

# Intercultural Competence

*An evaluation of diaries from a Comenius 2.1 project*

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# Abstract

Today's flow of information and people, across country-borders, has made the world face new challenges. Societies are in need of new expertise and competence to handle these challenges. Focusing on the education sector, teachers need new competence to tackle the multicultural class. This paper is an evaluation of diaries written by teacher students from Poland, the Czech Republic, France and Germany, who attended a course in September 2005 within a Comenius 2.1 project aiming to develop modules to increase the intercultural competence among teacher students. These modules were tested out at this course. The course consisted of combining theory with practical activities.

The objective of my evaluation is to find out if the course reached it's desired effect: Did the teacher students develop intercultural competence? To find this out, I will read and interpret the participants' diaries and link it up to relevant literature. The literature review will circle around the terms *intercultural competence*, *difference*, *identity*, *strangeness* and *gender*, which are important terms for the course and the project.

Content analysis is the method I have used to treat and interpret the data. Within this method I have used a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods, which for me seemed as the most suitable approach to reach the most precise findings.

The result of my evaluation was mainly that the teacher students attending the course developed intercultural competence, but to different extents. I conclude that the course possibly could had received better effects with improved preparation, from the people in charge of the course, concerning issues as language, the practical activities and the intensity of the course.

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## Acronyms

EU:	European Union
FLT:	Foreign Language Teaching
IC:	Intercultural Competence
ICC:	Intercultural Communicative Competence
PE:	Physical Education
UN:	United Nations

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Today's societies are becoming more and more multicultural as a consequence of globalization and increased migration. New challenges are emerging and have to be dealt with. The need to develop new competence and knowledge is urgent. Looking at the education sector, more precisely the teaching personnel, they have to enhance their intercultural competence (I will explain this term later). Teachers should be the students' facilitators, they therefore need to develop sensitivity towards students so that they can be capable to enable students to identify problems and deal with them. I will in this paper do an evaluation of a Comenius 2.1 project, which can be placed within this context. The aim of the project is to develop modules to improve the intercultural competence among teacher students. Important terms for the project are *difference*, *identity*, *strangeness* and *gender* (Erdmann, 2005). My task in this project is to evaluate diaries written by teacher-students from Poland, Czech Republic, France and Germany, who in September 2005 took part in a week's course in Freiburg/Strassburg where these modules were tested out.

## 1.1 Background

The idea of this project has its outspring from a program called "Intercultural Movement Education" initiated at the German Sport University in Cologne in the mid 90ies. The aim of this program was to better the interaction between different cultural groups in society. In programs with similar intentions, the results had been rather poor. The majority of these practical programs had been run mainly by sport-clubs and organizations, and as soon as the sponsoring stopped, all activities vanished. A German nationwide survey of organizations that had been involved in such programs (Michels and Schulz, 1999), reported that the lack of a theoretical conception as baseline for the initiatives, was to be blamed for the failure. The gap between the focus on the practice on the one hand and the lack of a theoretical conception on the other was obvious. Therefore, the emphasis was put on the conceptualization of a theoretical basis. In the attempt to conceptualize a

model of intervention intended to reduce intercultural conflicts, the members of the project became aware that this was too ambitious and had to reduce it to a more realistic model. As a minimum, the aim of the project was to contribute to a more rational conflict management (Erdmann, 1999: 3).

Since the project's beginning, several research works and publications have been done within this approach. It is in this context that the University of Freiburg (Germany) in autumn 2004 received support from EU for a Comenius 2.1 project<sup>1</sup>: a project aiming to improve the educational practice. Petra Giess-Stüber, professor of pedagogy, University of Freiburg, is the coordinator of the project. All money goes via Freiburg. The countries taking part in the project are Poland, the Czech Republic, France and Germany. Norway is involved in the evaluation of the project. Ralf Erdmann, professor at the Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, is the responsible for this evaluation. As mentioned previously, the aim of the project is to develop education modules that enhance the intercultural competence among teacher students. The project can be situated in the establishment of competence for the process of intercultural learning. "*The objective of intercultural learning is to enable learners<sup>2</sup> to identify (intercultural) problems and become able to deal with them more adequately in the future*" (Erdmann, 2006: 2). Through experiencing relevant situations and reflecting upon them, this shall be accomplished. Theory and practice shall provoke these kinds of reflections. Key words for the project (for reflection) are *difference, identity, strangeness* and *gender*.

To test out the modules, a one-week-long course (practicum) was prepared containing theoretical lectures, discussions and practical activities. PE teacher students from each of the participating countries were gathered together in September 2005 in

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<sup>1</sup> Comenius 2.1 projects aim at

- "developing, promoting and disseminating educational best practice, including new teaching methods and materials
- developing or exchanging experiences on information systems for learners, teachers or other education staff
- developing, promoting and disseminating new teacher training courses or course content"  
([http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/comenius/activities/comenius2\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/comenius/activities/comenius2_en.html), 2007)

<sup>2</sup> Erdmann (2006) uses here the term learners which mean students. I prefer to use the term students when I am not quoting.

Freiburg/Strassbourg to attend this course. After each day of theory and practice the participants wrote down comments of their impressions of the day in individual diaries. These are the diaries I will evaluate in this paper.

## *1.2 Objective*

The objective of my research is to find out if the course achieved the desired effect: to develop intercultural competence among the participants (see above), through reading the participants' diaries. Some guiding questions might here be helpful to have in mind during the process of reaching the most accurate conclusions: Did the modules function? If so, to what extent? Did the people taking part in this course get anything out of it? Did they acquire new knowledge, in that case, what? Did they develop some sort of intercultural competence, a better understanding of how to handle unfamiliar situations? Other useful questions might be: What were the participants' expectations before the course? Were these expectations fulfilled? Did the participants see the connection between the theoretical part and the practical part of the course? How did they handle and describe the different situations? What were the perceptions of tasks? How did they feel? What mood were they in? Did they change from day one to the last day?

## *1.3 Delimitations*

My study is limited to the teacher students who participated in the intercultural course in Freiburg/Strassburg, more precisely to those twenty-eight participants who wrote comments in their diaries. Since my task is to evaluate these diaries, they are my main sources of information. Additionally, I will use relevant literature.



## 1.4 Methods

In the procedure of evaluation I have chosen to use content analysis, which is a method that is frequently used to transcribe and interpret human communication texts. Within this method I will take use of both qualitative and quantitative methods, as I believe that a combination of these would be the most helpful for me to reach the most precise results.

## 1.5 Structure

Following this short introduction, I will illustrate important terms for the project and for this paper. First, the term *intercultural competence* will be explained. This term can be seen as an umbrella for the other terms that will be examined, which are the already mentioned terms: *difference*, *identity*, *strangeness* and *gender*. The theoretical part will be continued with the methodology chapter, where there will be made some remarks on how to evaluate an ongoing intervention program and where my use of methods will be explained. Then my data will be presented. Further, the data will be linked to the theoretical framework. In the end I will come with conclusions.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Intercultural Competence

What is intercultural competence? What does it mean and how to develop it? Said in a simple way, intercultural competence is a term describing prerequisites for how to handle multicultural situations and settings in an adequate manner. CICB Center of Intercultural Competence defines intercultural competence as “*the ability of successful communication with people of other cultures*” ([http://www.cicb.net/English/body\\_english.php](http://www.cicb.net/English/body_english.php), 2007). To acquire this competence, one needs to be sensitive or to develop sensitivity for differences and communication. Intercultural competence is founded on sensitivity.

As mentioned in the introduction, *difference*, *identity*, *strangeness* and *gender*<sup>3</sup> are central terms regarding the intercultural competence topic. One will be confronted with these terms if one wants to acquire intercultural competence. These terms will therefore be explained in later chapters.

Intercultural competence is a field that is most likely in need of more research. In the multicultural classroom, teachers are facing several problems and challenges, but as Byram, Nichols and Stevens (2001) say:

(...) it is not the teacher's task to provide comprehensive information and try to bring the foreign society into the classroom for learners to observe and experience vicariously. The task is rather to facilitate learners' interaction with some small part of another society and its cultures, with the purpose of relativising learners' understanding of their own cultural values, beliefs and behaviours, and encouraging them to investigate for themselves the otherness around them, either in their immediate physical environment or in their engagement with otherness which internationalisation and globalisation have brought into their world (Byram, Nichols and Stevens 2001:3).

The emphasis on the teacher as a facilitator is important and might ease the teacher's responsibility somewhat. It is difficult for a teacher to have knowledge about all the different cultures and to teach the students about these. Furthermore, it is also quite time-consuming. Instead the teacher should inspire the students to take an active part themselves in attaining knowledge and understanding about other cultures.

### 2.1.1 Language issues

In meetings with new cultures not only intercultural competence is necessary, but also linguistic competence is required. Maybe these two cannot be separated as two different concepts. Some would say that they belong together, or that linguistic competence is one dimension of intercultural competence. According to Fantini (2007) language and culture are dimensions of each other and should not be separated. He continues saying that the problem is that they very often get separated; interculturalists tend to concentrate on developing intercultural abilities and leave the development of language competence to language teachers; in the same way language teachers seem to concentrate on language and leave the development of intercultural abilities to the interculturalists. "*Language, in fact, both reflects and affects one's world view, serving as a sort of road map to how one perceives, interprets, thinks about, and expresses one's view of the world*" (Fantini, 2007: 27). Fantini enlightens important facets, which one should be aware of, but how much knowledge and skills can be expected of people taking part in intercultural meetings? What is actually possible to carry through? What is realistic? Being able to communicate with a foreigner in his/her own language would of course be preferable, but in a multicultural setting it would be quite difficult to acquire the language competence of all the different cultures presented and one end up speaking the language understood by the majority. In such a setting it would probably be more realistic to focus on using one's intercultural abilities to make the interaction as successful as possible. Language competence is important, but communication is more than linguistics. Knapp gives an eloquent definition of the term:

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<sup>3</sup> Gender is probably more a field of demonstration. It is already existing models and experiences concerning this field.

“Communication” is to be understood here as interpersonal interaction by means of a linguistic symbol system in the widest sense, i.e. one which includes verbal, para-verbal and non-verbal elements; a system that can be realized either directly (face-to-face) or via other media (written, aural, visual). “Intercultural communication” (...) can hence be defined as the interpersonal interaction between members of different groups, which differ from each other in respect of the knowledge shared by their members and in respect of their linguistic forms of symbolic behaviour (Knapp, 2007:1).

Byram (1997) uses the term intercultural communicative competence (ICC). He points out that ICC has its outspring from FLT traditions, but that ICC goes further and is more complex. It expands the concept of communicative competence. ICC goes beyond the linguistic dimension and emphasizes the interaction among people from different cultures and with different social identities as a whole. But is intercultural competence limited to communication? Communication is clearly a central part of intercultural competence, but does it complete the term? Going back to CICB’s definition of intercultural competence (above), the goal of intercultural competence is to have an optimal communication across cultures. Intercultural competence is the means to reach this aim. Having intercultural competence signifies having intercultural abilities, or having “*concrete and changeable behavioural characteristics which make a “good intercultural communicator”*” (Knapp, 2007:11). These abilities or characteristics are all linked to communication, but in the narrow sense they are abilities or characteristics that might be used for other objectives which do not directly concern communication. Though, in the long run, they probably result in improved communication (example: identity-development, see later).

The term communication seems to include many features. Still, the term intercultural competence probably consists of more facets than the communication competence term can cover. Lustig and Koester (2000) use the term intercultural competence, but as Byram they stress the link between communicative competence and intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is certainly about communication, but perhaps it also concerns other aspects? To understand intercultural and communicative competence Lustig and Koester refer to the following definition of communication competence:

Competent communication is interaction that is perceived as effective in fulfilling certain rewarding objectives in a way that is also appropriate to the context in which the interaction occurs (Lustig and Koester, 2000:197).

Said differently: “*communicative competence is a social judgment about how well a person interacts with others*” (Lustig and Koester, 2000: 197).

To be sure to not let out any important aspects, the term intercultural competence is preferably compared to the term intercultural communicative competence. When this is said, this chapter will enlighten only the aspects that have high relevance to my thesis. The linguistic dimension is for instance an important and problematic dimension within the intercultural competence topic, but this dimension will not be focused on in my thesis. The emphasis in my thesis will be on other intercultural abilities or characteristics that aim to facilitate intercultural interaction.

### **2.1.2 Face**

The concept *face* is of big importance for the understanding of how people interact in different situations and settings. Lustig and Koester explain *face* as being “*the public expression of the inner self*” (Lustig and Koester, 2000: 198) and they say that there are three kinds of faces: the needs for approval, admiration and control. The *approval face* is related to the individual’s need to receive acknowledgement and acceptance from others for their honesty and friendliness. This *face* is concerned with people’s need for belonging and for social contact. The *admiration face* has to do with the individual’s need for admiration from others; their need to receive acknowledgement and respect from others for their talents or for what they have accomplished. This *face* takes care of people’s need to receive acknowledgement from others for their success. The *control face* has to do with the individual’s need for acknowledgement from others for their individual autonomy and their freedom of action. All these three *faces* are related to individuals’

worries about how other people see them and their need for acknowledgement from others, which again is related to identity (see later chapter).

Intercultural competence requires *facework*<sup>4</sup>. In interaction with people from another culture one has to deal with one's own and others' face needs. In this context, an important factor which affects the facework people use is cultural differences in individualism-collectivism (Lustig and Koester, 2000). People from an individualistic culture behave and make their decisions based on what is the best for the individual, in contrast to people from a collectivistic culture where decisions are made out from what is the best for the group they belong to. Clear messages, direct confrontations and emphasis on preserving one's own face characterize communication within an individualistic culture. In a collectivistic culture direct confrontations are avoided and face-saving techniques are used. The mutual face is very important. Most Asian countries can be described as collectivistic cultures, while most Western industrialized countries belong to the category of individualistic cultures.

Certain situations or set of actions might create a potential face threat - this depends on the relationship among the participants in the interaction. Face threats are often associated with the differences in status or power between the people who interact. It also occurs in relationships where there are great social distances or poor social familiarities. Another common face threat potential is present in the interaction between individuals from different cultures (Lustig and Koester, 2000). Goffman (1971) says that when an individual enters the presence of others he/she immediately defines the situation and acts correspondingly to his/her projection of it. If events occur in the interaction with the others that contradict this projection, the individual receives doubts upon his/her interpretation and feels insecure and embarrassed. The individual has wrongly projected the situation and suddenly the situation is undefined. Everybody taking part in the interaction feels uncomfortable and embarrassed, but the individual who miscalculated the situation probably feels more ashamed. The others might feel hostile. "(...) *the minute*

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<sup>4</sup> The actions or the communicative activities people use to deal with their own and others' face needs, to maintain or create the connections between people, can be called *facework* (Lustig and Koester, 2000:198).

*social system of face-to-face interaction breaks down*” (Goffman, 1971: 24). This is an example of a face-threaten situation – the individual feels that he/she is “loosing his/her face”.

