more in-depth discussion. The countries differ with respect to their profiles and development concerning immigration, emigration, return migration and internal dislocation of groups of the population. Different cultures and communication patterns are involved in the migration of the different countries and the number of migrants varies considerably.

There are different "types" of migration situations and ICC needs, relating to whether the country is (i) a major recipient of immigrants, (ii) a country experiencing increasing emigration of youth or other groups, and/or (iii) a country with a large number of internally dislocated people (internal migrants), due to demographic and work conditions and/or war. Combinations of two or all three of these characteristics also occur. A second type of important characteristic is the attitude of people in general and of the government of a country towards migration and – following this – the policies with respect to integration and ICC and the success of failure of these policies. A third type of characteristic is the migration history of the country and its consequences today.

Examples of major recipients of immigrants, among the countries in the project are Sweden, Italy and Spain, all having a relatively positive attitude and policy concerning migration. Countries experiencing major emigration, but also some immigration, mainly of refugees and students, are Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Russia is also a recipient of a substantial number of migrants from these countries. The Ukraine suffers from major internal dislocation of groups of people, due to the present situation of war. Poland is characterized by relatively few immigrants and a hostile attitude towards immigration, while, on the other hand, work related emigration to other EU countries is common.

All this can lead to intercultural communication difficulties between countries, when discussing migration issues, politically as well as among ordinary citizens. This is one case where ICC expertise can be applied. A second case is the study the actual ICC involving migrants in the different types of countries. This is further discussed in the paper.
Multicultural Education as Social and Psycho-Pedagogical Phenomenon

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The social phenomenon of multiculturalism emerged due to the multiethnic nature of the interaction in the modern world. The age of globalization makes more topical the problem of preserving and developing the national cultures of ethnic groups as a space of psychic and social security. The global world requires the formation of skills of intercultural interaction, tolerance and behaviour.

The main direction of developing Russian educational and cultural traditions is seen in the revival of the cultural foundations and vector of education in Russia. However, culture does not develop outside society, it is transmitted through ethnic and national community and reflects the patterns of consciousness, subconsciousness and behavior of the person.

A modern approach to multicultural education should not be limited to its perception as one possible alternative of constructing the content of education, and is intended to serve as the core of the entire educational process, the education development strategy as the basis for the development of the state and civil society. In this regard, today it is extremely important to put the emphasis on the organization of multicultural education.

Multicultural education defines modern educational strategy that focuses on the formation of personality, capable of active and effective life in a multinational environment with a developed sense of respect and understanding of different ethnic cultures. This educational strategy can pursue the following educational objectives:

- to promote comprehensive and all-round acquisition of national culture by the students, which in turn is the main condition of integration into other cultures;

- to promote to young people’s the ideas of ethnic cultural diversity and build a tolerant attitude to cultural differences, which creates conditions for self-identity in a multiethnic environment;

- to fully introduce students to the fundamentals of world culture, to reveal objective reasons for globalization process in the modern world, interdependence and mutual assistance of the peoples and ethnic groups in the solution of topical problems of civilization development.

Revealing the specifics of formation of intercultural communication of students in conditions of realizing the ideas of multicultural education, it is necessary to focus on the following basic principles:

- the principle of focusing on multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity of educational space in university education;

- the principle of ”dialogue of cultures” in organizing communication process;

- the principle of unity and continuity in the education of students;

- the principle of consistency, coherence and integration in the organization of education;

- the principle of connection between theory and practice, aimed at ensuring the unity of theory and practical activities of students in implementing the tasks of professional activities in the multicultural

*Presenting author
environment.

These principles provide a system of knowledge, abilities and skills of interethnic interaction, psychological readiness for professional equitable dialogue with representatives of different cultures and nationalities, which is crucial for practical activities of a modern specialist in the multicultural environment.

