

# “Multiculturalism” today: aspirations, realities and crisis debates

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The 3rd conference of the ESREA Migration, Ethnicity, Racism and Xenophobia Network

University of Lower Silesia (Dolnośląska Szkoła Wyższa)

Wrocław 2015

## **ESREA Network on Migration, Ethnicity, Racism and Xenophobia**

The network aims to create a space to explore the articulation of adult education with the themes of migration, ethnicity and xenophobia. In the process we hope to encourage democratic and critical dialogue between socially committed adult education scholars seeking to develop theoretical and methodological resources that can contribute to the formation of a 'solidarity from below' in the rapidly changing context of Europe and adult education. The network explores these issues through a series of research questions: How do processes and practices of adult education contribute to living in and with difference, understanding processes of belonging and community formation, reinventing democratic citizenship in the context of multicultural societies? What is the contribution of adult education to different kinds of policy response to difference in terms of integration and assimilation, minority rights, otherness? What are the ways methodologically to understand the experiences of migration, ethnicity, racism and xenophobia. Previous conferences of the Network took place in Sheffield (2009), Graz (2012) and Wrocław (2014).

### **The 3rd conference of the ESREA Migration, Ethnicity, Racism and Xenophobia Network**

***"Multiculturalism" today: aspirations, realities and crisis debates***

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*IISCE (International Institute for the Study of Culture and Education)* is an academic and research institute at the Faculty of Education, University of Lower Silesia. Founded in October 2003, IISCE responds to the processes of transnational integration with projects that increase international mobility, intercultural understanding and citizen participation through education.

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# Preface

The current debates and concerns across Europe about multiculturalism are of particular relevance to adult educators and raise significant challenges. Posing questions concerning the current state of affairs requires consideration of a number of dimensions.

Firstly, there is an objective fact of coexistence or mere contact between people from diverse countries, regions, ethnicities, cultural/religious traditions. This results from transnational migrations structured by core-periphery relations, reflecting the logic of neoliberal global economy and politics, dynamics of social inequalities, polarization and tensions, transnational flows of information and ideas, as well as cultural hybridization. These continue to follow patterns of Western/Northern hegemony rather than offer more balanced and egalitarian multidirectional cultural exchange.

Secondly, there is the question of how this coexistence-in-difference is organized through legal-institutional or policy means and how is it perceived, imagined, solidified and reproduced through education, media discourses and narratives in popular culture. Of equal importance seems the matter of how difference is practiced in less institutionalized daily contacts, such as community/neighbourhood relations, inter/intra-family experiences and personal interactions.

Thirdly, there remains the issue of more systematic theoretical reflection on the very notion of multiculturalism and assessment of its usefulness to grasp these realities and provide viable descriptions, interpretations and explications of the contemporary processes. In this context, one cannot ignore voices, which by now have formed a discourse on the “crisis of multiculturalism.” This seemingly “critical” perspective has continued to gain certain media attention and academic prominence in discussions on immigration, integration and cultural diversity, on both left and right of the political spectrum, particularly in the aftermath of terrorist murders in Norway of July 2011, although in some countries the “crisis of multiculturalism” discourse was present long before those events. At the same time the semantics of “multiculturalism” seems to fit interests of some players in neoliberal capitalism: “cultural diversity” can be commodified or used in corporate public relations strategies, while it may also serve well to cover structural socioeconomic problems linked to exploitation and deteriorating conditions of labour, class inequalities and poverty.

The fourth aspect concerns reflection on practical challenges related to the recent growth in social and political tendencies closely related to this anti-multicultural backlash. Today critiques of multiculturalism often serve as a pretext for promoting authoritarian policies, violating human rights, disseminating new (or not so new) racist and xenophobic imagery in concealed forms that have replaced “race” with “culture” or “civilization,” and shifted from the “race supremacy” calls towards postulates based on alternative: either assimilation to dominant standards of “majority” or “separation of cultures” understood as their confinement in “natural boundaries.” Among examples in contemporary Europe we may mention wide-spread Islamophobia, intensification of anti-Semitic tendencies, campaigns against immigrants as well as anti-Roma policies and violence in some countries. These tendencies interplay with ambivalent attitudes towards other issues, such as women’s rights or emancipation of sexual minorities. The ever stronger presence of neo-Fascist and other far-right parties all over Europe, from Greece to Scandinavia, with international links in other countries, pose a challenge to procedures and institutions of liberal democracy as well as to

organizations and movements focused on human rights, tolerance and egalitarian developments towards society free of racism and other forms of chauvinism. As repressive immigration policies continue on local, state-national and international or transnational (especially the European Union) levels, anti-multicultural backlash finds home among not only parties and movements of the populist far right, but also among some centre-liberal or left-leaning political circles and sectors of public opinion.

The purpose of the third conference of ESREA Migration, Ethnicity, Racism and Xenophobia Network was to examine the above issues with special focus on, but not limited to, the role of adult learning and education. The organizers invited academics, educators, civil society activists and others concerned with multiculturalism both as an aspect of contemporary globalized human condition as well as a discursive field. Submitted papers and abstracts referred to a broad range of subjects including media and politics, community and family, educational institutions and civil society groups and organizations countering racism and working towards integration, dialogue and social justice etc. Among contributions were theoretical accounts, presentations of field research findings, analyses of teaching/learning experiences and other kinds of reflection on conceptual or practical aspects, concerning local, national or transnational levels of multiculturalism.

The conference brought together almost thirty presentations, including one keynote speech (*Security and Diversity: Do Absolutes Defend Principles?* by Vida Bajc of the Methodist University), the bulk of papers with accompanying discussants' comments, and a few posters discussed during a separate session. This proceedings volume includes twelve full papers submitted after the conference and a number of additional abstracts of papers appearing in the conference final program. They all reflect the major intention of the Network's participants: to pose questions around how the current multicultural condition can be best understood, practiced and developed; what are the opportunities and aspirations, as well as the failures, dangers and traps in various ways of thinking on the subject and practice within this area; how various categories, such as gender, class, ethnicity, nationality, legal status, age, sexuality etc. intersect in discourses and debates on multiculturalism; how identity, difference and conflict can be best grasped to develop reliable ways of understanding the changing conditions and envision a more inclusive future for all.

Post-conference papers  
(with abstracts)



# Multicultural universities: working towards the integration of students from Portuguese-speaking African countries

Susana Ambrósio, Lucília Santos, Henrique M.A.C. Fonseca & Ana Vitoria Baptista

## Introduction

A research project on non-traditional students (NTS) in Higher Education (HE) is being carried out in two Portuguese HE institutions (University of Aveiro and University of Algarve). Nevertheless, this paper is focused on the experience of the University of Aveiro, since this is a first approach to this issue within the mentioned research project. The pertinence of this project, which started in May 2013, comes from the absence (to our knowledge) of systematised research on NTS in HE in Portugal. Although the project is composed of four interrelated research lines, which relate to four different groups of NTS: (i) Mature students, (ii) Students with disabilities, (iii) Portuguese-speaking African countries' (PALOP) students and (iv) Post-secondary technological specialisation (CET) courses' students. In this study the authors intend to focus only on the experience of students from PALOP, i.e., Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Saint Tome and Principe. This line of research will allow a detailed analysis on questions such as: who are these PALOP students, what are their difficulties, how do they deal with them and how do they experience their integration in HE in Portugal, particularly at the University of Aveiro? Also, it will allow to better understand the role of the university in the integration of PALOP students, and to draw some suggestions at institutional level in order to make their transition more successful.

As previously highlighted, this paper aims to reflect on how the University of Aveiro (UA) is supporting the integration of PALOP students in their new life in Aveiro at personal, social and academic levels. To achieve this goal an exploratory data collection of qualitative nature, through in-depth interviews, was designed. Interviews focused on the perspectives of 'persons of interest' (PI) from the UA on PALOP students were run. These PI may be characterised as having management positions and/or important roles within the services where they work in, regarding the integration of these students. The interviewees came from Cooperation Office - Rectory (R), Social Services (SS), Pedagogical Office (PO) and Student Ombudsperson (SO). From the content analysis, our goal is to bring together PI's perspectives regarding the actions and adequacy of resources of the UA on the integration of PALOP students. In particular, we aim to identify: (i) support structures and actions offered by the UA for the integration of these students, (ii) their main difficulties and obstacles concerning their integration and (iii) the actions and resources directed to PALOP students. These perspectives will allow us to reflect on the impact that those actions/resources have on the academic path of PALOP students and to systematise suggestions to enhance their experiences in HE.

## 1. The Portuguese-speaking African countries

PALOP countries[1] share a strong linguistic and cultural identity, having their own systems of governance, reflecting their reality and autonomy. With Portugal they share many cultural traits from a common past and their sovereign interests today.

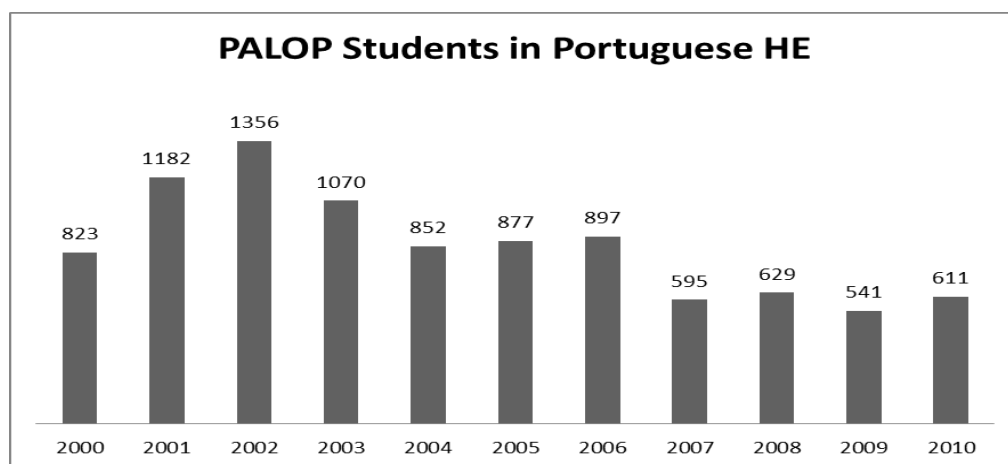
Cooperation for development with PALOPs is one of the main objectives of the Portuguese policy, also seen as a vehicle for affirmation and an extension of Portuguese influence internationally (Mesquita, 2005; Mourato, 2011). In this sense, the 'fight' against

poverty, the contribution to the consolidation of democracy, the promotion of economic development and, in particular, education, training and health are the priority areas for action of Portugal's cooperation policy with PALOPs (Palma, 2004). Within this policy, Portuguese Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have, since 1975, played an important role. Most PALOP students abroad choose Portugal to study due to the shared Portuguese language, historical issues and previous connections with Portugal and Portuguese relatives or friends or because of the guarantee that they can enroll in the Portuguese universities due to cooperation agreements (Bénard da Costa, 2012; Faria, 2009; Pessoa, 2004).