Goffman (1971) compares all interaction with a play where the individual is the performer and the other participants in the interaction are the audience. Everybody needs to know their role to let the show function. The audience should not come backstage and outsiders should not enter a play that is not addressed for them. The performer and the audience have made a kind of agreement to act as if a given degree of accord and opposition exist between them. Nonetheless, accord seems normally to be stressed more than opposition. If precautions have been taken for disturbances when such kinds of interruptions (face threats) occur, the participants (performers, audience and outsiders) all use techniques to save the show. The performer uses defensive techniques to protect his/her own projection; to avoid embarrassment, and the other participants use protective techniques to save the definition of the situation estimated by another. It is when these precautions have not been taken that the *face-to-face interaction* is in danger of breaking down. Predominantly, these techniques are more commonly used in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures (see above).

To be able to acquire and develop intercultural competence, it is crucial to understand that people have different face needs (Lustig and Koester, 2000). Teachers must be aware of this to be capable to sense and better understand diverse problems which occur in the multicultural classroom.

### **2.1.3 IC components**

According to Byram (1997) intercultural competence consists of three components, which are as following:

1. Knowledge
2. Attitudes

3. Skills a) skills of interpreting and relating  
b) skills of discovery and interaction

These components can be acquired through experience and reflection without the help of a teacher/educational institution. On the other hand, if they are acquired through the intervention of a teacher, the teacher has the possibility to insert the learning process within a broader educational philosophy (see later).

### **Knowledge**

In interaction with somebody from a different country, the knowledge a person has is critical for the outcome of this interaction. This knowledge can be divided into two categories: knowledge of oneself and others; knowledge of individual and societal interaction. Through socialization, formal and informal, this type of knowledge is acquired. In countries which have formal education systems, the knowledge acquired is normally dominated by the concept national culture and identity. Individuals acquire, to a certain extent, a national identity through formal socialization. Other aspects of identities: ethnic, social classes etc. are formed through both formal and informal socialization (see later, identity). When a person interacts with a person from another country, the knowledge one has of the other is in most of the cases acquired through the socialization with people from ones own social and national group. Obviously, the knowledge one acquires within ones own country about another country's history and culture, is a different interpretation of the facts one acquires within the foreign country. These interpretations are often prejudiced and stereotyped (biased). The more interaction and contact there are between individuals from different countries, the more knowledge they will acquire about each others cultures and identities (Byram, 1997).

I believe Byram is expressing a very optimistic, if not naive, view (above). Interaction between people might lead to more knowledge about each other, but interaction and knowledge do unfortunately not necessarily result in a better understanding of others. Most of the conflicts and wars in the world are between groups that have been in contact with each other for a long time (example ex-Yugoslavia). Interaction is absolutely



important to acquire knowledge and understanding about other people, but for the individual to be able to obtain understanding through interaction, the individual's attitudes, openness, sensibility and empathy are decisive and probably of much higher importance than the knowledge he/she has about others. Knowledge can be a helpful tool in social interaction, but knowledge in itself is probably not the key to reduce intercultural conflicts. What about people who have no knowledge and feel incompetent – how should they behave? Most likely, among these people there exist individuals that are self-critical and sensitive and that are aware of their lack of knowledge. Aren't their curiosity and respect for others as human beings more important than the knowledge they have at hand?

### **Attitudes**

To be able to have a successful intercultural interaction, certain “correct” attitudes are essential. The attitudes needed are attitudes of curiosity, openness and readiness to suspend disbelief about others. One also needs to be able to analyze one's own beliefs and values, and try to see how they might look from the viewpoint of the others – the ability to “decentre.” Said in other words, the attitudes needed are attitudes where one can relativize oneself and value others (Byram, 1997). “*Solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one is solidary*” (Freire, 1996:31). The problem is the individuals' ability and willingness to acquire these kinds of attitudes. These attitudes might be utopian for many people. One characteristic of utopia is that it can never be reached, but that does not mean that it is not worth striving for, Erdmann (2002) claims. It is important to strive for ideas that will improve society. Like health for instance; we will never get a society where there are no diseases and where all individuals are living healthy, but we would probably not argue against medical research or efforts done to induce healthy behavior. There is clearly a value in striving for utopia, because the alternative is standing still, which results in death. One should, on the other hand, notice that there also exists a danger with utopia; if the idea leads to the use of coercion or force in the meet with difficulties (Erdmann, 2002). “*Educational hope linked to idealistic assumptions in an unquestioned manner*” (Erdmann, 2002:6) might be a dangerous

mixture. This mixture seems to justify coercion and suppression, because of the conviction of righteousness. During history, many ideologies and even religions have led, in this utopian way, to brutal domination of others. I will not discuss this further here.

### **Skills**

In addition to knowledge and attitudes, Byram (1997) claims that some skills are also needed in multicultural meetings. He says that there are two sets of skills needed: skills of interpretation and the ability to relate and skills of discovery and interaction. The first skills can be explained more specifically as the ability to interpret and analyze an event or a document from one's own country and from another country, and also be able to see the potential relationship between them. Concerning the latter set of skills, one can discover new data by reading a document and also through social interaction. However, it is imperative that this kind of data is part of the analysis of relationships.

Are these skills as necessary as Byram claims above? Instead of skills the emphasis should maybe be on developing sensitivity towards situations, documents and individuals that one is in contact with. Sensitivity is the key word. Teachers, in particular, need to develop sensitivity towards their students for subsequently to be able to develop the students' sensitivity towards their fellow-students. With this ability among the students in the multicultural classroom, a lot of situations and conflicts can be better understood and sometimes even solved. The goal is not essentially to solve a problem, rather to create an understanding and an acceptance that there are different views and opinions about different issues, that it does not exist *one* correct solution or answer to each problem.

### **Acquiring IC within an educational setting**

As mentioned earlier (see above), students can acquire intercultural competence through the intervention of teachers/educational institutions. Teachers, who want to offer their students a rational approach to evaluations of other cultures and values, can teach within

a philosophy of political education where they try to develop the students' critical cultural awareness of themselves and their values, and those of other people. The purpose is not to change the students' values, but to make them conscious and explicit in any interaction and evaluation of others. International human rights (see <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>, 2007) might be a good baseline for evaluation, though the fact that interpretations of human rights differ, has to be taken into account (Byram, 1997). In line with the international human rights are the two principles highlighted by Hoffman and Maduro in Aluffi-Pentini and Lorenz (1996), which make a good foundation:

- 1) The principle of 'inclusive thinking', or 'non-exclusion.' This means that all participants in the learning process have equal access to learning opportunities and should not be obstructed by categories constructed by others on the grounds of race, sex, culture or class. This is obviously and ideal-typical anticipation of a state of society not yet achieved, but it marks an important ethical goal.
- 2) The principle that all interaction has to respect the uniqueness of each individual. This means that all educational methods, as well as all social policies and other organizational arrangements, need to be measured against this criteria (Aluffi-Pentini and Lorenz, 1996:143).

I believe international human rights (which include these two principles) are essential to have at hand for everybody in any type of interaction, to ensure the interaction is as successful as possible. Taking this to a practical level, using these rights and ideas, can be a quite easy thing to do for a teacher. Teachers could for instance use conflicts which appear in the classroom, instead of avoiding them. Problematic discussions and situations always appear in the classroom and could be quite useful to learn from. Additionally, the teacher could provoke relevant situation problems to enlighten and experience how one can handle these kinds of situations – this would be very useful for both the teacher as well as the students.

Another important facet is the content of curriculum, more specifically the content of teaching aids. Moser (2003) stresses the importance of having minority cultures represented in the teaching aids. Schoolbooks should for instant contain examples from

minority groups both in texts and in pictures. If this is neglected in teaching aids and only the majority culture is promoted (ethnocentric information), this might lead to a reinforcement of the formation of prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination. One should be aware that it is not enough to only have the minority cultures represented in the teaching aids, but in what way they are represented is vital. Teaching aids often tend to express an assimilative<sup>5</sup> thinking, which is not advantageous. In respect to this, the challenge is: How to produce teaching aids that develop and reinforce positive attitudes towards multiculturalism and prevent prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination? Some of the answers to this might be found emphasizing *who* should take part in the production of teaching aids. Using people with intercultural competence, people with minority background and human rights organizations to develop teaching aids, would for sure improve the content. Still, even if the content of teaching aids is more or less “perfect”, one can never anticipate its exact effects. Each individual’s attitudes will always influence the interpretation of the multicultural topic.

As an example, to demonstrate the importance of involvement from the teacher/educational institution concerning the intercultural topic, is the intercultural communication project for college-students in the USA carried out by Chamberlin-Quinlisk (2005). She experienced how the intervention of a teacher/educational institution taking use of the immediate surroundings can enhance the intercultural awareness among the students. Most schools in the USA are culturally diverse which means that the students have plenty access to intercultural interaction and activity in their daily surroundings, but, as Chamberlin-Quinlisk emphasis, access does not necessarily transform into opportunity. This is where the teacher comes in; the teacher needs to help the students to interact with students from other cultures. Through such interaction the students will probably question their assumptions and perhaps even revize them. The students taking part in this project had to meet a partner with a different cultural and/or

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<sup>5</sup> Assimilation can be defined as an absorption (or the process of absorption) of a subordinate or small group into a larger or dominant group, where the small group becomes indistinguishable from the larger group in cultural terms. Assimilation is one of the results of the process of acculturation (Seymour-Smith, 1986: 18). Acculturation is seen as “*the process of culture change set in motion by the meeting of two autonomous cultural systems, resulting in increase of similarity of each to the other*” (Barfield, 1997: 1).

linguistic background to themselves, at least five times during a 15-week period, where they should talk about school, work and social life and exchange ideas and beliefs. The results of this project were on the whole very positive. As hoped for, most students' encounter with another culture made them rethink their earlier assumptions and examine their prejudices. Fear for differences had for many been the reason for not interacting with someone with another background than themselves. When fear was dispelled, they seemed to open up to learning and interaction. Many realized that the differences were not as great as earlier assumed. The students developed an intercultural awareness and became more critical to their own beliefs and values. Most students expressed a personal satisfaction received in their interaction with people from another culture (Chamberlin-Quinlisk, 2005).

It is clearly not an easy task to develop intercultural competence. There are no accurate rules. Lustig and Koester say: "*Intercultural competence is, in many ways, an art rather than a science*" (Lustig and Koester, 2000:200). What do they exactly mean by this statement? Do they mean that it is not possible to create guidelines for intercultural competence? If that is the case, I strongly disagree. No science has accurate rules, and intercultural competence does not have any accurate rules either, but still there must be a way to improve learning processes intentionally. Any application of scientific results leads to uncertainty, interpretation and creativity, because science must reduce the complexity of the world (through modules and theory) in order to be able to work. Therefore, I believe that one has to follow certain modules, but one can and should also use one's "artistic talent", on the path of developing intercultural competence.

## ***2.2 Difference***

Difference can be described as the quality of being different. It is the characteristic that distinguishes something from something else. It requires that something is dissimilar. Difference does not necessarily indicate that something is in contrast; it can indicate just a slight inequality. Through comparison differences are revealed and confirmed. Identity,

strangeness and gender are all terms which only have a real meaning encountering differences. Difference in itself is not a problem; it is the *way* we are dealing with it which might be problematic. The existence of differences is the source of problems and conflicts, but also the source of enjoyment, pleasure and fascination. A world without differences would probably be a quite boring place to live.

The first step to handle problems which might appear because of differences is to be aware of the differences. Through reflection and the development of sensitivity, differences can easier be found and dealt with.

## ***2.3 Identity***

Identity is shaped in contact with differences. By becoming aware of the differences, one develops one's identity. The term indicates that there is a difference between units (individuals). It points out that each individual has unique and specific characteristics. All interaction involves relating identities. Identity is a relational construct (Erdmann, 2003).

This chapter will focus on individual identity, not group identity. Since the project's intervention is on an individual level, it was naturally to narrow it down to concern mainly the individual.

Both Bauman (2004) and Erdmann (2003) talk about the difference between today's societies and the former societies regarding identity. A few decades ago the societies were more closed and stable, the existence of differences within a society was relatively small. Consequently, identity was attributed as characteristics to an individual and it was not questioned much. The term identity was perceived as a stable part of the individual/state/nation. Today, in the era of globalization or the era of "liquid

modernity”<sup>6</sup>, most societies consist of all kinds of ideas, values and principles. One is constantly in contact with contrasts and contradictions; one has to make choices and comparisons constantly. Today’s society provokes the question of identity. The individual actively has to work on its identity to adapt to the modified new circumstances, Keupp in Erdmann (1999) says.

Lustig and Koester (2000) argue that identity consists of various identities. They divide the term identity into: cultural identity, social identity and personal identity. Similarly, Varsamis (2003) is defining identity through dividing the term into: private identity, public identity, individual identity and social identity. In the attempt to define the term identity, most people seem to divide the term into different categories. It is imperative to emphasize the complexity of the term identity, to show that identity has several faces, but instead of simplifying the term by splitting it up, Bauman (2004) uses the term identity alone in its complexity, which probably gives a more adequate picture. One could most likely divide the term identity, but one should bear in mind that there most likely exists a connection between the different categories and that the categories possibly influence each other to a certain extent. To talk about *aspects of identity* might be a better choice than to talk about *separated identities*. Keupp in Erdmann (1999) launches the concept “patchwork identity” where consistency is replaced with coherence. A “patchwork identity” can include contradictions and there can be observed coherence among the contradictions, Keupp argues. I believe this is an interesting and quite trustworthy description of identity in modern society. Globalization and migration have given people so many different impulses and they have to choose from society’s big “melting pot” of ideas. Their choices might be contradictive, but still coherent. Eriksen’s (1997) *hyphen identity* and *Creole identity* among second generation immigrants, described later in this chapter, are good examples of “patchwork identities”.

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<sup>6</sup> “Liquid modernity” is a term used by Bauman (it is also the name of one of his books) referring to a society where everything is ‘fluid’, a society under constant change, that cannot keep its shape for a long time. If frames exist, they will not last for long. Insecurity, flexibility and change are words which describe this kind of society. Bauman is here talking about the effects globalization has on society (Bauman, 2004).

In the search of one's identity one is dragged between the need of feeling secure offered by belonging and the need of having freedom of choice. Bauman (2004) calls this the ambivalence of identity. Said in other words, the ambivalence of identity is "*nostalgia for the past together with complete accordance with 'liquid modernity'*" (Bauman, 2004:7). Correspondingly, Erdmann (2003) argues that developing one's identity is a process where passed experiences affect one's reflections from the interaction with the external world and through this modify the noticed self. Further, he states that "*the subjective knowledge and expectations determining identity are circling around three areas: 1) The cumulated knowledge about oneself; 2) the self-evaluations and values and; 3) the conviction of control (in any given situation)*" (Erdmann, 2003:5).

In the development of one's identity the need of acknowledgement and acceptance is also central (see IC chapter), Erdmann claims. Positive and negative feedback from other individuals are undoubtedly forming one's identity. Most people try to avoid the negative feedback, which feels menacing. They therefore interact in such a manner that they will receive positive feedback. Being afraid of critics becomes problematic in today's multicultural society, surrounded by so many different beliefs and values. Pleasing everybody around you is an impossible task, unless you are willing to change your values and opinions according to each individual you interact with, like a wave changes constantly direction. This would probably be an unsupportable and unsatisfying way of living, a state with no identity. One should be true to oneself and not let the circumstances take the total control over the formation of one's identity. This does not mean that one should not be open and learn from the circumstances; the point is that one should not go against oneself due to fear of *the other's* reactions. The key is here *respect* and *tolerance* between individuals. The existence of respect and acceptance for differences within a society facilitates identity-development.