Keywords: multicultural education, educational strategy, intercultural communication, principles, approaches.
Multicultural workplaces: Facilitating Organizational Intercultural Learning

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Based on an insider action research project in Larvik municipality’s healthcare services this paper discusses how leaders can facilitate organizational intercultural learning in work with integrating immigrant employees. Norway has developed into a multicultural society and the public sector has had a large growth of immigrant workers, particularly in the healthcare services. Recent years’ considerable increase in scope and complexity of the municipal healthcare services necessitates increased demands for effective communication, interaction, quality and professionalism in the performance of services and brings about certain challenges to integrating immigrant workers. There is a strong tendency in healthcare services as in working life and society in general, to reduce communication challenges to resulting from the immigrants’ lack of sufficient language skills. However, a considerable pile of literature points out aspects on intercultural communication which link reasons for misunderstandings and obstacles to mutual understanding to both/ all parties in the communication process and highlights intercultural competence as necessary skills in today’s multicultural working life (Bartel-Radic 2013, Taylor & Osland 2011). Developing proficiency in a new language, which also implies mastery of a new means of communication to be able to participate effectively in a new context, may cause profound consequences of identity and identity construction (Temples 2015). This paper aims at enhancing both the understanding of how organizational intercultural learning can be facilitated and how it promotes integration processes through mutual learning and competence building among all parties.

Organizational learning is a field with an extensive amount of research. However, only few studies deal with the link between organizational learning and intercultural communication (Bartel-Radic 2013, Taylor & Osland 2011). The need for organizational learning to succeed and keep up with the development in today’s working life is highly emphasized as workplaces are increasingly characterized by complexity both occupational and due to cultural and lingual diversity (Edmondson 2012). Previous research refers to factors in the intercultural communication process affecting organizational learning and preventing information transfer and knowledge share. Hence research examining how intercultural diversity and communication facilitates rather than impedes organizational learning is requested (Taylor & Osland 2011).

Data are based on individual and focus group interviews of participants on different levels in the action research project, process data and minutes.

References:
San Francisco.


Cultural and religious tradition is an important factor for maintaining a minority identity in modern European societies. This study looks at two minority religious groups: second generation Yezidis in Germany and Tibetan Buddhist converts in Finland in order to discover commonalities in their perception of religious tradition within their respective host/home societies. Given the differences between the two religious traditions and their histories, as well as different ways of respondents’ being in the tradition (by birth or by choice), our analysis will focus on how the minority identities are negotiated among in-groups and within their environments. The preliminary analysis of qualitative interviews with the respondents from the two groups and observations demonstrate that besides expected differences between the two groups, there are also many remarkable commonalities. In both groups oral transmission, community and relations with the teacher are emphasised (Capper, 2002). It seems that responses to spiritual, existential and ethical queries are also similar, although in Tibetan Buddhism they seem to be historically better elaborated and adapted, and therefore accepted more easily (Eddy, 2013), than in contemporary Yezidism (Kreyenbroek et al. 2009). Also, both Yezidis and convert Tibetan Buddhists do not seem to draw a clear boundary between ‘religion’ and ‘culture’ in their spiritual outlook and practice. This way, belonging and identity frames become important for the respondents in both groups, although they are manifested differently. For the young German Yezidis identity boundaries are fueled by the need for preserving their heritage and enforced by formal rules and practices (e.g. endogamy), whereas for the Finnish Tibetan Buddhists these boundaries are maintained by their loyalty to their teachers and a desire to follow an ‘authentic lineage’. Real-time community remains an important identity maintenance factor for both groups (Ackermann 2003; Kreyenbroek et al. 2009). These identity boundaries lead to the need for negotiating their religious identities in their respective environments, which is also manifested differently. While the young Yezidis have to make an effort to integrate into the German society and find a balance between their cultural origins and a modern European society, the convert Tibetan Buddhists are its full members, who benefit from its freedoms in their choosing a non-mainstream religion, but still have to negotiate differences in lifestyle and values (Cirklova, 2012). This comparative analysis, based on interviews and participant observation, offers interesting insights of what it is like to belong to a religious minority within a European society.

References:


*Presenting author

Pop-cultural exchange between Finland and Japan: focusing on a feeling of superiority in 'Cool Japan'

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This study examines the specific aspects of Japanese comics (manga) and animation (anime) that have gained recognition by the Japanese government as one of the most successful exports since around 2000s, with special attention to how they are creatively consumed outside Japan and how their success is described inside Japan. The objective of this study is to consider how the story of 'worldwide enthusiastic consumptions of 'Cool Japan' products' is consumed in Japan in accordance with a feeling of chauvinism.