Multilateral cooperation agreements [2] allow PALOP students to have a special set of conditions to enroll in Portuguese HEI. These students must meet the following criteria: a) have a secondary education level degree or equivalent; b) not have Portuguese nationality and c) have a scholarship from the Portuguese government, from PALOP governments, from international conventions with the European Union or from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

According to the latest government data (Directorate-General for Higher Education, DGES, 2011), from 2000 to 2010 the number of PALOP students in Portugal first showed a substantial increase until 2002, followed by a steady decrease (Figure 1).

Figure 1. PALOP students in Portuguese HE. Source: DGES (2011)



Data also show that the percentage of PALOP students in Portugal has been independent of the country/population size. Smaller island-countries, like Cape Verde (n=2534) and Saint Tome and Principe (n=465) achieved more than 88% of PALOP student population in Portugal (n=). At the opposite extreme, the students from Angola (n=49) made less than 2%. Mozambique was the third country with more freshman students (n=204) and Guinea-Bissau was the fourth (n=190) (Table 1).

Table 1. Country of origin of PALOP students in Portuguese HE - freshman year  
Source: DGES (2011)

Country of origin	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Angola	18	16	8	3	4	49
Cape Verde	670	372	351	354	433	2534
Guinea-Bissau	40	39	39	7	25	150
Mozambique	51	33	52	37	31	204
Saint Tome and Principe	78	88	142	68	89	465

### *1.1. PALOP students and their integration in HE: the role of the university*

From 1970s, PALOP students gradually became an important group of foreign students in Portuguese HEIs. However no particular emphasis was taken to mitigate potential difficulties of integrating in Portuguese HEIs. There was a common idea that these students had no differences from cultural and social perspectives, comparing with their Portuguese colleagues, because they know the Portuguese language and culture (Nova, 2005). As a result, and in accordance with Nova (2005), there was some negligence from HEI regarding the socio-cultural specificities of PALOP students.

In this sense, there was and nowadays there still is a need from universities to develop and implement some strategies to improve the reception and the integration of PALOP students. The institutional responsibility must therefore encompass the promotion of the welfare of these students, at the psychological, social and academic level. There are some studies presented below, that focus on the integration of the PALOP students in Portuguese universities, regarding their motivations, academic success and participation in academic life. Most these studies are reflections and have suggestions to allow universities to enhance their welcoming programs and strategies to integrate PALOP students. Commonly they started from the analysis of students' voices to comprehend the main challenges and opportunities they see in their welcoming and integration process at Portuguese HEI. For example, Silva, Abrantes and Duarte (2009) developed a scale of academic and social integration (ISA) with specificity for PALOP students. With this scale the authors intended to identify three set of integration factors; the personal, the social and the academic dimension, and thus design specific strategies to improve PALOP students' integration. Duque (2012) measured and analysed the type of academic integration that some universities practice among PALOP students. The author used the Academic Experiences Questionnaire to deeper understand how these students lived their new life at academia. Rocha (2012) mentioned the importance of the implementation of tutoring projects with colleagues in order to improve the integration of new PALOP students.

The quality of the transition to HE of these students depends both on the psycho-social development of student, and how universities put in place strategies that facilitate their integration (Cunha & Carrilho, 2005). In addition, the process requires monitoring and evaluation practices directed at various 'academic actors' within HEIs in order to understand how the welcome-programmes and strategies impact on the integration of PALOP students, and foster academic success.

## 2. Methodology

The present study focuses on the UA and comprises the data analysis from the academic year 2013/2014. As stated before, this is an on-going project, and thus the results presented are preliminary. At this moment, we intend to explore the institutional perspective regarding PALOP students' welcoming programs and their integration at UA. So far, we have collected data from the institutional perspective and, as such, we will concentrate on PI's points of view.

For that purpose an exploratory data collection of qualitative nature through in-depth interviews was designed. These interviews focus on the perspectives of PI of the UA, who have management positions and/or important roles within the offices where they work in, regarding PALOP students' integration within this institution. The interviewees come from four offices of the UA: Cooperation Office - Rectory (R), Social Services (SS), Pedagogical Office (PO) and Student Ombudsperson (SO).

As previously highlighted, with this study we intend to deeper understand how the structures at UA are supporting PALOP students' integration in their new life in Aveiro at personal, social and academic levels. As such, this study aims to identify: (i) the support structures and actions offered by the UA on the integration of PALOP students; (ii) the main difficulties and obstacles in what concerns these students' integration, and (iii) actions and resources directed to them.

### 2.1. A brief description of PALOP students at UA

In the academic year of 2013/2014, there are 185 PALOP students enrolled at UA, attending bachelor e master's degrees. It should be noted that the total number of PALOP students at UA is 248. However, PhD students, students attending specialisations courses and technological specialization courses are not included in this study. As it can be verified in Table 2, the communities of Cape Verde (n= 68) and Mozambique (n=54) are the largest at UA. Saint Tome community has 36 students and Angola community has 18. The smallest community is Guinea-Bissau with 9 students (Table 2).

Table 2. PALOP students at University of Aveiro in 2013/2014

Degree	PALOP					Total
	Angola	Cape Verde	Guinea-Bissau	Mozambique	Saint Tome	
Bachelor	7	32	5	2	25	71
Master's	11	36	4	52	11	114
Total	18	68	9	54	36	185

The bachelor degrees with more PALOP students are Meteorology, Oceanography and Geophysics (n=6), Public Administration (n=6), Economy (n=5) and Technology and Information Systems (n=4). Regarding the master's degrees with more PALOP students, we may stress: Languages, Literatures and Cultures with 39 and Accounting with 9 PALOP students.

### 3. Preliminary results

#### 3.1. Support structures at UA

The support structures and actions offered by the UA regarding the integration of these students are given by Cooperation Office - Rectory (R), Social Services (SS), Pedagogical Office (PO) and Student Ombudsperson (SO).

##### 3.1.1. Support given by the Social Services

###### a) Social Scholarship

To have this kind of support these students have to meet some criteria such as: attested financial need, academic success and not already possessing a scholarship from their own home countries. Even with these well-defined criteria, there may be some exceptional cases: *“If the student has already a scholarship, but if there are serious delays in the payment of the scholarship, we’ll help him until the payment occur”*(SS3).

###### b) Food support

The Social Services also support PALOP students in their meals at the Campus, by providing the *“social ticket”* that allows the students in need *“for some time, which is defined by us, to make their meals in our canteens, paid for the Social Services...we have lunches, dinners and situations with also breakfast”* (SS4).

###### c) Accommodation

Like Portuguese students, PALOP students can apply for accommodation in university residences. For PALOP students in need there is a *“reduction in the price of accommodation”*(SS5).

###### d) Social merit scholarship

Since 2009, the UA has decided that *“for humanitarian purpose”* (SS1) PALOP students in need would be supported with this social merit scholarship. In this sense, the UA *“has the concern to find a support mechanism for humanitarian questions to help them [PALOP students], to have a minimum of conditions of life”* (SS2). Accordingly, PALOP students can apply to the Social merit scholarship. This merit scholarship consists of *“some task that students can do in different university departments, supporting the academic community”*(SS6) and it is paid in meal tickets.

##### 3.1.2. Support given by the Student Ombudsperson

The Student Ombudsperson is, most of the time, the link between the students and the different structures of the university, since *“there is a partnership and cohesive connection with all the structures of the university, which allows integrated responses to the problems.”* (SO1). The Student Ombudsman has several responsibilities: (i) defending and promoting the rights and interests of students at the University, (ii) responsibility for assessing complaints that are presented to him, and (iii) acting on his own initiative, guiding, based on results obtained, and proposing appropriate recommendations to the competent entities of the

university. For instance, it may be highlighted the following statement: *“PALOP students appeal to Student Ombudsperson looking for some kind of support, usually for social support, and then I send them to the appropriate structures”* (SO1).

### 3.1.3. Support given by the Pedagogical Office

The Pedagogical Office provides support to students in matters related to some general aspects of their academic and personal lives, while respecting confidentiality. Regarding PALOP students *“they come to the PO recently [...] with these scholarships problems”* (PO1) and then they were sent to the appropriate Social Services. Some students, from a particular PALOP community, appeal to the PO looking for academic support since *“in his country [...] they have a different teaching program [...] and they feel some difficulties.”* (PO2). In these cases, the PO provides academic support through its network of volunteers *“although the group of volunteers is more directed to students with disabilities [...] if the student really needs some help, of course they help him”* [PO3].

### 3.2. Synthesis of the main difficulties and obstacles in what concerns PALOP students' integration

There are serious issues regarding the allocation of scholarships, because *“sometimes, there are long delays in the payment of scholarships by the governments of origin and they only make the payment after 7-8 months”* (SS7). The delay in the payment of scholarship originates serious difficulties regarding food and accommodation, among other aspects of the student life, although the *“dominant problem may be in the social field”* (SO).

### 3.3. Actions and resources directed to PALOP students

#### 3.3.1. UA: inside doors

The institutional starting point should be *“to promote a better integration of these students”* (R1), hence, to gear the university towards efficiently connect the different offices, support structures and procedures. Considering the Rectory's perspective, it is important to analyse and to improve the welcoming and the integration of PALOP students, underlining that *“we [UA - Rectory] think a lot in the welcoming process of these students. It is important that they know where and with whom they can solve their problems”* (R2). Therefore, it is important to inform PALOP students beforehand of the different support structures offered at UA and how they can help them.

#### 3.3.2. UA: beyond this institution's doors

The different structures of the UA try to find an articulation with each other, in order to better respond to PALOP students' problems. However, *“it is evident that there are other actors [...] since there are things that can't be solved within the university, and we need to help them [PALOP students] to solve them [PALOP students' problems]”* (R3). Accordingly, in order to support PALOP students, the different structures of the UA also articulate with several national and local institutions, such as: (i) SEF – “Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras” - Portuguese acronym to Emigration Services, a security service organised vertically under the Ministry of Home Affairs; (ii) the Health center; (iii) the Municipality of Aveiro; (iv) CUFC – “Centro Universitário Fé e Cultura” - Portuguese acronym to Faith and Culture University

Centre, institution of the Diocese of Aveiro dedicated to supporting the academic population: students, faculty and staff.