One should notice that with acceptance for differences follows doubts upon one's previously unquestioned standards (Erdmann, 2003). How one is dealing with these doubts is decisive. There are two possible options: 1) It feels menacing and one is therefore holding tight to one's former ideas and beliefs in fear for the unknown and one



is blaming the intruder, or 2) one is open for new ideas and beliefs; one sees possibilities instead of threat and is open to modify or change one's identity. According to Erdmann (2003) the latter option is linked to a positive self image. An individual is only risking uncertainty to social interactions provided that the individual has a good self image and feels accepted. Enhancing and developing intercultural competence and understanding is of great importance, but to be able to acquire this competence the basis of this is a positive self image, as mentioned.

A very important facet regarding identity-development, is the need for security through belonging (see above). People are longing for security. Traditionally, the feeling of belonging was connected to family, friends, neighbors and work. Today these traditional boundaries are weaker, not available or not trustworthy. Consequently, the feeling of loneliness or abandonment has become quite common. People tend to go for quantity if quality is not accessible. Since real relationships are hard to find, people hold tight to any relationship they can get hold on, which normally are "networks" and "connections". To ease the painful feeling of loneliness and abandonment, people seem to seek happiness in "networks" and consumable things (Bauman, 2004).

As already discussed, identity is not stable, but a dynamic process. Through living, which implies taking daily choices, identity is formed. You can never 'finish' your identity. If you feel that you have – then you have stopped taking choices, you have stopped living. Bauman says:

A battlefield is identity's natural home. Identity comes to life only in the tumult of battle; it falls asleep and silent the moment the noise of the battle dies down. Cutting both ways cannot therefore be avoided. It can perhaps be *wished* away (and commonly is, by philosophers striving for logical elegance), but it cannot be *thought* away, and even less can it be *done* away with in human practice. 'Identity' is a simultaneous struggle against dissolution and fragmentation; an intention to devour and at the same time a stout refusal to be eaten... (Bauman, 2004:77).

In respect to this, one should not forget that there still exist quite a few societies that are rather closed and where neither freedom of speech nor freedom of choice is present. In these somewhat totalitarian societies, it is hard for an individual to develop a dynamic and authentic identity. The frames are clearly not advantageous, but one should be aware of the fact that the informal interaction is probably more important than the formal interaction when it comes to identity-development. There also exist societies where the importance of the group is in focus – what is best for the group, not what is the best for the individual (collectivistic societies, see IC-chapter). Democracies or so-called individualistic societies require individualistic responsibility to function. The importance of identity is therefore more emerging in these kinds of societies.

According to Bauman (2004) all societies have individuals that do not have the same access to identity choice; people who have no say in deciding their preferences and who are often enforced with identities imposed by others which are normally not of a positive kind, but stigmatizing, stereotyping and humiliating identities. These people have been denied the right to *choose* their identity.

But there are people that are in an even lower level of the power hierarchy, “*a space underneath the bottom*” (Bauman, 2004: 39); people who are denied the right to *claim* an identity, Bauman says. These are the disadvantaged group of society, the poor or the “underclass.” They have an “underclass identity” meaning an absence of identity.

The meaning of the ‘underclass identity’ is an *absence of identity*; the effacement or denial of individuality, of ‘face’ – that object of ethical duty and moral care. You are cast outside the social space in which identities are sought, chosen, constructed, evaluated, confirmed or refuted (Bauman, 2004:39).

Another group sharing the fate of the “underclass” is the refugees or the stateless, Baumann adds. The fact that people from the “underclass” have fewer choices and limited identities is not a surprise. This is a result of their weak position in society – they have little control and power. However, to argue that they have an absence of identity

would most likely be to exaggerate. This is a very pessimistic and deterministic view. Still, Bauman enlighten an important aspect when he says:

(...) asking 'who you are' makes sense to you only once you believe that you can be someone other than you are; only if you have a choice, and only if it depends on you what you choose; only if you have to do something, that is, for the choice to be 'real' and to hold (Baumann, 2004:19).

In the book *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1996) Freire talks about how the “oppressed” (underclass) in society desire a real existence, meaning freedom, but how they at the same time fear freedom (the ambivalence of identity, see earlier). While Bauman seems to believe that the “underclass” is trapped to be without identity unless the privileged (“upperclass”) choose to help them and change their situation, Freire believes that the “oppressed” have the possibility to improve their situation themselves, actually he believes that *only* they themselves can improve their own situation. The “oppressed” must fight for their own liberation and this must be done through the power of their weakness. Only by conquest freedom can be acquired. To reach liberation, what is crucial are people’s “*reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it*” (Freire, 1996: 33).

### **2.3.1 The self**

The concept identity is used differently among scholars. This might be a bit confusing, but it all comes down to how one chooses to use the terminology. Looking again at the assumption that identity consists of various identities, Eriksen (1997) says that there are various identities, but that they are all gathered and hold together in the self. Then the question is: what is meant by the self? Some would say that identity and self are the same thing, some would argue that the self is an aspect of identity (personal identity) and others would claim that identity and self are two different things. Nonetheless, most scholars would agree that these two terms are strongly related to each other. If the self is the same as identity and if Eriksen’s supposition is credible (even if he uses the term

*different identities*), it strengthens the already mentioned emphasis on using the term *aspects of identity* instead of talking about *different, separated identities*.

Mead (1962) argues that the self (or identity) is formed in the interaction with others, that it is a social construct. According to him, the self is created in the interaction between the “I”, the “Me”, the “Generalized Other<sup>7</sup>” and concrete others. The self can only exist in definite relationships to other selves, he claims. Mead distinguishes between the individual’s different selves and the individual’s complete self. As I see it, the different selves can be explained as the different aspects of identity and the complete self as a totality covering over all the different selves (aspects of identity). Mead and Eriksen use different terminology, but they seem to have more or less the same view. Mead says:

We carry on a whole series of different relationships to different people. We are one thing to one man and another thing to another. There are parts of the self which exist only for the self in relationship to itself. We divide ourselves up in all sorts of different selves with reference to our acquaintances. We discuss politics with one and religion with another. There are all sorts of different selves answering to all sorts of different reactions. It is the social process itself that is responsible for the appearance of the self; it is not there as a self apart from this type of experience (Mead, 1962:142).

The unity and structure of the complete self reflects the unity and the structure of the social process as a whole; and each of the elementary selves of which it is composed reflects the unity and structure of one of the various aspects of that process in which the individual is implicated. In other words, the various elementary selves which constitute, or are organized into, a complete self are the various aspects of the structure of the social process as a whole; the structure of the complete social self is thus a reflection of the complete social process (Mead, 1962: 144).

What is special with Mead’s self is that it is an object to itself. It can both be subject and object, but Mead is stressing the importance of the characteristic of the self as an object to itself. To be able to react rationally and intelligently, the individual has to take an objective, impersonal attitude toward himself, he has to get outside of himself and take

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<sup>7</sup> Mead is here referring to the organized community/group which gives to the individual his unity of self (Mead, 1962:154).

the attitudes of other individuals toward himself – to notice, this has to take place in a context where both he and them are involved. Further, he says that it is important that there is a conversation going on between the individual and himself, an inner conversation, or said in other words, the process of thinking. It is within this process that the self appears. “(...) *the individual is not a self in the reflexive sense unless he is an object to himself*” (Mead, 1962:142).

Nielsen (2006) says that individuals have the comprehension of being the same over time. This something which makes one feel the same, despite that one is going through changing situations and experiences, is the self or the personal identity, she claims. She states that we are narrators of our own lives and this together with the self biographic memory makes the foundation of the self. The self is a means to make interpersonal relationships and to regulate the individual's emotions. Nielsen is here explaining the self from a psychological narrative approach. There is a plethora of research regarding the study of the self, but concerning my thesis it would be a digression going any further into it.

### **2.3.2 Identity among second generation immigrants**

Second generation immigrants are probably meeting more challenges or problems than the majority of the society concerning identity-formation. This is connected to the feeling, which often occur among this group, of being dragged between two cultures or falling between two cultures. Eriksen (1997) is discussing this issue. He says that this group has three alternatives regarding identity, which are: *pure identity*, *hyphen identity* or *Creole identity*. *Pure identity* is built on a contrast or a conflict to *the others*. This identity has clear rules and makes order. Consequently, it exempts the individual from ambivalence and difficult choices. *Hyphen identity* is trying to build bridges between two different categories, an example: Norwegian – Pakistan: one is then living as a Pakistan within the family house, but in public places one is living/behaving as a Norwegian. To distinguish between the two cultures/categories is here very important. *Creole identity* does not believe in pure, limited cultures/categories. This identity does not operate with

limits or hyphens. It is a mixture of all kinds of cultures/categories (Eriksen, 1997). Eriksen's identity-classification seems trustworthy, but he describes it as if all second generation immigrants fit into one of his categories, which is probably not the case. A combination of these alternatives gives perhaps a more reliable picture.

### **2.3.3 Metaphors of identity**

Bauman (2004) compares identity to a defective jigsaw puzzle where several pieces are missing and where several pieces do not fit in. You can search to find the lost pieces, but you will never manage to find them all. In the same way, you have trouble to take away the bits that are not the right ones, because you do not now how the final image is. The picture will never be completed, he says. This metaphor of identity enlightens several important aspects, but I prefer Keupp's "patchwork" description of identity (see above). Keupp stresses that there is coherence among the different aspects of identity, but that there still can be contradictions. Exactly this, the fact that he claims that there can be contradictions, I believe is a very important aspect to emphasize. He does not as Bauman focus on bits that do not fit in or are not the right ones. How I see it, there might be bits that will be changed, but the time these bits stayed in the picture, they were the right bits during that time (even if they contradicted other bits), that was why they were placed there in the first place.

## **2.4 Strangeness**

Strangeness can be defined as 1) unusualness as a consequence of not being well known or 2) the quality (condition) of being alien or not native (<http://www.wordreference.com/definition/strangeness>, 2006). Høie defines strangeness as the social relation and mental reaction that occur when we are confronted with something new or unknown, and to which we cannot be indifferent (Høie, 1993:1).

These definitions (above) are similar and are overlapping each other. As with identity, strangeness occurs in the meet with difference, more precisely in the meet with something new or unknown. One becomes aware of the known in the meet with the unknown, and one receives a feeling of strangeness towards the unknown.

Giess-Stüber says the following about strangeness:

Strangeness occurs in the shape among persons – but it might occur as well in the shape of movements or games. Movements or games from a “different and strange world”. (...) Persons react to strange situations. They tend to get uncertain and they feel uncomfortable in such situations. Very often strangers and strange things are ignored, refused or excluded (Giess-Stüber, 2003:2).

As Giess-Stüber here expresses, people often react with uncertainty in strange situations. To feel uncertain or insecure is usually linked to a negative feeling, but that is not always the case. Uncertainty might induce curiosity and a fascination for the new, which is a positive feeling (see later).

The condition strangeness will always occur in our lives, though to a different extent. Since we constantly meet unfamiliar people and situations, it is impossible to avoid it. Hence, the question is not so much how to eliminate this condition, but how to handle it and maybe turn it into something positive, something to learn from. This is strongly connected to the intercultural competence chapter where I was talking about face and face threats. Face threats appear in the interaction between people from different backgrounds, in the meet with something different.

First of all, we need to have a look at how people react when they feel strange or when they feel that their security is threatened. Then we need to analyze whether this reaction is advantageous or not. If it is not – how can we change it to become advantageous?

According to Erdmann (2003) the majority of a society has the responsibility to develop a way towards integration<sup>8</sup> and intercultural learning, but the society has to be ready for integration to be able to implement it. In the meet with the unknown very often the majority's reaction is to protect their privileges in fear of losing their power to the unknown. Different strategies can be used to protect their privileges:

- 1) Foreigners are excluded from insiders' structures, resources and networks.
- 2) Prejudices can contribute to the stabilization of the dominant culture (Guttadin, 1993).
- 3) Aggressive understanding means suppression of differences (Gronmeyer, 1993). Strangeness dissolved in similarities.
- 4) Emphasizing only the attractiveness of a foreign culture (exoticism). Reduction of complexity to folkloristic facets (Giess-Stüber in Erdmann, 2003:7).

These reactions do clearly not contribute to abolish discrimination, racism and prejudices. On the contrary, they strengthen these thoughts of xenophobia.

Fortunately, not everybody is reacting in a negative way when they are confronted with something unknown. The feeling of strangeness might for instant wake up a curiosity among people and a wish to learn about the unknown. This is a good start in an adequate direction. It is all about having the "right" attitudes in the meet with differences; about being open and wanting to acquire new knowledge (see IC chapter).

### **2.4.1 Simmel's stranger**

Simmel's essay *The Stranger* (1971) is short, but very rich in content. His interpretation of the stranger or strangeness in this essay is a positive interpretation. In the words of Simmel: "*The state of being a stranger is of course a completely positive relation; it is a*

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<sup>8</sup> Østberg (1997) defines integration, "*in the sociological sense, partly as such an intercourse that makes the participants parts of a whole, and partly as this condition of totality. And according to if this totality is extensive or defective, one speaks of higher or lower degree of integration*" (Østberg, 1997: 26-27, my translation).



*specific form of interaction*” (Simmel, 1971:143). Simmel describes the stranger as a wanderer, but not as a wanderer in the normal sense of the word. The stranger is a wanderer “*who comes today and stays tomorrow*” (Simmel, 1971:143). He is a member of the group, but at the same time he does not really belong to the group. He is inside and outside the community at the same time. This middle-position of closeness and remoteness is characterizing Simmel’s stranger, and according to him this is a favorable position. Since the stranger is not bound with his roots to the group, he becomes more objective to the group and confronts all the elements in the group with a critical attitude. He is a participant of the group, but a participant that is not so much influenced by the group’s thinking, his mind works after its own laws, he examines with less prejudices. This objectivity can be defined as freedom. Simmel gives here an example from the practice of certain Italian cities concerning recruiting judges. They recruit judges from outside, because they cannot find a native who is not affected by family interests or other subjective boundaries. The stranger often receives a lot of confidence, because of his distance to the group. He often gets to know about affairs that are hidden from whom one is close.

Mobility is another important characteristic of the stranger. His mobility and the fact that he is not bound organically to the group, makes him the perfect trader, Simmel claims. A trader is needed for goods produced outside the group, he functions as a middleman and therefore this activity suits the stranger very well. Simmel illustrates this with how the European Jews have succeeded in the trade-business. They were not allowed to own any land, so they ran intermediary trade and pure finance which gave them the character of mobility. The Jew fits Simmel’s metaphor of the possible wanderer. He comes today and stays tomorrow.

A certain kind of strangeness can be of a negative kind, Simmel mentions. When the stranger is not a member of the group, when the relation with him is a non-relation, the meaning of the word stranger is no longer positive. Further he says that strangers are often not seen as individuals, but as a collective group. One seems easily to generalize their remoteness, which is no less general than their nearness. In the end, he concludes by

saying that the quality of remoteness and nearness exists to some extent in all relationships.