The research questions (RQ) of this study are as follows; how manga and anime are consumed outside Japan? (RQ1); how manga and anime consumptions overseas are received in Japan? (RQ2); and whether / how recognitions about consumptions of the Japanese pop culture outside Japan are connected to chauvinistic discourse on websites and the mass media? (RQ3)

This study particularly looks at manga and anime fandom in Finland as a case study of RQ1. A variety of events and fan gatherings large and small related to Japanese culture has been held in Finland since the late 2000s. Many of these events have been concerned with manga and anime. Comics culture has a hundred-year history in Finland, but there have also been some examples in recent years of the influence of manga on the local comics style. There are also unique examples of manga being translated and published locally. The Ginga (Hopeanuoli) series of manga (Yoshihiro Takahashi, 1983-present, Shueisha and Nihonbungeisha) has been translated and published by a Finnish publisher, and Finnish is the only European language (including English) into which the series has been translated and published in print. Moreover, the cover design and some pages are edited in Finland, thus the Finnish version is rather a localised publication than a mere translation. This study examines and analyses the reception of Japanese manga in Finland through three perspectives: the translation and publication of manga in Finland and their reception; the incorporation of the manga style into locally produced work; and the development of fan culture.

RQ2 and RQ3 are considered with an analysis of 'Cool Japan' policies and 'aikoku poruno (patriotism porn)' discourses on websites and magazines. The phrase 'Cool Japan' itself originated from a 2002 article by Douglas McGray, and the phrase soon came into popular parlance. Especially since the late 2000s, the series of policies involved with the overseas export and dissemination of Japan’s cultural industries have been frequently labelled as 'Cool Japan.' The phrase is not sufficiently supported by the Japanese manga and anime fans and often regarded as uncool because it reveals a cursory understanding of manga and anime by the authority. However, the rise of patriotic discourse implies a perception that positions foreign fans as the mere consumers/learners of the Japanese culture, instead of regarding manga and anime in terms of globalisation and showing tolerance their changes.

Reference
Presentation of new textbook: Human Encounters. Introduction to Intercultural Communication

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The book gives a comprehensive introduction to intercultural communication in the era of globalization. The reader is introduced to essential concepts in the field, different theories and methods of analysing communication, the importance of verbal and nonverbal languages for bringing about mutual understanding and, finally, the ethical challenges that arise.

The volume also has a practical aspect. The author discusses subjects such as handling encounters with people using foreign languages; incorporating different life styles and world views; the use of interpreters; non-familiar body language; different understandings of time; relocation in new settings; the use of power and how to deal with cultural conflicts generally.

Published in English for the first time following a very successful original edition in Norwegian, this richly-illustrated book offers a refreshing and engaging introduction to intercultural understanding.

The author will give an overview of the chapters of the book during the presentation.

Øyvind Dahl is Norwegian but grew up in Madagascar, where he taught at a teacher’s training college for several years. He has worked around international development issues in different countries and is now Professor Emeritus at VID Specialized University in Stavanger, Norway. He helped establish the Centre for Intercultural Communication (SIK) at VID and the Nordic Network for Intercultural Communication (NIC) together with professional partners from other Nordic countries. He has also been a board member of NIC and the Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research in Europe (SIETAR-Europa).
**Reframing Others in Colors of Mastery**

*BJØRN Z. Ekelund, Piotr Pluta*

Human Factors AS, Norway

Integration processes in European countries seems to be an increasing challenge. The capability of building competence to facilitate functional processes for all involved is central in order to avoid cultural clashes with frustrations, violence and at worst: terrorism. A process called Diversity Icebreaker has been applied in many cross-cultural contexts in order to create common ground, positivity and trustful interaction. This has been documented both in teaching (Orgeret 2012, Romani 2013), in African multinational missions (Canney-Davison et al, 2016) and even in peace building activities in the Middle East (Ekelund, 2015). The Diversity Icebreaker process creates a new language of Red, Blue and Green relevant for social interaction and problem solving (Ekelund & Langvik, 2008). Who am I, who are you and how do we interact are the questions that are discussed within a collectively created language. This language and experience facilitate interaction per se. However, it can also be applied as a metaphorical exercise mirroring other diversity management issues. The language of Red, Blue and Green seems to perceptually create a situation where “Others” are not perceived as strangers, but as representatives of another-color group that one feels safe to approach. This presentation will raise issues related to the following questions: How can the Diversity Icebreaker process be applied at best with refugees- and integration processes in Europe today? What have we learnt applying the concept first in Norway, Germany, Serbia and Greece? What theoretical perspectives can add value in practice? What kind of research questions are relevant?