## **Final remarks**

According to the analysis of the preliminary results, it seems that the UA has a real concern with the welcoming program directed to PALOP students and their integration in the university. It also looks like all “persons of interest” at the university defend a close relationship, partnership and/or synergy with (i) different structures at UA, (ii) the PALOP students themselves and (iii) the different local and national institutions that contact with PALOP students more or less directly.

Nevertheless, these “institutional voices” are aware of some issues that need to be improved in the near future and they have the willingness to do it. So, in order to accomplish that improvement it appears to be important to systemise and organise all information regarding PALOP students welcoming and integration. Additionally, the support system provided by the UA to these students seems to be very complete, but appears to lose some value by not being systematised institutionally.

By sharing these perspectives, we hope to promote a proficuous discussion on this current and relevant topic: welcoming and integration process of PALOP students within HEI. The next research step will be to analyse PALOP students’ voices regarding the support given by the UA.

## **Notes**

1. “Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa” - In 1996, together with Portugal and Brazil the Portuguese-speaking African countries established the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (also known by the Portuguese Acronym CPLP: “Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa”), which East Timor later joined in 2002.
2. There are different typologies of cooperation agreements between Portugal and the PALOP, such as: General agreement of Cooperation/Friendship; Cultural agreement; Cooperation agreement in the Education, Teaching, Scientific Research and Graduated training domains; Cooperation agreement in sociocultural, scientific and technological domains; Scientific and Technical cooperation agreement; Cooperation agreement in teaching and professional training domains and Cooperation agreements in Higher Education, Science and Technology domains (Mourato, 2011).

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**Abstract:** This paper focuses in a study regarding students from African Portuguese-speaking countries (PALOP) attending Portuguese Higher Education institutions (HEIs). This study will allow a detailed analysis on who these PALOP students are, which their difficulties are, how they deal with them and how they experience the integration in Portuguese HEIs, namely University of Aveiro. Furthermore, it will allow a better understanding of the role of universities' structures concerning these students' integration and to draw some suggestions at institutional level, in order to make their transition more successful. According to the analysis of the preliminary results collected by in-depth interviews, on one hand it seems that the University of Aveiro has a real concern with the welcoming program directed to PALOP students and their integration in the university. On the other hand, it appears to be important to systemise and organise all information regarding PALOP students welcoming and integration.

**Keywords:** multicultural universities; integration; students from Portuguese-speaking African countries.



# French companies, inclusion and Black women graduates

Carmen Diop

## Introduction

France officially promotes the coexistence of workers from different cultures in the workplace. Companies are encouraged to acquire the Diversity Label and to promote gender equality in order to fight discrimination against women and immigrants or French descendants of immigrants (Beauchemin, Hamel & Simon, 2010; Alaoui, 2011; Kachoukh, Maguer & Marnas, 2011). This paper focuses on some exceptions to the French principle of equality at work :discrimination, injustice and exclusion which are poorly documented (Maruani, 1998; Merckling, 1998,) from the victims point of view. The social construction of discrimination is based on categories (race / ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, disability, age, religion, etc.) which maintain the social system and influence the formation of individual identities (Browne & Misra, 2003; Crenshaw, 1991 Bilge, 2009a). Added to race, sex is a double otherness with specific implications on the labor market and in the workplace (Meurs & Pailhé, 2008; Rebzani, 2003; Fall, 2005; Diop, 2011). The intersections of categories make people particularly vulnerable to discrimination during their career (Crenshaw, 1991; Brown & Misra, 2003). Then, Black women remain concentrated and assigned in feminized occupations with little or no qualifications, particularly in the health and domestic labor (Merckling, 2006, 2011, 2012). Despite the regulations, their access to the labor market is often performed under the sign of differential treatment (Sebag, Méhaignerie, 2004) and sometimes of marginalization or exclusion based on the colonial legacy practices and representations.

Immigrant women or female of immigrant descent experience differential treatments (Maruani; 1998; Merckling, 1998; Meurs & Pailhé, 2008) which impacts their social trajectories (Kachoukh, Maguer & Marnas, 2011; Alaoui; 2011; Beauchemin, Hamel & Simon, 2010). How do workers from dominant group integrate those who have socially situated characteristics, like graduates Black women? Based on a current survey with more than fifty women of Caribbean and / or African descent, often French, sometimes foreigners, this paper shows that due to their ethnicization, graduates Black women face specific challenges in their careers and have to develop individual strategies in order to adapt to seemingly neutral and colorblind color management practices and forms of leadership (Diop, 2011). Influenced both by racism and sexism, they conceal their social work experience with individual and collective denial. This paper analyzes the symbolic violence of stigmatizing social representations and the way how, despite the assertion of republican equality, they experience exclusion, marginalization and racism at key moments of their career: access to employment, occupational status, contracts, salaries and social life at the workplace, during the exercise of managing functions and at last strategies of resistance.

## Theoretical framework and methodology

The domination relationships inherited from colonization (Césaire, 1950), its neurotic collective heritage (Fanon, 1952), and racist stereotypes (Memmi, 1957) weigh on the individual trajectories of migrants in France (Beauchemin, 2010; Sayad, 1992, 1999, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c). On one hand, in the French postcolonial context, some visible characters and characteristics which are minoritized by the dominant group, are associated with skin color. On the other hand, women are assigned to the reproductive sphere (Kergoat, 1998, 2009)

which indicates their place in the society (Juteau, 1981). Otherwise, as those from lower classes and minorities, they are excluded from the public space (Okin;1989; Fraser, 2001). The intersection of gender and ethnicity creates identity assignments (Guénif – Souilamas, 1999, 2010b) which make them particularly vulnerable to the effect of gender, origin, age and disability. Indeed, the workplace is a ‘factory of ethnicity’ (Lada, 2004) which overdetermines the identities of people who are seen as ‘others from inside’ (Guénif – Souilamas, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). Thus, Black women suffer triple discrimination (Meurs & Pailhé, 2008) and experience psychological emigration and assimilation, as well as vulnerability (Caporale – Bizzini, Galhardo - Couto, Kašić, Lund, Pulcini, Richter – Malabotta & Skærbæk, 2009).

My multidisciplinary approach mixes theoretical analysis, empirical observation, historical and geographical contextualization in order to give an account for the complexity of these women’s experience. It also draws on the feminist standpoint epistemology which claims that strategies of resistance meet the constraints that deny the identity and needs of minority individuals. The methodology of this paper leans on intersectionality, seeking how social categories emerge implicitly or explicitly from speeches (Bilge, 2009b) and how it affects the experience of relationships of domination. The biographical statements of professionals holding at least an undergraduate degree, are considered like a discursive and a performative production (Sanna, 2006), a gender technology” (De Lauretis, 1987, 2005) more or less deviating from standards. How do these women live subjectively the intersection of racism, sexism and classism in French companies? Are they able to act in order to transform or influence on the world, despite the social structures and representations that limit their opportunities? In one word, do they implement agency and show strength and forms of independence to face the domination (Giddens, 1984; Butler, 2006; Bourdieu, 1987; Foucault, 1994)?

### **A complex survey field**

This paper aims to contribute to the knowledge on ethno-cultural and gender diversity, as well as inequality in the workplace in France. It explores bicultural Black women’s subjective experiences of everyday racism and gendered racism (Essed, 1990, 1991), based on professional life stories of women of Caribbean and / or African origin and sometimes both. The research field consists of Black women graduates who only have in common three variables: sex, skin color and education. These subjects are immersed in very different situations and environments in terms of business, social class and social belongings, which allows a diverse range of worldviews, behaviours, practices, attitudes, and strategies. Aged 26 to 65 years, some of them are born in the territories and overseas French departments (DOM TOM) or in Africa. Others came in France as young adults to complete their education, for a professional assignment or for a wedding. Others were born in France of African or Caribbean parents, migrant or not. Often, they do not directly know their country of origin; they do not mention the Caribbean or Africa and feel more ties with Metropolitan France. Their origin is revealed by social, cultural or culinary practices transmitted by their parents. More rarely, they travel frequently, a part of their family remained in the roots country, which ensure the maintenance of strong ties and allow them to declare themselves ‘Caribbean’ or ‘Africans’. Many of them were educated in a Muslim environment, the others in a Christian environment. Their faith and religious practices were rarely mentioned during the interviews. Most of the Muslims never spontaneously gave details on this topic, unlike Christian who most readily referred to their faith or church. Most of the participants correspond to Western standards of ‘Black’ beauty, with an exception of a minority: overweight, face features called ‘Negroid’, big thighs, buttocks and hips. Finally, the range of their skin color is very wide: from black

'80% chocolate' to very swarthy or 'matt' complexion. I have not referred to them as 'Black'; they all volunteer to participate spontaneously in the survey, even the Métis from Black and White parents, self-reported as Black.

Irrespective of their geographical origin, they are from quite different social /professional level: daughters of popular or blue collar classes - migrant or native workers and employees; French, Caribbean or African lower and upper middle class. They are single, married or separated, with or without child(ren), from African, Caribbean or White Metropolitan fathers.. All obtained their degree, from Bachelor (level of baccalaureate - Secondary School Advanced Level- plus three years) to level of baccalaureate plus five years in France, in various fields: history, communication, Graduate School of Commerce, Finance, public law, political science, philosophy, English, fashion design, theater, arts., etc... While two of them originally wanted to become a doctor, only one had a scientific education (Telecom Engineer), two couple of them studied business administration, most studied humanities or law. Four entered prestigious French schools accessible by competition, like HEC (Hautes Etudes Commerciales – Business), Normale Sup (Ecole Normale Supérieure – Humanities and Science), Sciences Po (Institut d'Etudes Politiques –Political Science). They advertise different occupation as their profession: Editorial Assistant, diplomat, archivist, manager, assistant in public administration, journalist, lawyer, legal expert, designer, consultant, computer science, Communications, singer, film writer or producer, etc... Two did not name their job that I have to deduce from the activity they described: accounting and Human Resources assistant. Master 1 and Bachelor degrees are in the minority, most of the ladies have obtained a Master 2, professional or leading to a PHD. All of them are more or less stable in their job and have been working for at least three years. Their professional statuses are diverse: some civil servants or contractual in French administration, with a statutory perspective of career advancement. The others work in the private sector. However the involuntary over representation of the public sector is a feature of female employment in France, especially at a high level for the most educated women (Duru-- Bellat 2005). Very little of the participants are self-employed (lawyer, stylist). Many of them experience certain precariousness (fixed-term contracts, performing intermittent). Most had to struggle to find work in Metropolitan France... Two of them are recognized as disabled workers (one physical and one mental) by the Technical Committee of Orientation and Professional Reclassification (COTOREP, now replaced by the County Houses for Disabled - MDPH), which is supposed to improve and facilitate access to employment and vocational training thanks to institutional arrangements.