Simmel's interpretation of the stranger is very interesting. However, Simmel is focusing more on the position the stranger has or can have in society than on the psychological aspect, which is a more relevant aspect concerning my thesis. He says that the stranger has a favorable position, but how does the stranger feel about being different from the group and never being able to be a fully member of the group? Belonging and acceptance are important facets for an individual to be able to feel secure (see identity-chapter) and Simmel's stranger lacks these elements. The stranger's position might be positive, but the feeling of being a stranger is rarely a positive condition. Additionally, Simmel is talking about strangeness on a macro level, while the focus in my thesis should be more on the micro level. Still, it is important to analyze strangeness in the society as a whole.

As we can see, people often react with fear and insecurity towards strangeness. Such a condition is clearly not advantageous. It tends to result in increasing prejudices and xenophobia. In the intercultural competence chapter the suggested solution to face threats was to develop understanding to all face needs, which is probably also the solution in the meet with strangeness. We are here talking more or less about the same thing. If people acquire more knowledge about *the other* they will hopefully also acquire a greater understanding about *the other*. Yet, the crucial thing is people's attitudes and sensitivity towards strangeness or strangers. To handle strange situations in a positive way, they need to have attitudes of openness and curiosity, and be able to "decentre." These attitudes and this ability can only be acquired if there exist a willingness and a wish to acquire them (see IC-chapter) and if the individual feels secure. Being accepted and feeling belonging to a group is important for an individual to feel secure (see identity-chapter).

## 2.5 Gender

Strangeness can also occur because of gender-differences. Gender can be seen as one aspect of identity, and this aspect is quite complex. What is shaping one's "gender-identity" I will say more about later in this chapter.

To start with, we need to have a look at what is meant by gender. How is this word used? In the late 1960's, feminists acknowledged to distinguish between the word sex and the word gender. Sex was seen as the biological differences between male and female, while gender was seen as the socio-cultural differences between male and female, as a social structure (Andermahr, Lovell and Wolkowitz, 2000). Contemporary feminists are careful to differentiate between sex and gender. Moi (1999) argues that this division is not important regarding the concrete, historical understanding of what it means to be a man or a woman in a given society. Feminists have argued against biological determinism<sup>9</sup> long before they could choose between two different words for sex, she says. She is not denying that there are biological differences between men and women, but she says that this can never justify any particular social arrangement - this is the core of her argumentation. Moi is inspired by Simone de Beauvoir's<sup>10</sup> thinking. She continues:

(...) on my understanding of what the biological facts are, we can never get rid of sex, but we can certainly hope to produce societies that either multiply or eliminate gender. This, precisely, is the logical consequence of denying that biology justifies social norms (Moi, 1999: 114).

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<sup>9</sup> Humm (1995) explains biological determinism as following: "*The concept that physiological differences between men and women determine social roles. This concept is the basis of discriminatory legislation which prohibits women from full expression of our potential*" (Humm, 1995: 23).

<sup>10</sup> Simone de Beauvoir was a French philosopher and a contemporary feminist writer. She is maybe best known for her book *The Second Sex* (1949). Her thinking has been seen as ahead of the time she was living in. Quoting Humm (1995), de Beauvoir argued that: "(...) *in a patriarchal culture, the masculine is set up as the positive or norm and the female or feminine is set up as the negative, or what de Beauvoir called 'the Other'. De Beauvoir believed that Otherness is a fundamental category of human thought. She speculated that women's identity as Other and her fundamental alienation derive in part from her body - especially her reproductive capacity - and in part from the historical division of labour dictated by childbearing and rearing. De Beauvoir argues that women need to strengthen their rationality and critical power in order to achieve transcendence*" (Humm, 1995: 21).

Instead of gender and sex, Moi (1999) prefers to use bodies and subjectivity.

According to Connell (2002) gender is most commonly used as meaning the cultural difference between male and female, based on the biological division between man and women, which is similar to the 1960's feminists' definition of gender. Such a definition is troublesome. As Connell comments, human character cannot be divided into two types – it is much more complex, there exist a lot of variations among women and men. This definition is based on dichotomy and difference, which gender does include, but gender also includes lots of other patterns. Connell (2002) believes that the focus should go from *difference to relations*. Connell proposes the following definition of gender:

Gender is the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena<sup>11</sup>, and the set of practices (governed by this structure) that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social processes (Connell, 2002:10).

Or said in a simpler way:

(...) gender concerns the way human society deals with human bodies, and the many consequences of that 'dealing' in our personal lives and our collective fate (Connell, 2002:10).

Despite different views and interpretations in the field of gender, most scholars seem to agree on the general historical perspective of gender: Women (and homosexuals) during all times in most societies have been oppressed and discriminated and still are so, though to a different extent in different societies.

A society which eliminates gender might be favourable, but perhaps also poorer. However, the objective with this chapter is not to argue for improvements of women's

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<sup>11</sup> In the words of Connell: "(...) *there is an arena in which bodies are brought into social processes, in which our social conduct does something with reproductive difference. I will call this the 'reproductive arena'*" (Connell, 2002:10).

position in society, though this is a tempting thing to do. What is important concerning the IC topic is to have an understanding of the fact that gender is viewed differently among different groups and to have knowledge about how gender is viewed in different groups/societies. With such knowledge one might better understand how men and women interact, why they behave in certain ways. Still, one should be aware of the fact that gender might serve as acting ground for exclusion and discrimination. Differences between the sexes are not in the first place a negative thing, but when these differences are used as an acting ground for exclusion and discrimination, as mentioned above, they become problematic. Again, the crucial thing is how one is dealing with differences. The structures of differences and how it is dealt with are the same whether it is between ethnical groups (minorities) and majorities or between gender groups. Therefore the latter is perceived as an area which illustrates the problems and gives examples everyone can understand. Nonetheless, one needs to respect that people have different views of gender, even if these views might be quite provocative. The aim within the IC topic is to be sensitive and understanding, not primarily to change people's values and opinions, though "integration" inevitably leads to modifications of values and opinions on both sides; the immigrants' side and the recipient society's side.

Mainly, society is responsible for the performed "gender-practice," and it is consequently influencing the shape of people's "gender identity." Within society there are different factors that are taking part in the development of one's "gender identity" like nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, family, friends, school etc. School is an institution which has a great responsibility concerning this formation since youths are spending a lot of time in school. This institution should therefore be careful with the values it expresses. School should promote values of equality despite race, culture, religion or gender. A good baseline is the international human rights, as mentioned earlier in the IC chapter. Furthermore, the school should teach the students to be tolerant, sensitive and respectful to other people's values and opinions.

In a multicultural class there will probably appear a number of problematic situations which might not be easy to deal with. Physical education can be such a situation. How to

include women in sports activities, for instance swimming, if it is against their beliefs to show their bodies? Should they be forced to participate based on the principle of equality or should they be given some options to choose from based on the principle of tolerance and respect? In this case, I guess most would agree that they should be given other options. Still, it might be quite provoking for some that some females will not participate because they have to cover their bodies. Some might see this as if the institution accepts the practice of discrimination against women. The theme of bodies, women's bodies in particular, is delicate. In many cultures or religions the women's body is seen as sacred and as being in the possession of the men. Again, this can probably be linked to power-struggle (see above). Gender differences can and are often used to justify privileges of men (through religion and formal/informal laws in society).

Another complicated situation could be low oral participation among women in class. In some cultures and religions women have learned to submit to men, to keep themselves in the background and not to discuss or disagree with men. Such beliefs make it difficult to have a dynamic class where everybody can participate. Is the solution to separate the sexes?

Clearly, there are no easy answers to these kinds of questions. Nonetheless, one needs to be respectful and creative in the search for solutions. Having acquired Byram's IC components (knowledge, attitudes and skills), might here be helpful. To notice, as expressed in the IC chapter, I believe that being sensitive towards situations, individuals and documents that one is in contact with, is of much higher importance than having the skills Byram is talking about, but Byram's skills can probably be useful. Having acquired all his components included having developed sensitivity would most likely be the ultimate.

Gender is one aspect of identity, which means it is changing; it can never be fixed (see identity-chapter). As well, it might have contradictions – gender is not one-dimensional (Connell, 2002). One is behaving in different ways depending on the situation, place and time. Gender is a structure of relations, and with this follows: “*The structure of gender*

*relations has no existence outside the practices through which people and groups conduct those relations” (Connell, 2002: 55).*

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Evaluation

As said in the introduction, the purpose of this paper is to find out what the students who took part in the one- week- long intercultural course got out of it through evaluating the students' diaries. Helpful questions for the evaluation are: Did the modules function? If so, to what extent? Did the people taking part in this course get anything out of it? Did they acquire new knowledge, in that case, what? Did they develop some sort of intercultural competence, a better understanding of how to handle unfamiliar situations? What were the participants' expectations before the course? Were these expectations fulfilled? Did the participants see the connection between the theoretical part and the practical part of the course? How did they handle and describe the different situations? What were the perceptions of tasks? How did they feel? What mood were they in? What were the effects of the course? Did they change from day one to the last day?

All initiatives expect certain effects (so is this project) – that is how initiatives get started in the first place. The intention with evaluation is normally to measure the effects of a project, the efficiency, to secure the future investment (Erdmann, 2006). Mertens defines evaluation as “*periodic assessment of the relevance, performance, efficiency, and impact (both expected and unexpected) of the project in relation to stated objectives*” (Mertens, 2005: 47).

Evaluation is a procedure that leads to a design and application of methods to gather the information needed. Evaluation on its own has no value, but it is a tool to control an initiative and to give feedback to the people involved in the initiative, the consumers and the sponsors. To be able to conduct a reliable evaluation, it is crucial to have a clear objective with a substantial theoretical conception behind it (Erdmann, 2006).



My evaluation of the teacher students' diaries written during the one-week-long course can be classified as a process evaluation, where the emphasis is on the prevalence of contemporary effects, distinct from the product evaluation where the emphasis is on the probable future applications (Erdmann, 2006). Consequently, the results of the process evaluation play an important role in the procedure of the product evaluation of the project.

Since I was not present at the course and since I have not been in any contact with the participants (the teacher students), I can be defined as an external evaluator. Scientifically, this is probably an advantage; the chances for objectivity increase while the chances for bias decrease. Additionally, having the diaries as the only sources of information concerning the evaluand<sup>12</sup>, prevents distractions and makes it easier to keep the focus. Though, being an external evaluator also has its disadvantages. Important information and details about the evaluand, that one can only receive through participation in actual situations and through knowing or observing the people involved, might never come in to consideration. However, this kind of information will probably be analyzed by internal evaluators.

## ***3.2 Methods***

### **3.2.1 Content analysis**

In the procedure of evaluation I have chosen to use content analysis. Since content analysis is a method used to transcribe and interpret documents and texts, this was a natural choice in view of the fact that my data is limited to diaries. Within the content analysis I will use a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative and qualitative methods can supplement each other and improve the researcher's insight into the meaning of his/her data. This approach seems most appropriate to help me in the

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<sup>12</sup> Evaluand is a term used for the "*object of evaluation, what it is to be evaluated*" (Mertens, 2005: 50).

process of reaching the most accurate results from my data, and that is why I have chosen to utilize this approach.

In all research it is important to read written material very carefully (Holsti, 1969). Content analysis is a method that aims to help the researcher with this process, so that he will not let out important information nor include/give much attention to non-relevant information. Paisley in Holsti (1969) defines content analysis as “(...) *a phase of information-processing in which communication content is transformed, through objective and systematic application of categorization rules, into data that can be summarized and compared*” (Paisley in Holsti, 1969: 3). Weber (1990) defines the method as follows: “*Content analysis is a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from text. These inferences are about the sender(s) of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message*” (Weber, 1990: 9).

Content analysis is trying to transcribe/interpret human communication texts. It is therefore important not only to look at the characteristics of the document (the surface meaning of the text), but also to go beyond the text, to “read between the lines” and to analyze the deeper meaning of the text. There exists many disagreements upon this issue (Holsti, 1969). Looking at Paisley’s definition of content analysis (see above), he emphasizes the importance of objective and systematic application of categorization rules, and he gives no attention to the importance of analyzing the deeper meaning or “reading between lines”. This latter facet should, in my opinion, be included. I therefore find Paisley’s definition incomplete. Holsti claims that content analysis should be considered at two levels. First, at the coding step of research, where the text is placed into different categories, one has to limit the recording to consider only those items that can be found in the text explicitly, which actually appear in the document. Second, at the interpretation step, one is free to consider the deeper meaning of the text in the search for adequate conclusions from the data (Holsti, 1969).

As revealed, there are some disagreements concerning Holsti’s second step within content analysis: the interpretation or “reading between lines” step. This step is perhaps

more commonly used or accepted in qualitative methods than in quantitative methods, but interpretation is also done in quantitative studies. Some might believe that “reading between lines” increases the chances for errors, but the danger for errors exist no matter what method one is using. One should be aware of the fact that qualitative methods in the same way as quantitative methods are concerned about the study’s objectivity, system and generality. Most scholars seem to agree that the requirements in content analysis of objectivity, system and generality are important facets. *Objectivity* entails that one must follow some explicitly formulated rules and procedures in the research process. The meaning of this is to prevent (to that extent it is possible) the findings to be biased – the results should reflect the content of the document and not the investigator’s subjective interpretations. To test out the objectivity, one should involve another researcher, if it is possible, who uses the same procedures and see if he gets the same results. *System* or systematic has to do with the dealing of content, one should use consistently functional rules when one is excluding or including content. This prevents the investigator from only using material as evidence that is supporting his hypothesis. *Generality* is connected to theoretical relevance. The findings of the research have to be related to theory, other attributes of documents or the characteristics of the sender or the receiver of the message etc. A communication content need to be compared to something, if not it is meaningless (Holsti, 1969). In this case, the results will be linked to the theoretical arguments.

A central idea in content analysis is to reduce the data through classifying the words or phrases into fewer content categories, also called coding, so that it will be easier to interpret the data. The challenge is here to make reliable (consistent) and valid categories/variables (Weber, 1990). The problem/challenge of reliability and validity does not only occur in content analysis, but in all kinds of research studies. According to Weber (1990) reliability refers to the study’s stability – “*the extent to which the results of content classification are invariant over time*”; reproducibility – “*the extent to which content classification produces the same results when the same text is coded by more than one coder*”; and accuracy – “*the extent to which classification of text corresponds to a standard or norm*” (Weber, 1990: 17). Accuracy is seldom used, because in most cases established standard codings do not exist. Hammersley in Silverman (2000) gives the

following definition of reliability: “*Reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions*” (Silverman, 2000: 175). Hammersley also defines validity: “*By validity, I mean truth: interpreted as the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers*” (Silverman, 2000: 175). A content analysis variable is valid if it measures what the investigator aims it to measure. There has to be a correspondence between the variables, concepts, methods and data. Additionally, a correspondence between the generalizability of results, references and theory has to exist (Weber, 1990). Weber talks about “face validity” as the weakest form of validity. “Face validity” refers to the correspondence between the investigator’s definitions of concepts and their definitions of the categories that measured them. This kind of validity is weak because it rests on a single variable. Stronger validity is reached by involving more than one variable or by comparing the data to some external criterion (Weber, 1990). Holsti (1969) claims that “face validity” or content validity, as he calls it, can be sufficient depending of the purpose of the study. Content validity is normally sufficient if the aim of the research is a purely descriptive one, he says. The purpose of my research is of the descriptive sort, so according to Holsti it is probably enough to show that the study has content validity to get the study acknowledged as a valid research. Still, I will mention the four types of external validity that Weber highlights: construct validity, hypothesis validity, predictive validity and semantic validity. If a measure correlates with some other measure of the same construct, it has *construct validity*. There has to be a correspondence among variables and a correspondence between these variables and theory to find *hypothesis validity*. If a measure behaves as it is expected to in relationship to other variables, it has *hypothesis validity*. A measure has *predictive validity* if it predicts events for which evidence is not at present available for the researcher. To have *semantic validity* words or coding units classified together have to possess similar meanings or connotations (Weber, 1990).