We will also share experiences from our CSR-activities relevant for the abovementioned challenges: from the Middle-East and from supporting the WrOpenUp project in Poland. WrOpenUp’s mission is to educate young people about diversity; create socially engaged leaders who respect, use and promote it in their communities.

References


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*Presenting author*
Management, 12(3), 534-536.
Safe spaces in language courses for International academics

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Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, Norway

Within higher educational institutions in Norway and other countries today, specific strategic goals have been set to increase recruitment of international employees. One example is the Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences (HiOA), who in their strategy express that HiOA is working effectively with recruitment of skilled international employees (Høgskolen i Oslo og Akershus, 2017, p. 173). Another example is the research institution SINTEF, who in their strategy write that "In order to carry out our societal mission we need highly qualified and competent personnel from all over the world [...]." (SINTEF, not dated).

In Norwegian Academia, the number of employees with backgrounds from other countries has increased from 14 % (2001) to 22 % (2009) (Maximova-Mentzoni et al., 2016). This increased academic mobility is one of the results of the internationalization of higher education. Several studies and reports over the recent years have shown that academic mobility not only creates more diverse workforces and workplace environments, but also bring with it challenges and barriers (Maximova-Mentzoni et al., 2016; McAllum, K., 2017; Uusimaki & Garvis, 2017). The results of these studies suggest that one problem is that Academic workplaces tend to fail in including and integrating the group of international employees, and also that they fail to recognize diversity as an asset, as many international academics report that they experience obstacles in their daily work life, such as isolation, loneliness and language difficulties.

In our presentation, we will show preliminary results from our project “Norwegian language for Academic purposes”, and discuss whether language courses can play a key role in the work life of international academics. Our experiences give a strong indication to suggest that language courses can function as a sort of "safe space" where international academics feel confident to ask questions not only concerning language, but also, and to a larger extent, questions about local norms, traditions, values, social codes, unwritten rules and norms at the workplace. The concept of "safe space" refers to a space for individuals who feel marginalized to come together to communicate regarding their experiences with marginalization (Amenabar, 2016). In our presentation we will argue that the presence of safe spaces creates increased opportunities of inclusion for international academics in workplaces and local societies.

References:


*Presenting author


Supporting Intergroup Interaction of Students in Intercultural Contexts

*Jessica Haß¹, Sylvia Wächter¹, Margit Krause-Ono²

¹Berlin University of the Arts (UdK Berlin), Germany
²Muroran Institute of Technology, Japan

In a globalized academic world, international students often have to adapt to the predominant academic system without receiving enough help. Students from abroad often have immense difficulties to integrate institutionally and socially, as can be seen by the high numbers of students abandoning their studies (cf. Thomas 2010). International offices at universities report that many students tend to remain in their national groups instead of integrating. Contact alone (cf. contact hypothesis by Allport 1954) does obviously not guarantee well-working interaction between students of different cultural backgrounds (cf. Hiller 2010). In the past years, publications edited by Hiller (2010) and Weidemann & Straub (2007) show an increased awareness for these problems.

We will therefore present two examples of intercultural support programs, one from Berlin University of the Arts, Germany, and one from Muroran Institute of Technology in Hokkaido, Japan.

Berlin University of the Arts has recently developed a mentoring program for students from abroad, who study regularly at the institution. The students are provided with student mentors, who are each responsible for a small group of mentees and help them through everyday university life. Furthermore they organize social activities with their group of mentees in order to support them in their social integration. In advance, the mentors receive accompanying intercultural training as well as training bringing pedagogical aspects into focus. Besides the mentoring itself, the integrated concept provides a special workshop program exclusively designed for students from abroad.