Because this field consists of a collection of individuals who have different occupations, I do not analyze professional identities, but rather the relationship to the social world of work, as well as the subjective and socio- emotional apprehension of the participants and the 'objective' vision which assigns them to a minorized group identity in the French culture and society. In order to understand the psychological, psychosocial processes, micro- and macro-social involved in workplace discrimination, this paper reveals the practices in the French government and in the private sector. The verbatim are analyzed in a multidisciplinary approach, in order to understand how structural discrimination (De Rudder, 2000; Guillaumin, 1992, 2001) limits the participation of professional Black women graduates and to explain the persistence of social and ethnic inequalities in French companies. My analysis ends on strategies responses to discrimination, the conflicting relationships and the negotiations to become social actors at work.

## Difficult access to valued employment

Professional orientation is inspired by school, community and family experiences. In particular, the social capital - based on the possession of a durable network (Bourdieu, 1980)- and the *habitus*- that allows to interpret the world in a way shared by the members of the same social environment (Bourdieu, 1979) - may help an individual to adapt to the environment and to adjust to situations (Accardo, 1991). *Habitus* and social capital highlight the mechanisms of social inequality, and nearly 80 % of the fifty Black women of the survey were initially oriented or “spontaneously” oriented themselves in short courses after Secondary School. They first acquired or targeted a senior technician certificate (BTS) or a technical university degree (DUT) requiring two years of study after Secondary School Advanced Level. One of them was even directed to a certificate of professional aptitude (CAP) before the end of Secondary Education!!! Only two of them, from working class, were revealed by the attention of school teachers, and could join the highly valued preparatory classes for French Higher Education prestigious Schools. Indeed, motivation to knowledge was initially discouraged by the school environment, where most of teachers consider that students' intellectual resources first depend on the social position of their parents. They are less demanding from those of lower classes than from those of average or dominant classes and support the idea not to extend the school careers of the first in higher education (Hugrée & Poullaouec, 2011). The fact that all the participants have continued their studies, sometimes well beyond the schooling required (Master 1 or 2) shows their effective ability of resistance without confrontation. As they enter in companies with diplomas, being a woman, the daughter of immigrants, Black causes a triple discrimination (Meurs & Pailhé, 2008). Because work is central in the building of identity (Valette, 2006), they have to use specific strategies to successfully enter the business.

The French labor market reproduces the ethnic relations of the society (De Rudder, Poirer, & Vourch, 2000) and professional integration is not only based on qualification, but also on gender and nationality, which keeps them away from valued jobs (Maruani, 1998; Merckling, 1998). The difference between unemployed native French and people of foreign origin increases with the skill level (De Rudder *et al.*, 2000). Gender, race and class relations are combined in the labor market and increase gender relationships of domination (Kergoat, 2009). Moreover, some categories and their interactions are more prominent depending on the circumstances (Browne & Misra, 2003). An intersectional approach allows revealing the multiple experiences of marginalization and specific forms of inequality (Crenshaw, 1991) of ‘colored’ women who are usually kept within social invisibility (Bilge, 2009a). This kind of analysis deconstructs social categories and shows how some interactions between categories become more or less salient depending on the circumstances (Browne & Misra, 2003). Thus, an African surname which is a privilege in the microcosm of international organizations like the United Nations may become a stigma of a dominated racialized social group in the hexagon. That, even if one is rarely discriminated both on all his identity facets based on categories and social markers (La Rivière-Zijdel, 2009) like sex, race/ethnicity (the two sides of the same coin, according to Wekker, 2009), class, age, disability, religion, .... Discrimination, social position and inequalities have to be analyzed in interaction (Woodward, Cabo & Bagilhole, 2009) because they jointly model oppression (Hill –Collins, 1989, 2004). In France, jobs ads announce age, sex and nationality criteria, even if experience, training and languages are the only official criteria (Marchal, 2005).

*I had a lot of interviews when I was a student: it looked like a KGB interrogation!*

*I have a BA in communication and I was only proposed internships. So I went through the alternation.*

*My French friends had their pre-employment even before they finished school, while those with African surname did not work or were still interns  
Surprisingly, we were two of foreign origin for whom it was much more difficult to find a job: a Moroccan female and me  
I've never worked thanks to the National Employment Agency (Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi – ANPE), it was always by networking  
I am not interested in networks of Blacks in France...*

Diplomas do not protect women, they are over-unemployed and prone to instability (Gauvin, 1998). Moreover, qualified minority females are excluded from a normal career development.

*I have a short-term contract, afterwards I will see. I have experienced long periods of unemployment, but every year I manage to have some contracts. I use my time to devise projects and I avoid finding myself without activity. But sometimes I got the blues.*

### **Diversity label and reality**

In principle, there is a correspondence between initial training and professional position with an intersection between the age, the professional education level and the economic sector (Mansuy & Grelet, 1998). But social discrimination is based on the intersections between degree level, gender, skin color, origin and age. In France, the school capital diversifies professional backgrounds, but age, sex, skin color and origin are still disadvantages in career courses. Women with all kind backgrounds are less likely to obtain a permanent job and more often unemployed. Moreover, ethnicity weighs more than sex. Araujo-Guimaraes, Marschner, & De Britto, 2008). Then, Black high skilled women often face professional decommissioning and transitional maladjustment even if their professional experiences do not negate their initial training on the labor market (Mansuy & Grelet, 1998).

Then, Black women graduates implement networking to be hired and administrative examinations to join the public service. The display of gender and ethnic diversity allows highly qualified Black women to access 'top' management positions. Indeed, the legal framework allows the access to French public service based on merit, equality of opportunity and anonymity. An official must be French, from EU or Swiss and recruited by external or internal competition. Foreigners out from the EU with a work permit may only have a contract. The, the career of a civil servant depends on seniority, training and responsibilities and also on a notation after an annual meeting with the supervisor. Most of the civil servants of the survey have at least a baccalaureate degree in France (Secondary School Advanced Level) and belong to the executive or manager category called 'cadre B' or 'cadre A'. Yet, once they are hired, the career is not easy and highly qualified Black women face difficulties.

*As I won the competition, I had a priority choice between three positions. When I went around the department heads, two of them told me that they preferred to keep the local candidate who had failed the competition*

This purchase manager holding a master's degree experienced in automotive has been required another specialized degree in order to pursue her career in this sector and had to resume her studies. A female journalist from Martinique was never been integrated into a public radio, while new White ladies, less educated and experienced, became officials:

*I understood that they were not willing to give me a small place. Only promises...*

*I applied for a change: the director wanted me to propose a communication plan in order to test me, and of course, I was not successful! In six months, I sent twenty applications through the employment exchange website of the public service. I received only four responses. A doubtful one, and three negative ones, after I called them back by phone. My single track was my personal network*

*I wanted to return to my job after my parental leave and I had a lot of trouble because I wanted to work part time and they did not want me! Finally, the Department had to make an injunction to make them reinstate me*

Career paths are not a series of successive positions, but may be put into perspective with the circumstances. At the same time, the confrontation with the labor market is essential for the building of an autonomous social identity (Dubar, 1998). Whatever their social origin or educational background are, when they become professional, Black women are assigned to a range of jobs which fit the expected image of Black and uneducated woman. Indeed, they are registered in domesticity and servitude in a metaphor of the colonized African continent as the intersection of gender and race often means a hypersexualization (Jeurissen, 2003; Hill – Collins, 2004; Le Bihan, 2009, 2011).

*As a journalist, I considered myself as a feminist activist. But a completely naked Black woman with a French flag on the pubis was published on the cover to illustrate one of my papers about racism against Black women in France. Then the owner summoned me to his house to deliver my payment check: he wore a housecoat. And I left the magazine...*

When social class interferes with gender and race, sexualization may sweeten. Social class intersects with race, and may positively blur hysexualization, but not always; it depends on circumstances...

*In the workplace, the White man with a higher social background Black woman is not going to be in a seductive posture, because he doesn't control the double handicap: she is a woman, she is Black, but mostly her social status makes it impossible ...*

## **Life skills at work**

The organization of work also includes the social world of labor (Dejours, 2000). The participants face unpunished sexist, racist and ethno-centric routine of colleagues, (De Rudder *et al.*, 2000) which are shadowed by the Republican color blindness, especially the stereotype of Black people who are difficult to manage (Rebzani, 2002). Through a process of socialization within the company, they internalize the denial of ethnic or racial domination and learn to 'do with it' (Lada, 2004). The denial of the existence of ethnic relations in France does not allow the victims to express their suffering and obliges them to adopt, strategies to maintain a tolerable work environment and to avoid frontal conflict (De Rudder *et al.*, 2000). These women face the stereotype of the unpredictable and difficult to manage Black fellow (Rebzani, 2002, Fall, 2005).

*You have to make much more effort to provide work.*

*In the administration, some people did not like to see people from diverse backgrounds and did not hesitate to declare clearly: ' people like you should not be employed in the public service, because there are real French who need jobs, why do they hire you? You Black people, you deal with what does not concern you! You are in the place where you*

*should not be! Why do you meddle in? Then, after a number of years, I was very surprised that my boss told me one day, ' You are different. You are not vindictive like Blacks are usually. Because in general, Black are very revenge! One does not feel that you consider that all White people are evil'. Then I said ' What do you consider ' Black revenge', do you know Black people who are revengeful?' 'He said ' No, but that's the impression they give... 'We always have to justify our state of being, our behavior...!'*

This unspeakable experience of social assignments gives them a social expertise to implement culturally acceptable behaviors (Goffman, 1963,1973, 1974, 2000; Essed, 1991) and their behavior becomes essential for the assessment of their competence:

*They do not question the usefulness of my work or skills, but my behavior. I am suspected of being temperamental. My boss told me: ' it seems that you are rigid. You should be more flexible'*

They have to hide their reactions to explicit and implicit racism in order to meet expectations which are not formally prescribed, to fit the mold and to use complying and distancing strategies. Otherwise,

*It's the fear that I perceive the thing as racism and discrimination. They are afraid to hurt you; they look at you warily, quizzically thinking: 'Is she going to consider me a racist? '*

*I usually speak super fast and I am careful to speak more slowly*

*I have to be like that to get the job.*

*You must always be careful not to hurt them and they are so easy to hurt''*

*I've always considered working with distance.*

*It's as if I withdrew this part of myself far away in order to protect myself and to become unresponsive*

They have to maintain confidence in their lasting respect of good behavior (Dejours, 2003, 2012), according to implicit prescriptions in order to become part of the labor collective group.