Subsequent steps have to be considered and decisions have to be made to conduct content analysis. There are two general types of content analysis: conceptual analysis and relational analysis. Conceptual analysis is focusing on the existence or the frequency of

words, concepts or phrases, while relational analysis is looking at relationships among concepts in a text. Relational analysis can be seen as the next level of analysis, coming after conceptual analysis. These two types have some main steps for conducting their analysis which differ slightly (<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/research/content>, 2006). Concerning my evaluation, it is important both to measure frequency/existence of concepts as well as looking at the relationships between different concepts. I will therefore use both types of content analysis. Their main steps for conduct are as follow:

#### Conceptual analysis

1. Decide the level of analysis
2. Decide how many concept to code for
3. Decide whether to code for existence or frequency of a concept
4. Decide on how to distinguish among concepts
5. Develop rules for coding texts
6. Decide what to do with “irrelevant” information
7. Code the texts
8. Analyze results

#### Relational analysis

1. Identify the question
2. Choose a sample or samples for analysis<sup>13</sup>
3. Determine the type of relationships to examine
4. Reduce the text to categories and code for words or patterns
5. Explore the relationships between concepts
6. Code the relationships
7. Perform statistical analysis
8. Map the representations

(<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/research/content>, 2006)

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<sup>13</sup> The sample I am using is chosen for me.

These steps are meant as guidelines in the process of analysis, at least that is how I will use them. I will follow them to a certain extent, but not rigorously.

Normally, content analysis is used to describe the attributes of messages, giving little notice to the intentions of the sender and the effects of the message on those to whom it is directed. Nonetheless, the results of content analysis can be used to make inferences about the other elements of the communication process (Holsti, 1969). Helpful questions are here “*who says what, to whom, how, and with what effect?*” (Lasswell, Lerner, and Pool in Holsti, 1969: 24), adding the question “*why?*” The focus in my evaluation will mainly be on describing the characteristics of the messages, but I will also look at the intentions and the effects of the messages, which is also important.

### **3.2.2 My procedure**

Inspired by the steps demonstrated above, I will shortly describe my procedure of how I will handle the data-material. The first step will be to transcribe the diaries, trying to understand what each individual is expressing. Then, the next step is to put the information into a table (see appendix 1). The means of this table is to get a better overview of the data-collection. When this is completed, the table will be studied. I will search for tendencies (similarities) and peculiarities (differences) - I will put the data into categories. I will as well search for relationships between categories. After coding the data, the data will be presented. The last step is to analyze the data-results.

### **3.2.3 Possible errors – the language aspect**

To understand the diaries has been a challenging and time-consuming task. Since the participants were from four different countries, it was no surprise that language would be a challenge. The participants had been informed in advance that the course would be held in English and German, still, several of the students attending did not have sufficient language-knowledge to be on track at all times. Some of them presumably lost a lot of

information because they did not comprehend. Additionally, they could probably not express all that they wanted to express. Almost everybody mentioned somewhere in their diaries that language was a problem. Concerning the diaries the Czechs and the Polish had in general a greater language-challenge than the others. The French and the German students could write in their mother tongue, something which was not allowed for the Czechs and the Polish. Also, the French and the Germans had greater possibilities for translation (of lectures, questions etc.) than the others. Did the Czechs and the Polish manage to express all that they wanted in the diaries? And did they understand the questions? Through reading the diaries, it becomes clear that some of them did not understand the questions at all, because their answers did not correspond to the questions asked. Others did almost not respond to any of the questions in the diaries at all. The reason for this might be lack of understanding or it might just be that they were indifferent or lazy. Further, some of the students invented words when they did not know how to express themselves.

For me, as an evaluator, it has often been problematic to understand what the participants were trying to express. The greatest problem has been to understand some of the handwritings. Certain handwritings have been almost impossible to understand. Another problem, as mentioned above, has been the use of words that do not exist. In these kinds of situations, the most adequate solution has been to look at the whole context and according to that interpret and draw conclusions. Therefore, especially in these cases, there are possible errors. Some of the Czechs and the Polish gave some answers in their mother tongue. These answers have not been highly prioritised, because of lack of translation and the fact that the participants were aware of the language competence requirements for the course. Though one should be aware of the fact that it was very few questions that were answered in these languages and the handwriting of most of these answers were almost unreadable. However, these answers have been categorized as answers, but the content has not been considered, with the exception of where it has been answered yes and no (these two words I know).

The students' diaries were answered in German, English and French, with exception of those mentioned above. I am familiar with these languages, but to be sure not to miss out any information, to the extent that is possible, the use of dictionaries has been very frequent, and I have received help with the German language from my German supervisor. Still, the chances for misunderstandings exist and should be taken into consideration.



## 4. DATA-PRESENTATION

The Practicum consisted of six days of theory and practice related to the topic of intercultural competence. Twenty-eight participants (from Poland, Czech Republic, France and Germany) wrote comments in their diaries concerning their experiences during the course. These are the diaries considered below.

### Day 1

The participants arrived at the Black Forest Hostel in Freiburg where they were all wished welcome at 12.30. This day's topic was communication and cooperation, where the main focus was to get to know each other. The first activity of the day was a city-rally in Freiburg. The participants were placed in small groups and they had to explore the city together through finding answers to several questions asked about the city. The city-rally lasted from 14.15 until 17.00. A lecture about sport and migration in Germany and France was held between 17.30 and 19.30, continuing with an introduction of the evaluations of the pilot projects, which lasted until 20.15. Then it was an hour break enjoying the evening-meal, before the evaluation of the city-rally and the winning-ceremony started at 21.15.

The questions asked in the diaries this day were the following: 1. What was new in theory? What was new in practice? 2. What has facilitated to meet other participants? What has impeded to meet other participants? 3. Please indicate your expectations you came with by writing key words below.

#### **1. What was new in theory and practice?**

Theoretically, most of the participants said that they learnt something new about immigration (particularly in Germany and France). Three persons said that they did not learn anything new in theory and four persons did not answer.

In practice, discovering Freiburg-city through a rally was a new experience and this seemed to have made an impression on all. For some it was totally new to interact with people from other countries. Seven participants did not answer what had been new in practice.

## **2. What has facilitated to meet other participants? What has impeded to meet other participants?**

On the question: what has facilitated the meeting with the others, most agreed that it were the good atmosphere, the openness, the use of name signs and to be placed in small groups (which resulted in interaction) that had facilitated the meeting. Three persons did not answer the question. Six individuals said that language-knowledge had facilitated the meeting.

Though, the majority expressed that the lack of language-knowledge and that there was no common language had impeded the meeting – it had made it difficult to communicate. In addition, fatigue, insecurity and shyness were mentioned as factors that had made the meeting with the others difficult. Four individuals did not answer.

## **3. Please indicate your expectations you came with by writing key words below.**

The participants' expectations for the Practicum can be clustered in three points/teat cues: 1. get to know new people, 2. get to know different/new cultures and 3. have fun. Other expectations were: get new knowledge and experiences, learn new games, get new aspects of sports (sports as means for integration), improve languages and one individual expected to get surprised.

## **Day 2**

Sport and integration was the topic of the second day. After breakfast, at 9 a 45 minutes-long-lecture was held: Sport and integration – Why is the stranger strange? From 10 until 12 the participants were taking part in a practical activity linked to the theoretical part in the morning, more precisely a game where the aim was to make the participants experience strangeness. This culture-game went as follows: The participants were divided into two groups, representing two different “sport”-cultures. The groups were separated and they were trained in their culture; the culture’s movements and codes - how the culture was functioning. Then one person from each group had to change culture and try to function in the new culture without knowing the rules and codes of the other culture. They were not allowed to ask questions. They had to try to find out how things functioned on their own. Then they went back to their own culture and another participant had to enter the other culture. The rules of the two cultures were:

### **Culture A**

People walk slowly, creeping, deeply afflicted and they flutter with their arms slowly like a crane. People are nodding politely with their heads and look each other in the eyes, principally. In this culture it is very important to touch each other lightly at the back. If that happens, the touched person turns around and thanks for the touching by looking into the eyes of the other person by smiling. Touching at the back means: you’re o.k., I acknowledge you! People do not talk to each other in this culture.

Another characteristic of this culture is that they love to dance together. From time to time one person switches on the CD. The same person has the task to switch off the music after a while. When the music plays, either one man steps into the hoop that lays on the ground and two women stay next to this man or one woman steps into one of the hoops and two men stay around. Those who do not find such a trio watch the other dancing while standing on the wall. The person who is in the hoop dances ballet with the arms, the others outside of the hoop dance ballet with the legs. This is what is called SPORT in this culture!

Main aim of this culture is to get as mostly acknowledgement and not give as much acknowledgement to the others as possible – and to dance as often as possible.

## **Culture B**

This culture is composed of two rivalising subcultures with 7 or 8 members. There are different roles in each culture

- 1 seeker who waits for the bouncy balls in one of the 4 corners. The seeker may be substituted if he/she has to leave.
- 6 or 7 field players

The field players have to throw the volley-ball and/or the rugby-egg through one of the hoops. One of the subculture members catches the ball. The member who caught the ball notes 10 points on the board for its culture. The other culture gets the volleyball or the rugby-egg for the tinger in the middle of the field.

The ball and the egg may be carried for only 3 steps – then they have to be passed. It is not allowed to bounce the ball or the egg.

It is allowed to tackle the adversary from the front, within that movement you have one hand on the shoulder and the other hand on the hip. It is not allowed to tackle him/her on the backside or on the side. Breaches of these rules are punished with 10 points which have to be marked by the culture members. There is no referee.

The culture member who has caught the ball/egg and marked the 10 points, gets 3 bouncy balls which he/she throws onto the field (with the backside to the field).

The seekers have to catch the bouncy balls. Each caught bouncy ball values 50 points which has to be noted on the board. The seekers lay the bouncy balls on the floor and go back to their corners.

The one who has thrown the bouncy balls is replaced by the next person who has caught a ball/egg and plays with the others (Programme, 2005: 8-9).

After practising this game, the groups had one hour for reflection and discussion concerning the meaning of the words integration, assimilation and acculturation<sup>14</sup>. Then it was dinner. At 14.30 it was time for more practice. This time the participants exercised wrestling, judo and sumo in intercultural perspectives. An evening-meal was served at 20.00 followed of a “German-French evening”.

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<sup>14</sup> Acculturation is explained in footnote 5.

The questions the participants were asked to answer at the end of the day were: 1. What was new in theory? What was new in practice? 2. What was specifically pleasant with the topics of today? What was specifically difficult with the topics of today? 3. What has promoted an integration process? What has aggravated an integration process?

### **1. What was new in theory and practice?**

In the theoretical part, more than half of the participants found the clarification/explanation of the concepts assimilation, integration and acculturation new. The clarification of the different aspects of the term tolerance was also new for several. Four individuals said that they did not learn anything new in theory.

In practice, the fight-sport part and the culture-game (a game to experience/feel strangeness) were most frequently mentioned as new experiences. Two persons claimed that nothing were new for them in practice. One individual expressed that he/she that day had experienced integration through sport and that was a new experience. One participant did not answer.

### **2. What was specifically pleasant with the topics of today? What was specifically difficult with the topics of today?**

There were very spread answers to the question of what had been pleasant with the day's topics. Some said the discussion, some the good atmosphere, some the connection between theory and practice, some the cooperation and interaction, some the fun-factor and one person emphasised the enjoyable feeling of experiencing that sport can bring people closer. Five persons did not answer.

Language-problems were again something that had made the day difficult for a lot of people. Also to understand the differences between the concepts assimilation, integration and acculturation as well as to comprehend the different interpretations of these concepts in the different countries had been hard, several expressed. Additionally, two participants

said that the culture-game, where one entered a culture without knowing the rules of the culture, was difficult. One person found the physical contact in fight-sport hard. Three persons gave no answer.

### **3. What has promoted an integration process? What has aggravated an integration process?**

Among the aspects that had promoted integration, the most mentioned aspect was the interaction with the others (through talks, discussion etc.). Physical contact in fight-sport and the evening-party were also emphasised as integrating facets by several of the participants. Three persons did not answer.

On the other hand, what had aggravated integration were primarily the language-problems/communication-problems. One person mentioned fatigue as an aggravating factor. Nine persons did not answer the question.

### **Day 3**

The third day's topic was: sport, cultural identity and strangeness. From 9 to 9.45 a lecture about didactic perspectives in intercultural movement education was held. After the lecture the participants were placed in groups with participants from the same country as themselves. Each group had to plan an hour of instruction of plays and movement-forms from their country. Between 11.00 and 12.45 two of the groups presented their group-work. Then everybody went for a walk in the city and at 14.30 they took part at a reception at the town hall. Between 16.00 and 18.00 the last two groups presented their group-work. The evening meal was at 20.30 followed of a "Polish-Czech evening".

The diaries this day consisted of the following questions: 1. What was new in theory? What was new in practice? 2. What was specifically pleasant with the topics of today? What was specifically difficult with the topics of today? 3. Where do you see stimulation for future work?

## **1. What was new in theory and practice?**

What was new in theory for the participants, seemed to differ. Some said that they did not know how problematic the situation of immigrant children was, so this was new information for them. Others said that the country-presentation of the other countries gave them new knowledge. Information about Freiburg, presented by the mayor, and the purpose of sport instruction, were also mentioned as new information. Four persons said that nothing was new in theory; three persons said that they did not understand the theoretical lecture; and six persons did not answer the question at all.

In the practical part, almost everybody (twenty-one) agreed that the sport-games/activities/dances from the other countries had been new experiences. One person expressed that the atmosphere was new – an atmosphere where he/she did not have to be nervous, because people appreciated a non- perfect performance. One participant said that nothing was new for him/her in practice and one individual did not answer.

## **2. What was specifically pleasant with the topics of today? What was specifically difficult with the topics of today?**

To learn about the other countries, which were represented at the course, seemed to have been the most pleasant. Also the good, relaxed atmosphere and a lot of activities/practice were highly enjoyed. Four persons did not answer.

About half of the participants (fifteen) did not answer the question about what had been difficult that day, but the ones who answered said that the things which had been hard were: the dancing, the topic (see above), fatigue, to be open towards strangeness/strangers and to be ready for photos and filming all the time. Two individuals said that nothing had been difficult.

### **3. Where do you see stimulation for future work?**

Regarding stimulation for future work, several felt inspired to take use of new, different games and to use sport as an integrating tool. Cooperation with people from other countries was also emphasised. Three individuals said that they would be more sensitive and conscious about differences and further help the students to become more sensitive and aware of differences. Additionally, two participants said that they would take use of “strange” elements in teaching and deal with the topic of strangeness in the education of the students. Eight persons did not answer the question.