The intercultural mentoring at Muroran Institute of Technology, Hokkaido, provides two types of mentoring: a) a buddy-system for exchange students, in which the mentors are volunteers. b) a tutor-system for regular foreign students, in which the mentors are appointed by the professors of the respective field of study. Both are one-to-one support systems. Additional support is given by a) the international office, which organizes events throughout the year, as well as b) by the international exchange club run by students which organizes monthly, sometimes weekly meetings.

Reporting our experience, including student evaluations, we will show how the intercultural competence and in consequence the institutional and social integration of students could be improved.

References:


¹Presenting author
Concepts, Methods], edited by Hiller, Gundula-Gwenn, p. 5-7, Wiesbaden, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) forms a major cornerstone of today’s dialogue in the Nordic business society. While the stance towards CSR in Nordic countries is well established, Nordic companies often operate in emerging markets, where the perspective on CSR may be different from the home country. One example of such a divergence in views on CSR in business may be found when comparing Russia and Finland: The geographic proximity between Russia and Finland has allowed the two countries to pursue business and trade with each other for centuries. However, despite physical closeness, the countries contrasting cultures play a major role in forming the predominant national perspectives and managerial views on various phenomena. As a consequence, dissimilar views on certain phenomena may inhibit mutual cooperation between businesses in these countries.

We focus on the discursive construction of CSR in Russian and Finnish business media. Drawing on discourse analysis the article focuses on how the phenomena of CSR is understood by the business societies in the respective countries. The study also focuses on metaphors applied within the discourses in order to enrich the understanding of how the phenomena are constructed and how they are embedded in the cultural context of the countries in focus. The analysis reveals several distinctive types of CSR discourses in these countries and elaborates on their metaphorical characteristics. The contribution of the paper lies in uncovering cross-cultural similarities and differences in the discourses on CSR in emerging and developed markets.

Keywords: Corporate social responsibility, Russia, Finland, culture, business discourse, metaphors

*Presenting author
This Immigrant Life: How producing short documentary films helped to empower immigrants in Jyväskylä, Finland

*Ronan Browne

JAMK University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Through the prism of empowerment theories, this presentation will describe how a documentary filmmaking project entitled "This Immigrant Life" which took place in Jyväskylä, Finland in 2016, allowed a group of six young immigrants to tell their own story of immigration in their own words – through the medium of documentary film.

The films and more information on the project can be found here on the project’s Facebook page and on the Vimeo channel...

'This Immigrant Life’ Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/thisimmigrantlife/

'This Immigrant Life’ Vimeo Channel: https://vimeo.com/channels/1125465

The "This Immigrant Life” project was an on-the-street application of intercultural practices, particularly in the discipline of documentary filmmaking. The participants were encouraged to "think positively about their ability to make change and gain mastery over issues at individual and social levels” in accordance with Zimmerman’s theory on empowerment from 'Digital Natives’ (2000).

This presentation will demonstrate how the project successfully empowered each participant in adding their voice to the multicultural debate in Finland and – through the testimonials of two asylum-seeking participants – will explain how demonstrate in particular the impact a project such as this can have on the asylum-seeking or refugee communities, who are so often left without their own voice in the media.

This presentation is aimed at anyone with an interest in how on-the-street projects are organised and run, how they can be monitored in terms of success or failure, and most importantly what it brings to the people who participate.

*Presenting author
What’s in a Name? Teasing Apart Intercultural Competence Terminology for Improved Research and Application

Barbara J. Crawford

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

The concept of intercultural competency has been the focus of research and training programs for more than a quarter of a century. Yet the definition of the concept remains variable—if even defined at all in research. Moreover, the terminology is used variably in different research and application fields, even as new terms meaning approximately the same thing are cropping up. The question is, with variations in the conceptualization and application of the concept, what actually is being investigated and trained? As several scholars have noted (see, e.g., J. M. Bennett, 2008; Garavan & McGuire, 2001; Grandin & Hedderich, 2009; Hager & Gonczi, 1996), the successful development, execution, and assessment of a concept is significantly influenced by its definition.

However, even a cursory inspection of the literature indicates that the terminology surrounding the concept of intercultural competency is muddled. Different fields use different terms; the same term means something distinct in different fields or studies, while similar concepts have different meanings. In some arenas, the term competency is contested. It is my contention that the field of intercultural competency research and application has reached a point in its development where scholars can—and perhaps should—begin to work toward a coalescence of key concepts so that researching, training, and assessment within and across disciplines can be more easily compared and shared.