*When I find Blacks in the workplace, they are embarrassed in front of me: I come there like an elephant; I make a lot of noise...*

*You must be blind, not seeing and not feeling*

*I'll stay in this company. I'll be strong. I'll take upon myself and at the same time, once I leave the office, I will detach myself.*

*They say that there are always problems with the Caribbean's*

*When I found something unacceptable! I tend to yell. But this environment does not allow that! My colleague had a more flexible spine with the right people!*

### **Recognition as a manager...**

In the social hierarchy, the wage level reveals the social value of a worker and low pay generates humiliated identities (Doray, 1985). Salary crystallizes the characteristics of the participants (age, sex, class and ethnicity). Wage and career progress depend on employees' assessment and, in administrations, discrimination is part of tactical command (Dejours, 1998, 2007). If the public service announces equal treatment at equal grade and step, statutory bonuses may be "forgotten" by the

subalterns in charge of the calculation of salaries. Thus, a contractor's salary was ranked by the post she held and not according to her degree, while workers were generally paid on the basis of their highest qualification in the company. Seniority is often the only way of promote on for Black officials because the annual evaluation which conditions the progression by selection can be skipped by supervisors.

*After 15 years in the private sector, when I passed the competition, I could not obtain a career reconstitution. And finally, I was entitled to a minimum level. In ten years as a civil servant, I had only one assessment interview and no notation.*

Management normally includes design and supervision responsibilities as well as technical expertise. This specific professional status is valued in France, and provides high integration, hierarchical position, financial or management responsibilities and a career progression in the company (Cousin, 2002, 2008; Flocco, 2006). But the dynamics of recognition is based on hidden dimensions and subjective judgments (Dejours, 2003, 2012; Cousin, 2008) and the social context fosters denial or inadequate forms of social recognition, discrimination, suffering at work and a sense of injustice (Renault, 2004; Honneth, 2013, Dejours, 2007). The dynamics of (non) recognition (Taylor, 1993; Honneth, 2008, 2013; Fraser, 2001; Renault, 2004) is a heuristic social phenomenon as well as a theoretical critical tool which helps to analyze work and exclusion and to feed the debate on minorities and discrimination. It offers an analytical framework for sense of injustice and denial of recognition (Renault, 2004; Schaut, 1999; Honneth, 2000). For minority people, recognition often corresponds with shifted forms of visibility, unsatisfactory, cleaving or heartbreaking recognition (Renault, 2004). The workplace is the perfect place to observe forms of defect recognition.

A job providing autonomy, control, confidence, in a controlled design activity, with social utility and power to act, helps structure the psyche and turns work into pleasure (Dejours, 1988, 1998) especially when the technical activity meets the judgment of beauty : the compliance of the labor, of the production, of the manufacturing of the service with the state of the art (Dejours, 1995). Recognition at work helps to build identity, autonomy and subjectivity (Dejours, 1988, 1998, Molinier, 2006). But it also leans on normative patterns of behavior (Renault, 2004) and the symbolic recognition of the value of an employee's work leans on strategic purposes (Honneth, 2008) and often depends on social and political decisions (Molinier, 2006). The judgment of the usefulness of the activity of an employee is issued by colleagues, superiors, subordinates and users. Subordinates often realize the utility of their manager's activity for their own work (Dejours, 1995) on a subjective basis (Cousin, 2002, 2008). And the ethnic and gender hierarchy may be in conflict with the official professional hierarchy. Then, some subordinates from dominant groups may refuse to be supervised by minority managers considered illegitimate and deny them any professional recognition. 'Ethnic imbalance' in the collective work group may lead to personalized conflicts (De Rudderet *al.*, 2000) which are one of the foundations of symbolic domination. Thus the participants experience an imposed negative identity, as the evaluation of their work focuses on other criteria than their expertise. Thus, a recently promoted financial manager charged with overseeing the accounting staff of a large distribution company was surprised to discover that they had written a collective letter to the Director General explaining that they were not willing to work under her orders.

*You always have to beg them to do their job properly! It is quite painful! People are paid to do a job and you almost have to be on your knees! You have to turn your tongue in your mouth seven times. Taking a luxury of caution to talk to people! You should flatter them. One girl has spread around saying that 'the manager is zero. If I 'm not*



*there, the service collapses'. Two other girls supported me telling the truth. They saved me: I could get out, it could have been serious!*

### **...Without being so**

However, Black female managers are both filled and devoid of agency: they have a confused and limited scope and uncertain initiatives (Cousin, 2002). They must obey the paradoxical injunction: 'You are a manager, but don't be so'. They rarely decide their own rules of action and their autonomy seems an illusion (Flocco, 2006). They are like alibis, straw women who do not actually carry out responsibilities.

*I actually have no responsibility! As soon as I take an initiative, the director takes umbrage. He gave me a rather negative assessment, because at the beginning I was still kicking and screaming saying 'I am a manager. I must have a minimum responsibility!' The boss told me that I would not manage the logistics, but the general affairs, without more information. So I started groping. I had bits of files. Finally, I had a function without having one! A colleague arrived shortly after and logistics was for her: she asked me 'are you going to be my secretary?' ... In charge of general affairs, there was actually no job for me. I managed continuing education and legal affairs without managing anything! It meant nothing! They did not give me a chance to create my place. In fact, I had to make photocopies, to check the files for transmission to the accounting office, that's all. I was doing the job of a low-level employee! I had no budget, I had nothing. I was only answering questions when I had some.*

*I began as the deputy to the Chief of an Administrative Service. It should have been management, but people do not want to change their work habits! 'We've always done it that way', When you hear that sentence 50 times, you get in line, or you do something else. I had a really bad time. As soon as I have to deal with more than two people, there is always trouble! .*

In the public service, one cannot be charged a position below his grade, but Black female managers are often affected on strictly functional positions, involving no command and / or financial responsibility; operational functions, isolation, with no work nor collective cooperation. Racism and discrimination are things that one does not talk about (Gaignard, 2010). Effective management may be provided by someone from the dominant ethnic group with hierarchical posture. In the private sector, a senior legal officer working in a team of two people was suddenly imposed, when her colleague left, to work under the supervision of the CFO, losing her autonomy and any direct relationship with the departments of the company she used to collaborate with before. A junior consultant graduate of THE top French Business Administration School (HEC) had her client's file withdrawn: the client gradually outlined his needs and grievances to the team manager and she eventually turned into a performer without any proposal ability in the IT management support project that she used to lead.

Some of them are assigned to a 'blocked professional identity' which leans on a rift between the identity assigned by the institution ('identity for others') and the identity that they have forged ('self-identity definition') (Dubar, 1998). They often gave up their singular 'specialist' identity based on qualifications and became workers available on demand. Some careerists overqualified assistants and contractors ignore the gap between their desired and imposed identities; and expect a career progression, with no hierarchical dependency. Both of them are doomed to isolation out of collective labor arbitrations (Molinier, 2004, 2006, Dejours, 2012) and often receive no support from unions (Vourc'h & De Rudder, 2006) which are also

traversed by discriminatory attitudes with women and minority workers. The usefulness, effectiveness of a participant's work may be attacked, making her become vulnerable and isolated, and confined to 'women's work' (Haraway quoted by Molinier, 2006). As they are socially constructed as women, they are devoted to 'devalued labor', to 'work considered feminine', exercised by male or female migrants, slaves or colonized who have been naturalized ethnicized (Falquet, 2009). The three social relations (class, race, sex) are undisentangleable and they not only strengthen, but they also co-produce each other. The class relationship strengthens racialization and 'genderization' through 'the processes of naturalization (...). They strengthen and legitimate precariousness (i.e. class relations) and 'genderization'. And gender relation sexacerbate class relations because feminization (...) strengthens race relations by anchoring reasoning in naturalization (Kergoat, 2009, pp122-123). Thus, they are victims of the usual violence against disabled, Black, woman... (Dejours, 1993). However, most of them still claim professional excellence and a need to be respected both as Blacks and as women.

### **Forms of resistance and strategies of defense**

None of the participants admits that she used an institutional device against racial or sexual discrimination (*Haute Autorité de lutte contre les discriminations et pour l'égalité –Halde-, Défenseur des droits*). Some of them do not identify themselves to a minorized group and cannot complain using the racial stigma (Poli, 2004). Consciously or not, they implement flexibility in front of symbolic and material marginalization, thanks to their various social affiliations that limit and / or increase their recognition needs. Their perception and reactions to discrimination can change in the process of social recognition (Taylor, 1993; Honneth, 2000; Fraser, 2011, 2011) in a subjective interpretation of discrimination. They juggle stigma according to the circumstances in an intersectional performative and discursive logic (Sanna, 2006). Thus, for this thirty two years old freelance reporter :

*It is because I'm young, because those who are popular in broadcasting business, are around forty, whether they are French, Indian, White or Black. And I'm right in the box of the thirty old ones for whom everything, sex, race, education, it is hell on earth.*

Even if she recognizes the interaction of social categories, she neutralizes gender and race, and considers age as a source of privileges or disadvantages. She also focuses on the effect of context (Browne & Misra, 2003).