#### **Day 4**

This day’s topic was: A look at European Politics. The participants travelled to Strassburg where the rest of the Practicum were going to take place. In Strassbourg they visited the European Parliament. There was no program this evening and no questions to answer in the diaries.

#### **Day 5**

Sport and cooperation was the topic of this day. The whole day consisted of practical activities. From 9.30 until 18.00 lasted the experience-pedagogic part with only a break for dinner. One of the activities was to build a float together with the other people in the same group. When the float was finished they had to cross the river with it. Most of the activities were team-games. At 19.00 reflexions were shared concerning the experience-pedagogic part. That evening a barbecue-party was held.

The questions asked at the end of the day were: 1. What was most impressive to you today? 2. What has facilitated the cooperation in your team? What has impeded the cooperation in your team? 3. All together, how did you experience the day?



## **1. What was most impressive to you today?**

One of the activities this day was to build a float and this activity made an impression on many of the participants (nine). The day consisted of different games, such as quad, bicycling and football. Ten persons expressed that the games, in general, had made an impression on them. Also ten participants mentioned the cooperation or the team-dynamic as being impressive and three persons among these emphasised the fact that cooperation is possible despite language-problems – it works if one wants it to work (attitude). One individual was more pessimistic about the cooperation-topic and said that it was difficult to cooperate in different languages. This person also expressed that there had been a lot of waiting for the different activities and that he/she was not happy about this. Other things that had made impression that day were the discussions and the relaxed atmosphere. Four persons found nothing impressive that day and one person did not answer.

## **2. What has facilitated the cooperation in your team? What has impeded the cooperation in your team?**

On the question what had facilitated the cooperation, eight persons said the dialoguing, listening to each other and making decisions together. Others (five) said that the fact that everybody was motivated and friendly had made the cooperation easier. It was also mentioned as a facilitating factor by several (four) that somebody took the leader-role. Fun activities, nice atmosphere, confidence, integrating attitudes and language-knowledge were other factors that were mentioned. Three persons did not answer the question.

Almost half of the participants (thirteen) expressed that the lack of willingness to compromise – when someone wanted to do his thing regardless of what the others' opinions were, had impeded the cooperation. Lack of leadership was another thing that had hindered the cooperation according to many (six). Language-difficulties were also

emphasised. Some mentioned that large groups, gender-problems (the dominance of men) and quarrel had made the cooperation difficult. Five persons did not answer.

### **3. All together, how did you experience the day?**

Twelve persons experienced the day as a day with a lot of fun. Having a lot of activities had been nice, several expressed (nine). Working and growing together - the integration process - had been good and progressive, nine persons claimed. Some mentioned a great evening and some said that they had experienced the important role of the team-leader. Others mentioned experiences of a more negative art, as the long waiting time for the activities and fatigue, a result of a very intense program. Two persons did not answer.

### **Day 6**

The last day's topic was sport and gender. At 09.15 it was held a short introduction (15 minutes) about gender-relations and -attitudes in Europe. Then the groups were given the task to prepare a Podium-discussion about the theme: Girls and boys in school-sport (sport-instruction/classes). When this was done, the Podium-discussion could start and lasted for about 40 minutes. At 11.00 there was held an hour-long-lecture about co-education<sup>15</sup> in school-sport, followed by a lecture about migrants (females) in sport, also about an hour. The participants discussed afterwards, in small groups, how much they knew about females from minority-groups living in their country. Then it was dinner. From 14.30 to 17.00 there were practical activities concerning the topic: dance, gender and culture. Evaluation of the pilot projects was held between 17.30 until 19.00. This was the last evening of the course, so this evening all the participants had their evening meal at a restaurant.

The questions asked in the diaries were: 1. What was new in theory? What was new in practice? 2. What was specifically pleasant with the topics of today? What was

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<sup>15</sup> Co-education is "*the joint education of both sexes at the same institution and in the same classes*" (<http://dictionary.reference.com/search?q=coeducation>, 2007).

specifically difficult with the topics of today? 3. Looking back at the beginning, to which extent were your expectations fulfilled? Looking back at the beginning, to which extent were your expectations not fulfilled?

### **1. What was new in theory and practice?**

In theory, the different practice in co-education between the countries was new for many (seven). Some (three) said it was new for them to see gender in the perspective of the man. The discussions were also mentioned as bringing up new ideas. One person said that he/she was surprised to see that prejudices and stereotypes still exist and another said that he/she was not aware of so large differences in the way of thinking concerning gender. Seven individuals said that nothing was new in theory.

Concerning the practical part, dancing was most frequently mentioned as a new experience. Three participants said that the feelings they experienced through dancing were new. Two of these expressed that they felt very uncomfortable, something that was not only connected to their dance-performance, but the fact that there was an audience watching them and there were cameras all over. New movement forms, the physical contact in dancing and the experience of integration through sport (without having a commune language) were also new for some. Two individuals said that nothing was new and six persons did not answer.

### **2. What was specifically pleasant with the topics of today? What was specifically difficult with the topics of today?**

Eight participants found the discussion or the exchange of views about co-education and gender very pleasant. The dancing was also mentioned as being pleasant by several (five). Other things pointed out as pleasant were the topic (see above), the film and the openness and tolerance of the other participants. One person said that he/she disliked the dance-practice and that it was nice to see that he/she was not the only one. Eight persons did not answer the question and one person expressed that nothing had been pleasant.

Concerning what had been difficult, several (five) expressed that it had been hard to “let go” in dance; not only were the movements unfamiliar, but they had to perform them in front of cameras and audience. Some (three) said that it was difficult to relate the dance to the day’s topic (see above). To understand the different way of thinking regarding gender, and to keep up the motivation through long lectures were also mentioned as difficult facets. One person said that it had been hard to explain his/her opinions without being too direct towards participants from one specific country represented. One person claimed that nothing was difficult and ten persons did not answer.

### **3. Looking back at the beginning, to what extent were your expectations fulfilled and to what extent were they not fulfilled?**

In the very start of the Practicum the participants were asked to write down their expectations for the course for then later look back at it and see to which extent these expectations had been fulfilled. As much as eleven persons expressed that all their expectations had been fulfilled and another eleven said that some of their expectations had been fulfilled. Nobody expressed that none of their expectations had been fulfilled, but three persons did not answer the question.

Among the expectations that had not been fulfilled, was the handling of languages most frequently mentioned, yet only by three persons – it had been harder to communicate than presumed in the beginning of the course. One participant said that there had been too much waiting – waste of time; one person said that he had not got as much as expected out of the course concerning feelings and reflections; and one person mentioned that the culture of the Western countries was not as expected. Eighteen participants did not answer.

## **In the end**

In the end of the diaries one final question was asked, as a summary of the whole Practicum: What would you like to take home with you? Twenty persons answered this question. Most of the participants expressed that they had received positive impulses that they would like to bring back home. The most frequently aspects were: to keep the contact with the other participants, to bring back home all the nice experiences (these differed) and to take home the nice atmosphere of being side by side with other cultures. Several said that they had received new competence and knowledge and others said that they had learnt new exercises and games for integration which they would take use of. Some expressed that the topics had been interesting and important and that they wanted to use them in further reflection or work. Many participants expressed themselves in general terms, while some mentioned more exact experiences/facets. For instance, four persons mentioned specifically that they wanted to bring back home their experiences regarding strangeness: the importance of being open and sensitive towards strangeness. One person said that he/she had got a better understanding of the problems immigrant children have, and one individual expressed experiencing that it takes hard work to reach integration, but it is possible and worth the labour. Impulses of a negative kind were mainly the language problems. Additionally, one person mentioned that he/she did not learn anything new in theory.

There was also a space for general comments concerning the Practicum in the end of the diaries. Five participants made remarks. Two persons expressed that the course had been too intense – that there should have been given more free time to the participants.

Another comment, also uttered by two, was a critic of some of the other participants regarding the language-problem, claiming that some of the German and French students did not make any effort to speak in English or another language than their mother tongue – this was not solidarily. One individual said that he/she was fascinated by the Czechs and the Polish – by their eagerness to present and let others know their countries. The positive effect of using small groups in discussion was also commented – small groups had made it easier for everybody to participate and exchange ideas.

## Summary

All the participants who answered the questions in the diaries expressed some kind of positive experiences of the Practicum. The amount of new knowledge and experiences varied, but most agreed that the atmosphere had been very good and that it had been nice to be in a multicultural setting. The course seemed to have provoked reflection among many of the students: it made them more aware of themselves, made them change or modify their way of thinking and made them understand the importance of being able to put oneself in the situation of the others. Cooperating in small groups was emphasised as a nice and fruitful experience by the majority.

The lack of a common language was not favourable. Most of the participants expressed this as problematic. It had made the communication difficult. Nevertheless, several had experienced that language not always is necessary to be able to communicate, for instance in sport. Sport can be a means for integration.

Too little free time was another aspect criticized by several of the students. The intensity of the course had been exhausting for many of them.

## 5. DATA-RESULTS VERSUS THEORY

In this chapter the data will be linked to the different facets enlightened in the theoretical chapter. This chapter will follow the structure of the theoretical framework.

### *5.1 Data versus intercultural competence*

#### **Knowledge**

Byram claims that IC consists of three components: knowledge, attitudes and skills. He divides knowledge into two categories: knowledge of oneself and others; and knowledge of individual and social interaction. The outcome of any interaction depends on the knowledge one has, he says. What knowledge did the students taking part in the Practicum have? As we can see from the data, the knowledge people had prior to the practicum varied, but the knowledge they left the course with was quite comparable. Some said that they did not learn anything new in theory, but the majority said that they did and everybody seemed to have learned something new from practice. The first day several of the participants expressed that it was new for them to interact with foreigners. Through studying the diaries one can see that the cooperation or the interaction in the groups was getting better day by day during the course. The students claim that the team-dynamic was improving because they were listening to each other and making decisions together. They were also becoming aware of what was hindering good interaction; lack of language-knowledge and lack of willingness to compromise are here emphasised facets. These positive and negative experiences can all be linked to the amount of knowledge they have. The progress in cooperation was probably connected to the fact that the students were acquiring new knowledge about themselves and others through theory and practice. Furthermore, one might say that it is the lack of knowledge that is impeding the cooperation. Though, one should notice that this is probably only one part of the

explanation. Most likely it has also something to do with the attitudes of the students, which leads us to the next component: attitudes.

### **Attitudes**

One student said: “This course has permitted me to see things much more from a distance concerning the French pedagogic model.” The same student said: “I want to be open-minded in all possible situations.” What this student is expressing is exactly the kind of attitudes intercultural competence requires, according to Byram. He is emphasising the importance of having attitudes of openness and to have the ability to “decentre” – to analyze oneself, to see things in the viewpoint of the others or to enter the situation of the others (to relativize oneself and value others). Additionally he is stressing the importance of having attitudes of curiosity. The third day of the course each nation had a presentation of their country. This was enjoyed by most of the participants. One student said that the presentations made people curious, a positive feeling towards something new and unknown. This strengthens the assertion enlightened in the strangeness-chapter saying that the feeling of strangeness does not necessarily have to be of a negative kind, it can also be a positive feeling, a feeling that wake up a curiosity and a wish to learn about the unknown.

It seems that many of the participants had or acquired the kind of attitudes Byram is talking about. However, most of the participants did not express this explicitly, but implicitly, therefore it is difficult to measure to what extent these attitudes were acquired.

The language-barrier clearly made communication more challenging, but as some participants assumed: It might take more time and work to communicate in a multicultural setting, but it is possible to communicate - it is primarily a question of willingness, of having the attitude of wanting to communicate. Two students were criticizing some of the Germans and French of not having this willingness or attitude. They said that some of the French and German participants only spoke in their mother tongue and did not make any effort to communicate in English or another language. This



was impeding a good atmosphere and good cooperation. This example also shows the importance of being sensitive towards situations and individuals. The French and Germans mentioned here are not only demonstrating a lack of adequate attitudes, but also a lack of sensitivity. If they had sensed that the other participants were bothered by the fact that they were not trying to communicate, maybe they had made a harder effort.

### **Skills**

The last component in Byrnes IC model is skills. As already mentioned, more important than skills is probably the ability to develop sensitivity towards situations, documents and individuals. The example above demonstrates this.

The topic of the fifth day was sport and cooperation. Several students expressed this day that dialoguing and listening to each other had been a facilitating factor to make cooperation work, while lack of willingness to compromise had impeded the cooperation. Again, this is an example which shows how crucial it is to be sensitive and to have tolerant attitudes to be able to have a good interaction.

One student said that it had been difficult to explain her/his opinion concerning gender without being too direct towards a country. This student was probably very sensitive, at least in this situation, and understood that he/she could offend somebody with his/her opinion, something she/he was trying to avoid. Another person would maybe not have read the situation and just said his/her ideas without thinking of the reaction of the others involved. Moreover, this student was or had probably become aware of the fact that different cultures have different face needs, which Lustig and Koester presented (also Goffman), and she/he felt unsure of the face needs of the culture she was confronting.

The point is, one should of course be able to express ones personal views, but one should maybe consider the way one is expressing them. It is possible to state ones opinions and at the same time be tolerant, not create face threats. In all kind of situations it is important to be sensitive, but especially in a multicultural setting it is important. In a multicultural

setting the codes for interaction differ normally to a higher extent than in another more familiar situation, consequently the chances of misunderstandings and problems are also higher. To be able to facilitate the interaction in such settings, having the quality of sensitivity towards differences is central (which includes understanding that face needs differs from culture to culture).

Three participants said that the course had given them stimulation to become more sensitive towards differences and to further help their students to become more sensitive and aware of differences.

### **Acquiring IC within an educational setting**

IC can be acquired through direct intervention of teachers/educational institutions (see IC chapter). This one-week-long course is an example of such a direct intervention within an educational setting. Through lectures and practice one was trying to give the students new knowledge, to give them an awareness of themselves and others and to provoke deep reflection. The different sport activities “forced” the student to interact with each other and the students expressed new, positive experiences through this interaction, but also uncomfortable and challenging experiences. All the feelings and experiences the course provoked among the students, those of a positive kind as well as those of a negative kind, are of great importance. The aim was partly this – to make the students feel, sense and experience different situations within a multicultural setting.

## ***5.2. Data versus difference***

Intercultural competence is all about being sensitive towards differences, and differences are clearly existent in a multicultural setting such as this Practicum. The differences are in such settings linked to the different cultural backgrounds, but if one goes deeper, looking at it from a micro-level, the differences are connected to aspects as identity, strangeness, gender etc, which of course are aspects which have been influenced by the

society one has been raised in. Most of the challenges the participants of the course experienced were challenges that appeared in meetings with other cultures than their own.

### *5.3 Data versus identity*

As mentioned above, the society where one has been raised has influenced one's identity. This is connected to the ambivalence of identity which Bauman is talking about, more precisely the need of feeling secure by belonging part. People need to feel secure, and in a familiar setting with familiar individuals one feels secure. Acceptance and acknowledgement is also connected to the need of feeling secure. One of the students said that the atmosphere at the course was new for him – he did not have to be nervous when performing, because people appreciated a non-perfect performance. This is a typical example of the importance of getting acceptance from the others, of the importance of fitting in. Another student expressed the good feeling of not being the only one disliking the dance-practice. Again, this is an example that shows how belonging to a group is significant for people.