This proposed presentation will present the findings of a concept analysis of the terminology surrounding intercultural competency as found in the literature from diverse fields over a 25-year period. The concept analysis will be based on the most-cited papers over three decades generated through a systematic literature review. The goal of this research is to investigate similarities and differences in the concept as it applies to multiple disciplines, to uncover alternative terminology, and to identify the key components of the intercultural competency concept.

References


Innis (1950) claimed that the strength of an independent and self-ruling empire diminished when a nation was dependent on imported vital staples, including especially communication commodities. Communication activity is supposed to construct community through the proffered statements and depictions of commonly-shared morals and values, and through the performance of common rituals that contribute to the formation of a distinct national identity. In other words, traditionally a strong national communication infrastructure sufficient for providing citizens with what they need for daily information and entertainment also creates the concept of "nation" to which those citizens ascribe. A weaker mediated-communication community takes in not only entertainment, but also the ideologies, social conclusions, and values of "outside forces."

Upon these arguments, several projects exploring mediated cultural diffusion and intercultural changes have been launched.

Research into media imperialism, cultural dependency and cultivation have specifically studied if, and/or under what conditions, the portrayal of American stories and the depicted lifestyles shown in mass media favorably predispose international audiences to US cultural standards and away from native values. For US scholars, the Nordic region is a particularly good cultural laboratory for research in media, communication and culture, however Iceland has been studied less than other Nordic nations (e.g., Bondebjerg, 2001) and therefore provides both opportunity and challenge for outside scholars and teachers of media studies interested in explaining the specifics of its enduring identity and nationalism.

In regard to US TV in Iceland, Payne & Peake (1977) (using Broddason’s 1968 data), and the "imperialism perspective” found American media had a very limited effect. Arguably, possibilities for media consumption have changed since these early reports, and new data and new explanations are warranted. Relevant audience research about the impact and influence of the interplay of domestic and imported contemporary media messages should thus center around investigations of the ways widely-received stories and their associated messages of social norms and values become interpreted.

In this report, questions include: in what ways do Icelanders seek contemporary and "classic" stories to entertain and inform themselves about today’s values and norms?

In what way are decisions made regarding which story messages are accepted, which messages are modified/ adapted, and which are thoroughly rejected? and what is seen as the present and future of a distinctively Icelandic culture?

Within three semi-structured individual interviews over several weeks, ten participants described their perspectives, attitudes, and reasoning regarding ancient and modern (mediated) stories, local and imported messages, and their Icelandic identity. From summary and analysis of their responses, it becomes clear these Icelanders in the 21st century understand a unique and dynamic culture that is simultaneously local and global, and historical and modern.
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Addressing the Role of Activism in the Intercultural Field in the Current World Crisis

∗Elmer Dixon1, George Simons2

1Executive Diversity Services, USA
2George Simons International, France

Interculturals around the globe for decades have been dedicating their "life’s work to building bridges among cultural differences, softening barriers to living life with cultural others. International organizations have long recognized that cultural differences impact cross-cultural communication and therefore organizational success, and intercultural trainers are providing members of international organizations with cultural awareness, understanding of the value of cultural differences and skills for adapting styles and behaviors to enable culturally different colleagues to work successfully together.

The challenges created by human movement and relocation in the 21st century, by choice or in response to human-made or natural disasters, has ignited a trend where many people and in fact nations have taken defensive lines and discourse as a means to protect their cultural identities. Few groups have enjoyed Donald Trump’s rise to the White House more than Europe’s far-right white nationalists, who have forged closer links with like-minded groups in the U.S. and benefited from Trump’s perceived sympathy for strands of their radical politics.

Yet this is a trend that has been building for years. In July of 2011, a gunman described as a right-wing Christian extremist with a hatred of Muslims and ties to right wing Neo Nazis opened fire at an island youth camp in Norway targeting muslim youth. The toxic combination of the most prolonged period of economic stagnation and the worst refugee crisis since the end of the Second World War has seen the far-Right surging across the continent, from Athens to Amsterdam and many points in between.