*People ask me: 'where have you been working before?' Because 35 or 40 years old editors used to experience playing with Blacks and Arabs in the playground. It's different, because in TV business, we are in a special environment. If I was talking about France 3, the national TV channel in Châteauroux or Dijon, I might not say the same thing. We are in Paris : people travel, they have friends who are musician or artists and they are African, Indian, Chinese... I might have problems as a Black journalist in the countryside for example when I need to find a witness for a TV show...*

She does not want to consider that all her difficulties are due to racism, she nevertheless recognizes that people may sometimes refer to her ethnic origin and that the addition of age, sex and race exacerbates discrimination

*When my intern arrived from Alsace [a very conservative region of France] in Paris in a big TV production company, and found that his manager was Black, I think that he was shocked! He recognizes me as his supervisor when he is in trouble! He may feel less nervous with me than with a White female manager! It's because of the collective unconscious vision which considers that Black people are not capable, are inferior! Before seeing the coordinator, he will see a 'Re- noi ' [French slang for 'Black']!*

When she works for a mainstream media, sometimes she combines her professionalism to a militant commitment:

*I don't let anyone go through! I said : ' look, how can you say a 'small Blackette' ? 'Small' is already reductive! Let's not speak of the suffix ' ette ' ! So stop! You say a 'young African American' or a 'Black young lady'. Not a 'small Blackette'... !*

Among other experiences, tricks, strategies and tactics of women from immigration (Guénif-Souilamas, 2010a, 2010b), the speech and the account of one's story is a way to appropriate one's experience, to(re) produce or to resist (Delory-Momberger, 2009) to the structure and environment, and their alternative narrative is a demand of recognition (Butler, 2004, 2006). They live their experiences of social privileges and disadvantages differently according to the intersections that they construct in their narratives of belonging, identification and practices (Kruzynski, 2004). The categories which are combined and accumulated (Pellegrino, 2009) structure their everyday experience of inequality at the personal, symbolic and institutional level (Wekker, 2009). The biographical approach and this attempt of an intersectional methodology allow to show the complexity of discriminations linked to sex, skin color, social class, sexual, generational difference and postcolonial experience (Wekker, 2009) which differ by the dimensions of choice, visibility and change (Kantola, 2009). The intersectional approach focuses on a large range of social identities and positionalities (Haraway, 1988; Gutiérrez Rodríguez, 2006) and on the way how the subject thinks the effects the categories, going from the posture of victim to resistance for her recognition at work. Thus, they set up defensive strategies (Dejours, 2000; Gaignard, 2010; Grenier– Pezé, 2005, 2007; Molinier, 2006) during the time of their learning and professionalization (De Souza *et al* , 2009; Delory – Momberger, 2009) and throughout their careers in some kind of cleavage (Dejours, 1988).

*Even if it is because I am a woman, what does it change?  
I cannot reach those who have hurt me!*

Age determines trajectories and ethnicity weighs more than sex (Araujo-Guimaraes *et al.*, 2008).

*This is what makes you put your resume in the trash. In addition, I hold another discriminating factor, I am more than round.  
Maybe it's because I was very young. Maybe my complexion was not the good one! I stop defining myself as a disabled person*

They feel the weight of discriminating characters differently. It can be gender:

*I saw their surprise; they expected to meet a gentleman.*

Discrimination by age and sex looks natural to them and they can superimpose categories

*You are already a woman, but being Black is not considered in fair value. And being Caribbean, it is even worse!*

When they belong to privileged classes or local elites, they do not see themselves as dominated, they may deny the impact of their minority status and stand on their class privileges, showing condescension to job search comrades, obscuring discrimination, distancing themselves from assigned role and playing with social frameworks (Nizet & Rigaux, 2005). Yet, some causes of discrimination are more obvious for them depending on the circumstances.

*It's because I'm Black! I have not thought about my womanhood, yet he referred me to my motherhood!*

This young disabled lawyer spontaneously thinks the interaction of her visible characters, but deliberately conceals her physical disability, the benefit of age and / or skin color while people with disabilities face the suspicions of inferiority and failure in business (Michel *et al.*, 1985). Her origin, sex and age which appear like benefits when she is hired as a legal adviser eventually become a disadvantage. Indeed, preferential hiring of foreigners or minority workers is rarely synonymous of equal treatment, but rather a pretext to impose disadvantageous conditions (De Rudder *et al.*, 2000). Moreover, despite her decommissioning, she shows corporatist elitism and eventually manages to use her disability as a comparative advantage when she is employed in an agency specializing in the recruitment of disabled. And eventually, this graduate of Sciences Po (political science prestigious school) has finally managed to become an official through special competitions reserved to disabled people, after years of under-qualified jobs, unemployment and frustrating professional experiences.

## **Conclusions**

This work contributes to the emergence of a shared experience of discrimination in the workplace in France. It innovates in the implementation of a new approach to multi-factorial discriminations and the deconstruction of otherness in the field of labor. It documents the issue of recognition in the workplace in link with postcolonial, gender and minority studies. In France, educated Black women are some kind of laboratory to account for differential treatment based on sex, race, class, and age in access to employment, status, career progression, salaries and daily life at work. These discriminations are both the expression of racism, sexism, classism and “ageism” that define hierarchical positions on the sexual, generational and class axis. In fact, the republican equality displayed by French institutions faces the reality of social relations of domination perpetuated in the labor market and in the workplace. These multiple discriminations prevent these workers from making the careers that they deserve and create psychological and social conflicts. Most of the participants internalize oppression, and some refuse to identify themselves to the ‘woman’ category (Kergoat, 1988), when it is not to the ‘Black’ category. Thus, they renounce to confrontation in an apparent submission. Despite their lack of grip on discriminations, as a protection, they implement strategies of defense against the violence of discrimination that give more or less strength to particular categories. They distance themselves from imposed roles and play with the various facets of their identities despite the contradictions with the social categorization they are assigned to. Then, they are surprised to learn that they share their behaviors, their words, their suffering with other Black graduates ladies at the workplace. Doing so, they help to build a collective denial of discriminations and of things which may not

be talked about (Gaignard, 2010) and contribute to the construction of the rules that maintain the social hierarchy which oppresses them. In France, their isolation is reinforced by ethnicization. If they tried to build a community based on the common experience of sexism and racism on the labor market, they would soon be suspected of communalism. So, the absence of a collective group reinforces their atomization as gendered ethnicized individuals.

But these subjects are only apparently doomed to submission, passivity and renunciation to confrontation. They implement various modes of resistance appropriate to the circumstances. The dimensions of their inexpressible experience of everyday racism is neglected (Essed, 1990; 1991) and little documented. Their multi-positionnalities and the shifting contours of social relations of gender, race, class, generation, etc. exceed naturalizing identities and account for their individual resistance. The discursive agency (Butler, 2004, 2006, 2009); the ability to transform the environment; the choice to apply for under qualified jobs: all these strategies help to deconstruct the image of 'the mute and always junior woman from the Third World' (Spivak, cited by Merle, 2004). This paper tried to give a voice to those who are most cruelly deprived of a voice (Bourdieu, 1991). Gendered and racialized representations deny Black women as subject of their own discourse (Spivak), but they actually use discursive strategies and perform their identities in order to gain recognition (Butler, 2004, 2006, 2009). Biographical research on socio-individual career paths shows their ability to become social actors (Dejours, 1988) and to influence the context, even if their agency is sometimes supported by attachments to beliefs and practices which are perceived as alienating by Western scholars (Vidal, 2011) and if they co-produce the social structures of domination. This intersectional analysis onto the statements of these Black women graduates reports how subjectivities internalize the social control and the variety of lived experiences of race and gender assembled or disassembled with other relevant social categories such as age, class or disability. Social markers like accent, colorism, hair dressing, good looks, western beauty criteria, etc ..., were not examined here, but they play an obvious role in the workplace too.

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**Abstract:** This case study is based on a current survey with women graduates of Caribbean and/or African descent at the workplace in France. The data from non directive biographical interviews are analyzed using a feminist, postcolonial and intersectional approach which combines empirical observation, theoretical analysis, historical and geographical contextualization and a self-reflexive posture. This multidisciplinary approach allows to take into account the complexity of the intricate power relations as well as the respondents' subjectivity and agency. This paper shows that because graduates Black women are particularly vulnerable to the effect of gender, origin, age and disability, they experience exclusion, marginalization and discrimination in their access to employment, their occupational status, contracts, salaries, as well as in social life at the workplace. Due to racism, classism and sexism, they face specific challenges and develop individual strategies to adapt to the symbolic violence of seemingly colorblind management practices.

**Keywords:** racism, sexism, education, work, intersectionality, agency, discrimination.

# African student's perspectives in Higher Education in Portugal: integration and challenges

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## Introduction

It was not until recently that Portugal took the decision of making the access to higher education easier to some groups of non-traditional students. Higher education institutions have gladly joined this national tendency and as a consequence, our students' population is nowadays more diverse by every standards. However, this fact questions the organization, rules, principles and the main mission of higher education institutions (HEI). Making access easier is important, in a context of social responsibility, if students have the opportunity to stand in good position, taking learning experiences to improve their lives. As researchers we have taken the opportunity to study these groups of non-traditional students to steer institutional changes.

African students constitute a very distinct group in our context. The independence of the Portuguese African former colonies (Angola, Cape Verde, Guiné-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe and Mozambique) in 1975, was a direct result of the *coup d'état* which, in April 74, ended the dictatorship regime in Portugal. One of the results of the process of democratization and modernization of the country was the expansion of the higher education system and the admission of students from different socio-economic contexts, such as those from African Countries of Portuguese Official Language. Portugal's relations with African countries in a democratic context carried the possibility of having bilateral agreements that guaranteed a quota of African students in Portuguese HEI – thus they were the first important group of non-traditional students in Portugal, probably together with working-class students. Over the last decades African students enrolled in undergraduate programs, master programs as well as doctoral programs (Semedo, 2010). Between 1980 and 2010, the number of these students increased significantly. In the last years there was a decrease in their number, probably related to the recent economic and financial crisis in Portugal.

The fact that African students are a visible group in HEI does not mean that they are necessarily in a good situation. Social, cultural and linguistic differences, differences between the educational systems of both countries, among other factors, lead to considerable high numbers of drop-out and retention. Generally speaking, HEI have not looked deeply into the problems these students have.

## Theoretical framework

The term 'non-traditional student' is commonly used to describe different groups of students that are underrepresented in higher education (HE) and whose participation is constrained by structural factors (RANHLE, 2009). This category, therefore includes disabled, mature, female, first-generation and working-class students, or students from specific cultural minority groups who do not fit the 'traditional' category. Policymakers and academic decision makers have attempted to facilitate access to HE for non-traditional students, carrying the focus of scientific debates to access. But improving access is one thing, ensuring progression within and beyond HE is another (Osborne, 2003). Although some dimensions of access can be solved, retention must also be considered if the gains of access are to be consolidated, fostering social mobility and social development. This forces our analysis of non-traditional

students to be much wider and include the underlying nature of the learning institution, the manner in which this environment influences student's expectations, perceptions and non-completion (Laing & Robinson, 2003). And focusing African students implicates further attention to other factors – for example, cultural factors. Maybe a brief review of some investigations done in the Portuguese context will help us to deeper understand those students' context, starting by the motives for coming to Portuguese HEI.