Further, identity is created in meetings with differences or contrasts and by becoming aware of the differences, Erdmann claims. He continues saying that all interaction involves relating identities. In a multicultural setting, like this Practicum, the differences between the individuals are normally great and consequently, following Erdmann's assumption, each individual would become more aware of who they are and develop their identities in this kind of setting. Looking at the course, it seems to have produced reflection and awareness among the students and several seemed to have modified their way of thinking, which might imply a modification of their identities. This is also connected to the ambivalence of identity, but to the need of having freedom of choice part. In the meet with differences and contrasts one becomes aware of different ways of thinking and living and one might choose to change or modify one's identity.

Going back to the acceptance-aspect, receiving acceptance does not always mean that the persons giving you acceptance agree with your opinions or way of doing things, but it might mean that they have an acceptance for differences. This is a crucial point. As Erdmann says, with respect and acceptance for differences in a society, identity-development becomes easier. These attitudes are favourable, but they produce doubts upon one's previously unquestioned standards which can be quite challenging. One needs to have a positive self image to be able to deal with these doubts in a positive way, meaning being open to modify one's identity. Only with a positive self image one is able to risk uncertainty to social interaction. The basis for enhancing intercultural competence is a positive self image, Erdmann continues (see identity chapter). The participants were constantly in an environment of differences and all of them expressed that it was nice to be in this setting, the good atmosphere was emphasized by everybody. Additionally, they expressed to have learnt something new and to have changed in some way. It therefore seems like the participants in general had positive self images. They showed openness towards differences and they were open to learn something new and to modify their identities (of course, to different extents). They seemed to have the needed foundation to develop intercultural competence.

According to Mead the self (identity) has the characteristic both to be a subject to itself and to be an object to itself. He continues to say that to be able to react rationally and intelligently, the self needs to be an object to itself. Being an object to oneself means to see oneself from outside, from a distance, to see how one is viewed with the eyes of others. Byram is emphasizing the same quality when he is talking about intercultural competence – he says that having the ability to see things from a distance is crucial to be able to acquire intercultural competence. Only one participant, see above, expressed explicitly that the course had made her/him see things from a distance, but that does not mean that the other participants did not have or acquired this quality. Through reading the diaries it seems that most of the students have developed this characteristic to some extent. They expressed that the atmosphere at the course was good, that the people in general were very open, that it was nice to exchange ideas and views and that it was nice to interact with people from a different culture. Further they said that the course have

given them new knowledge and incited reflexion. Looking at what they expressed concerning cooperation, the majority said that dialoguing and listening to each other had facilitated the cooperation while lack of willingness to compromise had impeded the cooperation. Dialoguing and listening to others is absolutely the starting point to develop the ability to be an object to oneself. Through such interaction one will understand that there exists different views and different ways of seeing things. On the contrary, when someone is not willing to compromise in making decisions together in a group, it shows that this person is not willing to see things from the viewpoint of the others and he/she is not being an object to himself/herself or he/she does not want to see things from a distance.

#### *5.4 Data versus strangeness*

In the strangeness-chapter Giess-Stüber says that people often feel uncertain and insecure in strange situations, and that this often is connected to a negative feeling. On the other hand it can also be a positive feeling – uncertainty can produce a curiosity for the new. The course made use of several exercises to make the participants familiar with the feeling of strangeness. One of the exercises was a culture-game where one individual had to enter a group that used codes and rules that he/she did not know. This individual had to try to function in this “strange” culture. Another exercise was dancing. Most of the participants were not familiar with these kinds of movements and they had to perform in front of an audience and a camera. Both exercises produced the feeling of strangeness among the students and several of them expressed that it had been hard and some said that it had been uncomfortable. Though to notice, the word uncomfortable was used concerning the dance-performance. What was it really that had been uncomfortable? Was it the strange movements in dance or was it the filming and the audience? The purpose of the exercise was to do “strange” movements. The filming and the audience might have distracted the students from this objective and even made it a very negative experience for some.

As mentioned previously, the feeling of strangeness is often of a negative kind, but concerning the dance-exercise there were probably other causes for the negative outcome, at least factors which were aggravating the outcome. Still, several participants had clearly experienced that strangeness handled in an adequate manner can produce new knowledge and insight. Two students said they would take use of “strange” elements in teaching and use the topic strangeness actively in school. Further three students (also mentioned earlier) said that they would become more sensitive towards differences (strangeness) and help their students to become more sensitive too. In the end of the course four participants uttered that they would bring back home their experiences regarding strangeness – the importance of being open and sensitive towards strangeness. A concrete example of strangeness being a positive feeling was expressed by a student saying that the country-presentations woke up curiosity among the participants to learn about something new and unknown.

### *5.5 Data versus gender*

In the gender-chapter it is enlightened that society plays an important role in the forming of people’s “gender-identity”, because society is responsible for the general “gender-practice” within the society. The theme of the last day at the Practicum was sport and gender. The commentaries in the diaries showed that the “gender-practice” varied from country to country, which support this assumption. Several students were not aware that there were different practices in co-education between the countries. The exchange of views concerning gender and co-education were appreciated by many students, but some found it difficult to understand the different ways of thinking regarding gender. One participant said that he/she was surprised to see that prejudice and stereotyping still exist.

The school is an institution in society which maybe has the greatest influence in shaping the youths’ “gender-identities”. This institution should therefore be cautious in what values it presents, as mentioned earlier.

When one is talking about gender, one is often talking about discrimination of women (and homosexuals) or gender seen from the perspective of women. This is probably not so surprising since women have been a group that has been discriminated during all times. At the course gender was enlightened in the perspective of the man, which was a new angling of the gender topic for several. The participants got aware that men in certain situations also are being discriminated and this produced new conducts of reflection among the students.

According to what the students expressed in their diaries, it seems like there had been very few gender-discriminating situations occurring at the course, but one situation was mentioned by several. In some groups the cooperation had been experienced as difficult because the men had been very dominant. The question which should perhaps been raised here is: Were these men dominant only towards the women or were they just dominant persons?

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The Practicum seemed to have achieved its goal: to develop some sort of intercultural competence among the participants. Everybody who took part in the course (those who answered the questions in the diaries) expressed that they had received positive impulses and that they had learnt something new concerning intercultural situations and challenges (though, to different extents). Through reading their diaries, I could see how their attitudes got modified, how they got a new awareness about themselves and others, how they got more sensitive, how they found strangeness and differences less terrifying than before and how they enjoyed being together with people from other cultures. Several of the students said that theory and practice had been strongly related, and that this had been helpful.

Nobody was against the project; there were no strong critics of the course or of its objective. All the students accepted the project and its goal. They found it somehow pleasant. Still, the effects of the course could probably have been even better – affecting more of the participants and affecting them on a higher level.

Then the question is: How could the effects have become even better? This is probably connected to the preparations and the organization of the course. The planning of the Practicum should maybe have been more thorough. Almost all the students mentioned language as a problem. The participants elected for this course should have been people with sufficient language-knowledge, meaning people who were able to understand and express themselves in the language used on this course. This could have been done by giving them an intensive language-course before the Practicum or that they had to pass a language test to enter the course. Another option could be to have translators at the course.

Some of the participants were criticizing the intensity of the course, they wanted more free-time. This is also an aspect which should have been taken into consideration in forehand by the planners of the course. Clearly, a week is not a long time for a course.



These kinds of courses are normally very intensive, so that the participants can get as much out of it in a limited time as possible. The problem with too high intensity was that the participants got exhausted. When people are exhausted, their concentration and motivation normally go down. Therefore, giving the participants some more free time would probably had been a win-win situation for both parts. With motivated and concentrated students at all times the effects of the course would most likely have been even better, and the students would have felt sufficiently rested and consequently more positive.

A further facet that could have been improved was the planning of some of the activities. In the planning-process of the course, the objective of each activity should have been made clear and the focus should have been on reaching this objective, not distracting the students from this aim. An example was the dancing-activity where the objective was to make the students do strange movements and experience the feeling of strangeness. For some reason, their performances were filmed and there was an audience watching them. From the students' commentaries in the diaries, this was clearly something that made most of the students very uncomfortable and therefore distracted them from the task they were given. They lost focus and afterwards it was difficult to evaluate if the activity had had any of the wanted effects.

As already enlightened, the interpretation might have some possible errors due to incomprehensible handwritings, invention of new words, lack of answers and the need of reading between lines. To notice, efforts have been made to avoid biases, but there will always exist a certain danger of errors or misunderstandings no matter what kind of material one is using.

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# Appendix 1

DAY 1		Get to know each other - communication and cooperation		
New in theory	New in practice	What was made the meeting with the others easier?	What was made the meeting difficult?	3 words describing your expectations for the Practicum
<p>EE 1182</p> <p>Trunk in Germany from figures</p>	<p>Feeling beautiful different people</p>	<p>Efforts to communicate good will openness</p>	<p>Language problems making languages</p>	<p>1. Meetings 2. Discoveries 3. Feelings</p>
<p>RR 0283</p> <p>Wife about country, following about what to communicate about get through the operation</p>	<p>Plays in a city where we had a dramatic scene in the end to get through the operation</p>	<p>To be placed in a group to make it easy to meet their culture</p>	<p>Language - some spoke only and others in German, some with 311</p>	<p>1. Meet new people 2. Get to know a new culture 3. Integration with people who live in your country (most important)</p>
<p>IE 0884</p> <p>Short lectures</p>	<p>The cooperation in the group was very good from the very beginning</p>	<p>No problems with communication</p>	<p>Shyness and insecurity</p>	<p>1. Communication improvements 2. Fun 3. Communication improvements</p>
<p>JR 0480</p> <p>Walking in the city, learn to know the others in the group</p>	<p>The cooperation in the group was very good from the very beginning</p>	<p>Talking together - this was the basis/foundation</p>	<p>When nobody talked together</p>	<p>1. To get to know new people from other countries 2. To know how sports lessons are in other countries 3. Have fun</p>
<p>UL 1081</p> <p>Details about Freiburgs history, details about politics and social integration</p>	<p>Walking with Polish and Czech youths</p>	<p>Listening to each other</p>	<p>That we didn't know each other and we felt a little shame</p>	<p>1. To get to know different cultures 2. To know how sports lessons are in other countries 3. Have fun</p>
<p>AD 0582</p> <p>Nothing</p>	<p>The exercise where the group has to cooperate has been a little hard for me</p>	<p>Very well, I feel better</p>	<p>Nothing</p>	<p>Meet a lot of new people</p>
<p>LL 0181</p> <p>All was very good</p>	<p>First city only</p>	<p>Mind people, language fun</p>	<p>Tired people, talking about reducing the working time (not good...)</p>	<p>1. Other countries 2. interesting people 3. New games 4. lot of fun</p>
<p>OR 0578</p> <p>Nothing</p>	<p>City really, different people in the group</p>	<p>I know German and a little English</p>	<p>I was tired. Lots of people were speaking in English</p>	<p>To get to know new people</p>
<p>OR 0182*</p> <p>Everything was good</p>	<p>Everything was well</p>	<p>Positive, I feel good</p>	<p>Nothing</p>	<p>To get to know new people</p>
<p>PA 0479</p> <p>Everything was good</p>	<p>Everything was well</p>	<p>Positive, I feel good</p>	<p>Nothing</p>	<p>To get to know new people</p>
<p>AN 0883</p> <p>Learn about</p>	<p>Learn about</p>	<p>Learn about</p>	<p>The different languages sometimes it is easy to speak and sometimes hard because of the different accents</p>	<p>lots of curiosity</p>



EG 1080	The content of the report	X	Openness, traditions, common language to understand the culture	Not common language	How can you spot junction as an integration platform?
WT 0878	High immigrant members	X	Common exercises, mixed teams	Language - no common language for all members	1. Fun with the other (foreign) students 2. Cultural exchange with Polish & Greek exp 3. Practice foreign languages
BZ 0181 *	Nothing	Nothing	X	X	1. Experience something about other countries & get to know people, sports as well as their life 3. Get surprised
AR 882	All	All	X	X	A lot of exercise



# DAY 2 Sports and Integration

	New in theory	New in practice	When today's topics what was pleasant?	Difficult/hard?	What has promoted integration?	What has aggravated integration?
EE 1182	Different explanation of assimilation, migration, acculturation in each country	Doing sports in another language	Discussion in the morning after (and) the sport practice	Do sport all day	Social relations between the people	Communication → different languages
RR 0283	Prefecture around the words assim. integr. → through sports → all foreignly said what they would in discussion and integration	BEST way to integration through sports → new and organized → new and easy to understand. his goal was reached	Topic: integration It was fun/positive and new for me	Differences between assimilation and integration	Ambition to recognize a new culture	Individualistic work in sumo
IE 0884	Importance of integration	They were organized → new and easy to understand. his goal was reached	To understand the play, we had to understand the assim. and integration	To overcome one's shame in sumo-parte and dance	The direct contact in sumo	Sometimes to overcome to oneself
JR 0480	Difference between assim. and integr.	The plays in the beginning of the day	The close connection between the assim. and integration	The architects in English	To get to know the people and feel the group	Some were difficult when starting relations and giving good suggestions of ass. and ac.
UL 1081	Cooperation of the xenophobia tolerance	Fight sport	Conversation after the work in groups	To give 100% to the culture in our fight sport	Barbecue, dance	First part of lesson/about
AD 0582	Nothing	The work in the group where we exchange from time to time	Everything was good	Everything was OK	Work in 2 group/team	
LL 0181	All fight	Everything was good	Everything	language		
OR 0578	Natural	Nothing	Lots of emotions today's evening	concentration a little. we were overall stressed (I knew every thing we did)	Talks, discussions away people	impossible to explain own opinions and emotions (language)
OR 0182*	All	All	All	We were speaking a lot but we were doing so little	Evenings and parties	Very tired after a day's work shut for 1 week on
PA 0479	Everything was good	No problem	Everything	language	work	
AN 0883	Difference between integr. assim. and accult. in each country	Fightsport, but it was great	New perspectives on how to learn on sports (cultural play games)	Nothing special		