Daniel Friberg, a prominent figure in the Swedish radical right identitarian movement, who attended the "Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville is a clean-cut, smooth-talking far-right activist who describes himself as an identitarian. The French-originated ideology, increasingly influential among European far-right youth, argues for the preservation of a white or European identity, while, in theory, attempting to decouple from the overt racism, violence, and fascist symbolism that have been a barrier to the far-right’s political acceptability in post-war Europe. He sees “identitarian” and “alt-right” as largely synonymous terms.

What happens when this form of right wing ideology makes its way into the workplace and in the classrooms of interculturalists? What methods or philosophies exist to challenge this rhetoric, or prevent it from taking over the classroom?

In this interactive workshop, participants will explore the mindset and philosophy of this new breed of smooth-talking far-right activist or identitarians and the European far-right who argue for the preservation of a white or European identity. Following this inter-active discussion participants will break into small groups to explore the complex dynamics of a multicultural workplace and the impact of rising resentment of non-dominant culture populations by these extremist groups. They will then be asked to identify training approaches and strategies specifying the most critical issues of identity xenophobia and how to address them in the classroom.

∗Presenting author
In the report out each team will be asked to share their groups ideas along with their own experiences facing these critical issues in the classroom and how interculturalist can more effectively challenge this growing rightwing isolationist philosophy.

The overall goal of the session is to encourage intercultural trainers to identify approaches to challenging rightwing isolationist philosophy and strengthen training programs around the globe.
New Horizons: At Home Together in Finland (and elsewhere)

*Steven Crawford, Diane Ruppert, Ronan Browne
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The diversophy® New Horizons educational activity celebrates human diversity across Finland by creating empathetic relationships among its inhabitants and forming common ground for adapting to the new composition of local populations. Developmentally, the project responds to the Finnish government initiative, Merkityksellinen Suomessa (“Relevant in Finland”; Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö, 2017), which targets social inclusion and negative social phenomena such as hate speech and racism. The New Horizons workshop informs how the project works and helps participants develop insights into how the activity could benefit communities and classrooms both locally and in other multicultural environments.

Target group keywords: teaching (middle school through university), curriculum development, diversity and inclusion, migration, ethics and social responsibility (18)

Session Outline (proposed time: 90 minutes)

1 Introduction (presentation format)

JAMK University of Applied Sciences introduced the New Horizons activity at the NIC 2016 conference in Bergen. The ongoing project represents the school’s response to the challenges of increasing mobility and multiculturality in Finland, with a particular focus on recent mass migration across Europe, resulting in an influx of 30,000+ asylum seekers in Finland.

Based in JAMK’s School of Business, the project involves faculty members, degree and international exchange students, as well as migrants enrolled as open university students. This community service-based project connects to a wider range of organisations in Jyväskylä and across Finland.

Sustainable business management education, with a particular focus on academic service learning, provides a solid foundation for the project. Teaching and learning strategies include experiential learning, meaning-centred education, transformative learning, and reflective assessment methods. Students choose from a range of options for earning academic credits, including research, course requirements fulfilment, project study credits, and internships; many students participate in community service activities directly tied to academic learning goals.

2 Organising and managing the project (presentation format)

The project is based in two courses: a cross-cultural management course and a cross-cultural academic track in which international business students extend their basic studies with the aim of developing thesis research projects. The project takes a community-wide stakeholder approach by engaging teachers and students across campus. Additionally, the embedded academic service learning component enables reciprocal relationships among many external organisations, including other universities, high schools, cultural centres, municipal offices, libraries, vocational schools, and local, national and international NGOs.

3 Playing New Horizons and Bringing It Home (active participation format)

*Presenting author
Participants will play New Horizons in small groups with cards created in Finland. After a short debriefing, the participants will create their own New Horizons cards based on cultural elements present in their home schools and communities, which may include other Nordic countries. A final debriefing and discussion will review the activity, with a particular focus on the participants’ learning to create their own New Horizons project by developing locally relevant content and facilitation skills.

References:


Information about the diversophy® New Horizons educational activity is available online at:

www.jamk.fi/newhorizons

www.jamk.fi/en/newhorizons

https://www.facebook.com/newhorizonsdiversophygame