For these African countries, to invest in higher education represents a strategy for national development, mainly through the creation of a qualified work-force. But it also means the possibility of building processes of citizenship, social justice and to promote a more equal distribution of health (Faria & Costa, 2012). This policy provides therefore a first wider context that frames communities, family and the interest of individuals. For African families, choosing Portugal as a place to study represents a strategy that aims, through their sons and daughters, to improve their position and strengthen their social capital (Faria, 2009). It seems natural that language, the historical relations between countries, cultural proximity, or the prestige of Portuguese HEI are factors that further explain the motivations for these students to come preferentially to Portugal. The social networks already existing in Portugal are also mentioned in former investigations. Family, friends and acquaintances already living in Portugal improve African students' confidence in the first impacts with Portuguese society (Faria & Costa, 2012).

Within this context, it seems understandable that a significant number of African young adults have high expectations concerning the academic life in Portugal. These expectations are of course built according and within their origin culture and context. But once in Portugal, African students' face very demanding changes at personal, social and academic levels. Thus these expectations often dissipate when they are confronted with the Portuguese cultural and academic reality (Duque, 2012).

The concept of integration is central in this paper. Pires (2012) proposes a model for analysing integration processes by distinguishing systemic integration from social integration. Systemic integration refers to the relations between social systems, that is, involving institutions, roles, places and spaces and hierarchies. It is a macro system of analysis that does not require face-to-face relationships: the relationship between institutions includes both space and time, in a context of globalized societies. Social integration refers to a micro analysis that takes into account the social relationships between people, involving a certain consensus regarding values and social norms. This seems especially important when analysing the relationships that are built between minority groups and the dominant groups in societies. The concept of integration becomes crucial in the context of contemporary societies in which migration flows constitute significant phenomena. In this particular context, integration could be seen in both dimensions proposed by Rui Pires. Whilst policies, national or European agreements, as well as a set of other structural macro factors are a part of systemic integration, social integration focus in the social interaction that immigrants establish in host societies.

This type of integration includes dynamic processes that extend in time. Immigrants develop a set of strategies towards their adaptation to new societies, expecting this will bring advantages: not only social relationships can reduce conflicts and prejudgments, but also integration can facilitate the access to the host society social capital (Martinovic, Tubergen & Maas, 2009). Integration can be analysed through the acquisition of a new language, people's participation in the educational system, housing, religion, among other important indicators.

In the context of higher education, Baker & Siryk (1999) state to be important three basic types of integration: i) institutional integration, including students' expectations regarding their studies, previous academic background, motivation, their satisfaction towards the university or the learning within their degree, and academic success; ii) the second type

refers to social integration, visible in the relationships with peers, teachers and staff; the processes of building friendships networks; student's participation in social and cultural activities; or the way they integrate in working-groups; iii) finally, an emotional/personal integration, that means physical and psychological well-being, self-trust and the student's emotional balance. Also Rienties et al (2012) point out the factors that determine positively social integration, like a solid network of friends; good informal relationships with teachers and staff; sharing accommodations with other students; or participation in a wide range of cultural or sport activities. *Globally speaking, therefore, integration has different and wide meanings that should be analysed as dynamic on-going processes with no fixed limits in time. Integration involves deep transformations in values, norms and behaviour both for individuals and groups and host societies.*

Previous investigations show that African students face several problems in their integration in Portugal. Although most African students receive scholarships, its value is usually low and, generally speaking, they cannot count on the financial support of their families (Mourato, 2012). Consequently, they have difficulties in paying tuition fees and all the daily expenses that living abroad implicates – accommodation, books, clothes, food, among other (Duque, 2012). So, most of these students never visit their home countries during their stay in Portugal.

Some studies highlight that these students have learning difficulties, some of them stemming from the differences between educational systems. They are confronted with different teaching methods they were not prepared to and experience difficulties in social relations (Mourato, 2011). Language skills facilitate educational success and contribute decisively to the academic and social integration of foreign students but according to Ferro (2010), Portuguese language can be a real barrier to the academic success of African students. Even if it is the official language of their countries of origin, the Portuguese spoken in Portugal, especially in the academic world, is very different from the Portuguese they know.

For Duque (2012), these students have problems in their relationships with lecturers and colleagues and, sometimes, they face racial discrimination situations. As a matter of fact, Portugal – despite what the Portuguese themselves may think – does not constitute an exception regarding racist attitudes and behaviours in Europe. Marques research concludes further that racism in its blatant version is a part of the everyday life of many people, including African students (Marques, 2007). Although kept on a «non-political» level, racism does exist in Portuguese society. People of African origins living in Portugal, are often victims of a type of racism that clearly obeys to a logic of «inferiorisation»; its sources are found in the colonial past of the country, as well as in the prejudices inherited from that same past (Marques, 2007, 2012). Discrimination in several domains of the social life, eventually some verbal violence, constitutes the principal manifestations of this form of racism.

African citizens studying in Portuguese HEI face a number of problems that call, at a one hand, for an urgent research and, on the other hand, for a strong institutional will to solve them. In this sense, it is important to question the integration processes of the African students within the academic community. Integration seems to be a key factor to the academic success of these students.

## **Methodology**

This paper is a preliminary and partial outcome of the research project “Non-traditional students in higher education: research to steer institutional change”. [1] In it we try to deeply understand the situation of four different groups of non-traditional students (African students; students participating in short learning programmes of technological specialization; students

with special needs; and mature graduates) in the Universities of Algarve and Aveiro, in order to produce recommendations towards institutional changes that could improve their success and better their lives in the academic community. Regarding the group of African students in the University of Algarve, we posed the following research questions: how do students from Portuguese speaking African countries describe their academic integration in HEI? What are they learning from this experience? And, finally, what are the main challenges and obstacles they are facing in their social integration processes at the university?

Our research project includes in-depth interviews to students, lecturers, management (especially the directors of learning programmes), deans, and student's union leaders.[2] However and as we are in the beginning of our investigation, in this paper we will only consider the interviews with the students. We have selected our interviewees trying to keep a balance on nationality (there are five different nationalities among African students), gender and the scientific area of the programme they are participating in.

## **African students integration in the University of Algarve**

### *Motives for studying in Portugal and the student's expectations*

Generally speaking, coming to Portugal to study in higher education is an aim which is common to a significant number of African students. There are several motives that lead these students to make that choice. First, the diploma obtained in a Portuguese university has more prestige than the ones obtained in their home countries, which has an important effect of increasing people's chances of finding a job back in African countries. A part of the students, therefore, want to come to Portugal to increase their qualifications in order to go back for their countries and have a role in development's promotion. But some of students want to get a degree in Portugal and settle here; and for some others Portugal is a first step to achieve their ultimate goal, that is, to establish themselves in other European countries. Transversal to most of the students there is a basic concern of increasing their life quality and to use their better income to help their families (in Africa) financially. Even a modest salary in Portugal is enough for graduates to help their families.

A number of additional factors are important in its capacity of further attracting students to Portugal. First, the language; as in these countries the official language is Portuguese. Second, the fact there all Portuguese HEI have a separate quota for African students; this means that they do not need to compete for access with the remaining Portuguese students. Third, their States give them the possibility to have a bursary (this is a *sine qua non* condition imposed by the Portuguese state), which allows students from families with lower incomes to be candidates. Finally, a very significant number of students have already relatives or friends living in Portugal. For some students, this is a factor that contributes decisively to their choice.

African students' expectations seem characterized by some ambiguity. At the same time they are looking forward to meet what might be a shift in their biographies, they are aware of the amount of effort and dedication necessary to be successful in higher education in Portugal (sometimes we heard the word 'sacrifice'). They also experience the natural anxiety coming from knowing they will be far away from home, in a cold and unknown country (although the climate seems a detail, it means more than that to some students), unknown friends and colleagues, unknown university, academic environment, rules, etc. Uncertainty is thus an important word for those prepared to print such a change in their lives. The fact that they don't expect to travel back home, due to the high expenses it implies, makes the scenario even worst.

### *Academic integration: a work in progress*

Language is a basic factor in the processes of integration. Although Portuguese is the official language of these African countries, this only means that it is used in State departments or schools – and quite often a very different Portuguese from the pattern that mixes Portuguese words with native languages. And people use their mother-languages (like *Crioulo*, the capeverdian pidgin) in the everyday life, variations of it and various dialects. Hence language is a first difficulty African students are faced with, for socialization or learning purposes. Students claim that the Portuguese speak fast making both understanding and expression very difficult.

African students find culture and basic sociability habits in Portugal very different from their own. They claim Portuguese people to be distant and cold when compared to the Africans and miss their own cultural habits and traditions.

*I felt a shock when I had to live here (...) Culture is completely different, people are cold, they are closed, and they seldom talk, it was almost depressing. In Mozambique life is very intense, lots of things happen at the same time, trips, parties, deaths, weddings, there's a certain spirit which is completely different from that we've got here in Portugal. The first year was really very hard(male, 27 years old)*

### *Integration processes within higher education institutions*

A first difficulty, common to most African students in higher education, relates to their late arrival, usually when the first semester is the middle or sometimes in the end.[3] Not being able to count with structural solutions to this problem, it is most likely that students fail the first courses, which coincide precisely with their bigger difficulties regarding the processes of adaption to a brand new institution – not to mention all that is involved in a new country. Generally, our students consider Portuguese learning in HE as more demanding; others also claim that secondary school has not prepared them for such difficulties. Some specific subjects, like Mathematics or English, are commonly referred to as the most difficult.

Most African students stay in-campus or in university accommodations spread through the city, which they share with other students, African or not. This seems very important as it represents the beginning of the processes of sociability and construction of social networks, even if they have already family or friends in Portugal. Social contacts among peers also provide the sharing of the specific rules, principles and norms of the institution. African students therefore show a good level of satisfaction towards this in-campus living experience, which seems to promote the basis for social integration.

The relationships with peers within the narrower context of class and university spaces (including cafeterias or university restaurants), seems also important and influential. The support they are able to give one another includes studying material, doubts sharing and studying periods. Some use digital media, like *Facebook*, to create groups that help students in various ways. These types of social relationships that can begin in the classroom or in shared accommodations, rapidly extends to other type of events between students. There is a tradition to organise dinner parties along students from the same degree; to go out at night to the city bars; and academic feasts, all seem to be fundamental regarding a positive student's integration in mixed groups (that is, African and non-African students). A significant number of students point sport activities as important, namely football, swimming, volleyball and dancing. There is, therefore, a positive feeling concerning the relationships established among peers, but this does not mean problems do not exist.