AN 0184	Learn something about "fighting" assem.	Learn with two groups and with the other group. (understanding) → understanding of the other group's experience.	Learn to understand the atmosphere and to work with the other group's experience.	Difficult to discuss integration in this group and to work with language barriers.	Integration - game and the relaxing program (strong) was not very good for today's group.	Exercises for the group were not very good.
LR 0584	"I didn't know yes!"	Fight sports	I understand that different cultures are using other words for the word "integration".	I have learnt to know the common starting culture.	The fun	I haven't participated in previous games with other partners.
VR 0479	The complexity/multiplicity of the significance of the word tolerance.	The joint/low-moon fight → was cool!	Partnerwork / cooperation with new partner	language barrier in fight sports. I don't think the movement-instruction	New partner-composition	X
RR 0783	Discussion about tolerance, assem. and category.	culture - game	X	X	Fight. Partner-work. Groups	Language, communication
OL 05178	The words: category / result. assem. / result.	Fight sport culture game	The fun factor.	When I see something in the game which I don't know the rules between the countries.	Physical contact through fight	X
EP 1193	To do an activity with different languages is possible too. Learning the same things in different countries.	Arjido → "TO dance together in the evening"	X	X	Dance - evening	To eat at the same table of persons
AR 1193	Better understanding of the words: assem. category and aculturation.	Fight sport	Play together with a hobby without having to communicate. Sports can be a way to bring people closer (language problem)	Familiar language problems (fear of getting to know and overcome) and more language in discussion.	That we are getting to know and overcome the fight sport	So little humor in the fight sport
AR 0491	Similarities between German and Turkish immigrants	Arjido-part with foreign-language-speaking leader	Atmosphere	Terminology	group-formation	communication sport
HC 1092	Confusing concepts/terms	Fight sport. It is nice that already the group leader is good and that the partner almost automatically worked.	PO SPORT. To do something to move	The games	Physical contact between partners. Every body was in the same space. mixed	language - problems
OR 1193	The terms assem. category and aculturation	Arjido, rugby and volleyball	X	X	Integration and "assimilation"	The distance between cultures because of exchange by giving strange things
LQ 0585	Definitive: assem. and acult.	Fight sport. culture-game	composition of the exercises, the partner factor	To overcome language-barriers	The composition of the evening party	X
AS 0478	Topic about intercultural function	Fight sport - part without a name	Close connection between fighting	It was difficult for strangers to get	Integration - game in fight sport: all	often discussion of

	topic about intercultural function in fightsport	Fightsport-part culture - game	close connection between theory and practice	it was able to be changed so close in fightsport	evolving party	often less understood	not
EG 1080	class about intercultural function in fightsport	Article training experience strategies through culture-game	Good selection of units. Atmosphere elaboration	Article selection explanation of terminology: communication in the fight	Group-organizational communication	often less understood were not always really understood	not
WT 0878	Nothing	X	X	X	X	X	N
BZ 0181 *	Nothing	X	X	X	X	X	N
AR 882	Nothing	Nothing	X	X	X	X	N

# DAY 3 Sports, cultural identity and strangeness

	New in theory	New in practice	with today's topic what was present?	difficult/hard?	where do you feel encouraged for your further work? stimulate for future work
EE 1182	Documentaries about team children who pre-structured their sports	Sports from other countries very instructive and interesting to practice	The sharing party with the others	To always be ready for photos and filming during the whole day	I don't want to be a PE teacher
RR 0283	Nothing	Dance in Czech Rep. and Germany. Very nice. Boule. Very nice	recognize a culture in country taking together → very interesting	the whole day; private topic; (already strong) immigrant children	In a sport which is an integration with the other new countries can cooperate. I think why we can find work here it will be like that
IE 0894	Nothing	Polish dance and the different plays from different countries	Almost the whole day learnt about other countries	Nothing	I was fascinated by the different plays and have decided to use them, since they were great fun
JR 0490	Social and institutional conditions/terms	To get to know the Polish and French culture	Tuesday about integration in sports	Nothing	In sports integration
UL 1081	Dance's about the city feeling inside the mayor of Foid us	Dance and plays from Poland and Czech Rep.	Very nice presentation something from its country and the other methods were curious	X	In the Aikido perspective - through this one could control whether the sport really has potential for integration effects or if one has contact with people. I think it from another country → pleasant → use this knowledge to enhance the culture of my country. I should know better the culture of my neighbours → then I will be able to help my country → integration
AD 0582	Did not know what the children have so many problems at school	Boule	got to know the culture of Germany (Zehn Rep) and France exercises in the afternoon	X	
LL 0181	Everything OK	Everything OK	It was very interesting	X	
OR 0579	Plan for integration in learning process in the school. To be realistic appropriate and thus plan to work reality like doing a drawing of the school resident of foreign sports in German schools	I didn't use the network program in the school. I prefer to perform it myself	We had a good evening in the evening and very nice atmosphere	X	In cooperation with different cultures, but the first stimulation has to come from providing realisation of countries and their cooperation with schools, sports and other departments
OR 0182 *	Everything on but I don't understand	Everything	Everything	X	
PA 0479	Everything was good	Everything was good	Everything was pleasant	X	
AN 0083	The problem is the same in France and Germany with the national sport politics	The different sports from Poland, Czech Rep. and Germany	X	To get into the adjacent dance maybe this is difficult for the to dance and use it not to dance in France	I have new ideas to teach sports with new games



EG 1080	Dispersing info about Felding by pressure by the university	Czech contribution	our context? Each nation Everybody work practice connection between	Each nation	Giving the chance to present our games (foreign), improving consciousness and the awareness of the problems
WT 0878	Dispersing in Polish and Czech schools	New dances, movement forms, Bowie	Get to know Plus university leaving thing new	X	Using heterogeneous classwork to enhance the confrontation with strange things
BZ 0181 *	Nothing	X	X	X	X
AR 882	Nothing	Nothing	X	X	X

# DAY 5 Sports and Cooperation

	What has made impression on you today?	What has... cooperation in your team? facilitated / impeded	the impeded	What have you all in all want today?	
FE 1182	Listening to the others and manage to understand the others	Dialogue and Asserty of the others human context cooperation	Always be in a group for lonely persons	Fun activities can be good means to teach sports to different people	The 2c
RR 0883	Building and swimming on the raft. After and fun. The best day of our trip.	Everybody very friendly and motivated. Everybody cooperated	Large group → lots of different meanings, often hard	Great fun, but one had to wait for a long time for the activities	The 2c
IE 0884	even if there are long difficult problems can be solved, it takes more time, but when one starts it works. Football impressive - everybody would win if they were	Everybody very friendly and motivated. Everybody cooperated	when someone decide group was doing (could impede)	Great fun, but one had to wait for a long time for the activities	The 2c
JR 0480	All days/games were great.	The integration of all students	To find the right leader	That was the BEST day. I believe, everybody had a lot of fun.	The 2c
VL 1081	that one of the peers took the leader role in a group exercise	when somebody take over the leader role (changing leader)	when somebody did something interesting and not really contributed with something	All in all, a day with a lot of fun	The 2c
AD 0582	Building the float - people remain quiet. They have to make something, they don't know language, but they have to cooperate to build the raft/float	Everybody was (trying) to understand and help each other. We made a choice	Somehow today, whole group was only speaking in German	Great day! Today was really an interesting day (see question 1)	Not
LL 0181	Nothing	Everything was OK	X	It was OK. Very happy	We
OR 0578	Trying many sports and games → difficult to cooperate in different languages. I had a passing time - had to wait for a long time for activities. The activities were great	Lots of fun especially for kids. Strong motivation. Had to wait for a long time for activities. The activities were great	When people in our group wanted to do something, they were not really speaking. Some of them were not really speaking. Some of them were not really speaking.	It was a great day with sports and fun. We had a great time and enjoyed it very much. Really enjoyed it.	Not
OR 0182 *	X	X	X	X	Not
PA 0479	Nothing	Everything was OK	X	Very well. It was OK. I am happy	We
AN 0883	The best construction, but that the competition makes us not good. There should be some better of construction. Team games in the morning	Nice we know each other better. Fun and interesting. We had a lot of fun. We had a lot of fun. We had a lot of fun.	Always language. We have to play a lot of games. We have to play a lot of games. We have to play a lot of games.	Nice day. To practice sports with people with other nationalities it's good to see different ways to play	Not
AN 0184	Fun and interesting to do sports together. Good to have some games together. Good to have some games together. Good to have some games together.	Fun and interesting to do sports together. Good to have some games together. Good to have some games together. Good to have some games together.	Difficult to find a group with people from different countries. Some of them were not really speaking. Some of them were not really speaking.	Great day! I think we are creating a group with people from different countries and activities. It was a great day.	Very good and fun. We had a lot of fun. We had a lot of fun. We had a lot of fun.
10 ACTA1	I love cooperation and with the	Everybody was OK	Everybody was OK	Fun day. A day where we had a lot of fun. We had a lot of fun. We had a lot of fun.	The 2c

LR 0584	Barbecue • Bicycling	1 love cooperation and with the group cooperation went well	was a nice unstructured situation	Top half were other persons the work becomes better!	100 useful qualitative that means communication	Fun day. A day where we progressed together	The best
UR 0479	Barbecue	The confidence in the group	lack of organization, type of leadership, dominance of the men	The willingness to find a compromise to negotiate	lots of activities, new groups → connect with others on the floor, lot of walking, time for each person	Great fun. We were working for a long time for AXA and Ardenly and everybody was great!	Fun day. A day where we progressed together
RR 0783	Barbecue						
DL 05178	watergame, bicycling in the woods						
EP 1183	The group-dynamic in the raft-building						
AR 1183	Quad						
AR 0481	possibly to have nice and deep discussions. The project gave many occasions to discuss and reflect.						
HC 1082	I liked the raft-raft-building but impressive is to cooperate						
PR 0379	The organization functional						
OR 1183	It's not easy going atmosphere among all (quad) but they were interesting. Interest in and great team spirit						
L9 0585	Quad Raft (?)						
AS 0478	Group-dynamic in raft-building						
EG 1080	The organization in the raft-building						
WT 0878	The program: provided team-arguments without being difficult. This brought the group closer together						



	ms in open meadow together	open meadow	transverse	highly valley
BZ 0181*	Nothing	X	X	X
HR 882	Nothing	X	X	X

# DAY 6 Sports and Gender

	New in theory	New in practice	with today's topics what was pleasant? difficult/hard?	Look back at the expectations you had in the beginning of the pre-crisis. Toward extent fulfilled? not fulfilled?	Feelings - notes	
EE 1182	The acceptance of making end to ethnic how students from diff. countries spoke about it. <i>It wasn't clear.</i>	X	It is not necessary to know a language to integrate, you're more important than the language. <i>It's good that they often talk to each other.</i>	Sharing our views about it - clear and without leading to differences between boys (with Poland) and girls.	Expanding my opinion about it.	Feelings - notes
RR 0823	It was not necessary to know a language to integrate, you're more important than the language. <i>The dance was quite nice.</i>	X	The film was quite nice.	Clear	The dance and to let go on oneself, go into it.	Feelings - notes
IE 0804	more of lectures	X	The dancing was nice.	To move, to let go in front of people I don't want to love someone when I'm alone.	Trying in the morning.	Feelings - notes
JR 0480	The feeling towards the discussion	X	The dancing was nice.	To move, to let go in front of people I don't want to love someone when I'm alone.	Trying in the morning.	Feelings - notes
VL 1001	The after-reading sessions of reading in local countries in your countries	X	A lot of people were participating. Lots of things were discussed about the film.	All	To learn something new.	Feelings - notes
AD 0582	Nothing	X	Nothing	Building the body - we were impossible for us.	The language problem.	Feelings - notes
LL 0181	We know all	X	All	Building the body - we were impossible for us.	The language problem.	Feelings - notes
DR 0578	It wasn't clear. <i>But you was the performance understanding.   <i>It was very interesting.   <i>It was not only about the film, but about the culture.   <i>It was very interesting.   <i>It was not only about the film, but about the culture.</i></i></i></i></i>	X	Nothing	Building the body - we were impossible for us.	The language problem.	Feelings - notes
OR 0182 *	Nothing	X	Nothing	Building the body - we were impossible for us.	The language problem.	Feelings - notes
PA 0479	We know all	X	Nothing	Building the body - we were impossible for us.	The language problem.	Feelings - notes
AN 0883	Differences between the 4 countries in the dance, especially for the east countries.	X	Nothing	Building the body - we were impossible for us.	The language problem.	Feelings - notes
AN 0184	Very interesting and discuss with give me a lot of ideas. <i>The differences.</i>	X	The dance gave me a different view of national dance.	Building the body - we were impossible for us.	The language problem.	Feelings - notes



BZ 0181*	Nothing	X	✓	X	X	X	X	Nothing
AK 882	Nothing	Nothing	X	X	X	X	X	Nothing

Gender also in the consideration of the man-ride.

... ..

sections - too little news for me

people experience something about other countries

was surprised. Sport as means of integration. Through sport, get to know

pre-lik

about women/men's sports, football should they let the discussion go.

People faster integration. People can still remind/maintain their identity. (over)enthus

What would you like to bring back home with you?

FE 1182

RR 0883

IE 0884

JR 0480

VL 1081

AD 0582

LL 0181

OR 0578

OR 0182 \*

PA 0479

AN 0883

AN 0184

German language. People are so open and friendly - I want that people in Poland would be like that.  
Contact with all the people,  
photos, videos etc.

The nice experiences

It is hard/strenuous and a lot of work when one is confronted with so many changes in a well-long non-stop course. But, I believe it is worth the labour/effort when we can contribute to a more together grain Europe. And that which was strange, was not so strange anymore in the end.  
I believe that people have been to living in 3 languages and they understand each other. I would like to meet German language: I believe that being in a group where everyone speaks German, I would start speaking myself (now I study in German) and I believe I can learn anything new from the org.

At least all people that were here for a while

lots of nice moments

To share! But nice that one will meet each other in Prague next year. Nice experience, but it was a pity I can't speak German - lost a lot of information! I will miss the people.  
All the people. The German language.

Information, I will use in my presentation.  
All the people. The German language.

LR 0594

UR 0479

RR 0783

DL 05178

EP 1183

AR 1183

AR 0481

HC 1082

PR 0379

OR 1183

L9 0585

AS 0478

EG 1080

WT 0878

1. I will, with no doubt, remember this week's experiences - it has been an unusual circumstance being in a cultural team. Theory - a lot of important impulses which I will take use of in further learning. Now correct that I will have further impulses which I will take use of in further learning. Now correct that I will have further impulses which I will take use of in further learning.

2. bottles of wine

1. I will remember how positive it was being with students who are not from Germany. I will remember how positive it was being with students who are not from Germany. I will remember how positive it was being with students who are not from Germany.

To come back to Freiburg next year to study (Erasmus), interculturalism, functions and I enjoyed being side by side with other cultures than my own, to be open-minded in all possible situations.

The idea of other cultures, new experiences and new people. In everyday life where my life and our selection in contact with people who are not from Germany. I will remember how positive it was being with students who are not from Germany. I will remember how positive it was being with students who are not from Germany.

sport instruction - competence. Competence for training, excursions and for further projects. Competence for training, excursions and for further projects. Competence for training, excursions and for further projects.

Nice intercultural memories / impressions, new knowledge, photos and e-mail screenshots. Nice intercultural memories / impressions, new knowledge, photos and e-mail screenshots. Nice intercultural memories / impressions, new knowledge, photos and e-mail screenshots.

Castle. Quad. Volleyball. Castle. Quad. Volleyball. Castle. Quad. Volleyball. Castle. Quad. Volleyball.

A greater number of exercises for school to use for integration. To keep the contact with the others. The special role of migrant-students, understanding better their problems. To keep the contact with the others. The special role of migrant-students, understanding better their problems. To keep the contact with the others. The special role of migrant-students, understanding better their problems.

Keep the contact with other students. Games and movement forms from practice-day. Project -> to facilitate in similar forms in school. Keep the contact with other students. Games and movement forms from practice-day. Project -> to facilitate in similar forms in school. Keep the contact with other students. Games and movement forms from practice-day. Project -> to facilitate in similar forms in school.

BZ 0181

on  
a form:  
injection  
5/15/85

AK 882

New experience