Whilst some African students claim to have strong, united mixed-groups in university, others state to have had problems among peers. They feel that some Portuguese students have prejudices regarding African students. For example, Portuguese students seem to take as granted that African students “know little”, or “do not know how to use a computer or a mobile phone”. These prejudices are also visible when students have to constitute small working-groups to perform autonomous tasks outside class and the majority of Portuguese students avoid African students – not bluntly, but most of the times silently. It seems that those prejudices can blur with time. But generally speaking, positive and negative experiences do exist concerning the African students sociability relationships with Portuguese students.

The level of satisfaction provided by social relationships amongst African students seems to be clear. Strong friendships seem to be built easily, through parties, cooking their typical home-meals, or other activities. A minority of students, however, state to have not that many relationships with other African students, because there are that are built according to their nationality – students coming from Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde are mentioned as grouping amongst themselves. Also two of the students we interviewed belong to an association of Mozambicans living in Faro. There seems to be a natural tendency for African students to gather by nationality and this may have complex consequences that we are not yet ready to analyse.

African students state that teachers can be characterised by their professional competence, effort and dedication to offer quality in teaching. They also claim to establish social relationships with teachers marked by respect, as they are available to help them in their offices for clarifying their doubts.

The financial capacity of these students relates directly to their academic success. If they fail too many courses they will lose their scholarships, which implicates they have to find a job to survive in Portugal – which means of course reduced possibilities to achieve academic success. This chain of events can push students away from their goals and drop-out is at least considered. Some families (a minority from what we can say at this stage) do support their sons and daughters fully. However the differences in the cost of everyday life between Portugal and these African countries means that these students have huge difficulties to manage the scarce financial resources their families can provide. Again this might lead students to part-time or full-time jobs with the natural negative consequences over their academic success.

Some of our interviewees claim to have had experiences of discrimination and racism, but usually point examples from the everyday life, leaving aside the academic environment. Some of these examples suggest subtle forms of racism; for example, supermarket employees that indicate the cheaper products to students, assuming they can only afford those; rooms that were supposed to be available to rental but “magical” appear occupied when owners see the colour of their skin. Yet it is too early to analyse this phenomena deeper.

## **Conclusions**

As we’ve stated in the beginning of this paper, these are preliminary and provisional results of a still ongoing research, so the following conclusions are also in some extent provisional. Firstly, we must assert that students from African countries have many positive and some negative perceptions about their academic and life experiences in Portugal. Positive perceptions include gratifying sociability and friendship, participation in sports activities as well as rewarding learning experiences. On the other hand, the negative perceptions our interviewees described about their integration processes seem very consistent with the results of other investigations on academic problems faced by foreign students.

According to Rocha, foreign students are "subject to pressures and challenges of great magnitude, related to the displacement and to the new cultural reality they have to face (2012, p. 19). For Habimana and Cazabon, the "cultural shock experienced by a foreign student can be analysed at four levels: i) Environmental (climate, housing conditions, urban life etc.); ii) Educational (problems with equivalences, timetables, matters, relationships with teachers and/or with colleagues); iii) Social (relationship problems with people in general, prejudices and stereotypes etc.); iv) Personal (financial problems, delays in money transfers etc.) (Habimana and Cazabon, 1992, quoted in Duque, 2012, p. 8).

Butcher and McGrath (2004), based on an empirical research about the main problems experienced by international students in New Zealand, grouped these problems in the following way: i) Academic problems (comprehension of the English language; adaptation to new teaching methods; communication skills; understanding of the questions about plagiarism; ii) Social problems (lack of institutional support structures; lack of information about the existing support structures; iii) Financial problems (addiction to gambling; dependence on the family financial support; iv) Health problems – stress; depression; anxiety; psychosomatic disorders.

As we've seen above, some of the mentioned problems were described in the interviews by African students of the University of Algarve. One of the problems mentioned by almost all of these students is, apparently, a minor issue but it clearly influences their integration process: in the first year, they arrive to Portugal systematically several weeks after the beginning of the academic year. This leads not only to unnecessary stress and anxiety disorders but also to bad results or, in some situations, to academic failure.

Secondly, we must recognize that there is a hidden linguistic issue on the academic integration processes of these persons. Portuguese language spoken in Europe, especially in the academic world, is a really different language from the one these students use in their own countries. But Portuguese university professors and lecturers are, sometimes, very insensitive about that subject. They often reproduce the ethnocentric perspective according to which 'Portugal's Portuguese is the real Portuguese', so the students must adapt. According to Ferro (2010), although assumed by all as encounter ground between teachers and students, Portuguese language constitutes a barrier to the academic success of the latter. Further investigation will then allow us to understand the nature of the relation of these linguistic obstacles with the learning problems.

Financial problems were also too often cited by the interviewees. There is a vicious cycle that goes from academic failure to money problems and back; this cycle seems very difficult to break without institutional measures.

Two of the main objectives of this investigation were to understand the role of the post-colonial situation in the construction of the social and self-identities of the African students living in Portugal as well as to reveal the eventual reproduction of stereotypes and ethnic and racial discrimination issues. However, the preliminary analysis of the interviews we presented in this paper does not allow us to safely go any further in this direction. We intend, in the next steps, to explore this path and to analyse racism situations they experience in their everyday lives and relate them to social and self-identities.

The challenges and obstacles the African students have to face in Portuguese HEI claim for new institutional policies that help to facilitate their lives abroad and to improve their academic success. We firmly believe that, in order to be effective, such policies should be based on a thorough understanding of the social reality.



## Notes

1. Project PTDC/IVC-PEC/4886/2012, funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT).
2. Within the students' union of the University of Algarve, there is an autonomous group of African students.
3. There are a number of explanations for this, beginning from the fact that the access of African students if one of the alternative forms of access, which in bureaucratic terms begins to be dealt with after the first moment of regular entries is finished. Also the processes to obtain visas from African embassies only begin after the formal acceptance of students from Portuguese HEI and sometimes these processes are very slow. As there is a poor coordination between state agencies or institutions from our countries, the net result is a big delay in students' arrival to Portugal.

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**Abstract:** This paper presents the very first results of a broader investigation on four different groups of non-traditional students in higher education in Portugal. In this paper we will focus the African students of the University of Algarve, their integration processes and the main difficulties they find in the academic context. Our aim is to produce recommendations towards the improvement of the academic life of students, including their academic success. This research comprises in-depth interviews to several different social actors in the academia. As we are in the beginning of our research, we will present here the preliminary analysis of the in-depth interviews made to students. In this paper we will describe the students' perceptions of their integration in the University of Algarve, and the challenges and obstacles they are facing while living in Portugal. It also becomes clear a set of issues we should further analyse in our ongoing research.

**Keywords:** African students, non-traditional students, higher education, integration.

# Resistance to multiculturalism – discursive strategies used by nationalists constructing the notion of the “unwanted other”

Justyna Kajta

## Introduction

The current discussion about multiculturalism and diversity would be incomplete without mentioning the anti-multicultural backlash. As one can observe there are different voices of criticism of multiculturalism. Although it is a well-known fact that nationalist organizations express their strong resistance to that phenomena, I state that it is worth to focus more on their language and a way of argumentation. Taking into consideration the fact that they are aware of political correctness and their media image, they often avoid of radical and extreme statements. What is more, they try to use arguments which can attract new supporters of the nationalist movements. Based on nationalists' statements, I will present who are the others and how they are presented. Moreover, I will focus on the ways of justification for excluding of the otherness.

The article draws on the critical discourse analysis of the narrative-biographical interviews carried out as part of my research project. Focusing on the identity of the contemporary nationalist movement in Poland, I talk with the members of the nationalist organizations: the All-Polish Youth (Młodzież Wszechpolska), the National Radical Camp (Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny) and the National Rebirth of Poland (Narodowe Odrodzenie Polski). To date 30 interviews were conducted. Some of them are carried out by me and some by my students who participated in the field work research training “Activists and supporters of the national movement”. Informants were asked to tell their story of life and the structure of interview was the same as in the Fritz Schütze's method (see: Schütze, 1992), including an uninterrupted presentation of the whole life story in the first part of the interview followed by specific biographical questions in the second part and problem-driven questions in the third part. The analysis below is based on these interviews in which issues such as multiculturalism or the otherness appeared. Crucial fact is that multiculturalism does not constitute a topic of the interview but it was raised by the interlocutors in reference to various issues.

Obviously, I make no claim to present a representative sample. However, the material collected in these interviews gives some insight into how the anti-multicultural discourse is (re)constructed and expressed by individuals who are involved in nationalist organizations.

## Discourse in the narrative-biographical interviews

Discourse is here understood as a social practice (Wodak, 2009). Taking into consideration the variety of approaches to discourse analysis and numerous literature on this topic, it would be impossible to present here a detailed elaboration of the concept of the discourse and the methodology. Hence, I would present only crucial issues concerning my analysis. Critical discourse analysis is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (van Dijk, 2008, p. 85). Thus, is an important approach in research on identity as well as in studies on discrimination, exclusion and marginalized groups.

It lets us to unravel how a specific language usage can reproduce dominance and thus, inequalities, stereotypes, prejudices. Therefore, ‘stereotyping and other forms of social

categorization are seen as discursive constructions which are created and negotiated in everyday talk and shaped by contextual and situational factors' (Ladegaard, 2012, p. 61).

Discourse can be seen 'as the product of a certain group of interests' (Kozłowska-Grzymała, 2014, p. 61) and it connects with an ideology. Generally speaking, individuals who told me their life stories seem to present nationalist discourse and share similar opinions. 'Ideologies 'work' by constructing for their subjects (individual and collective) positions of identification and knowledge which allow them to 'utter' ideological truths as if they were their authentic authors' (Hall 2006, p. 397). However, they express it in various ways, refer to different issues and base on own experiences and feelings.

As many scholars state (van Dijk, 2008, Abell & Myers, 2011 & Wodak, 2009) the context plays crucial role in discourse analysis. One could mention about different levels of the contexts here. According to Jackie Abell and Greg Myers state there are four crucial aspects of the context which should be noticed during analysis of the research interviews: (1) immediate linguistic context, (2) intertextual and interdiscursive references in the text, (3) extra-linguistic social variables and institutional settings of the specific situation of an statement and (4) socio-political and historical determinants (2011, p. 233).

I would like to focus particularly on these extra-linguistic and socio-political variables which are crucial in the interviews with participants of such a controversial movement as nationalist movement. It is important to understand that this level of context refers to the consciousness of atmosphere and the relationship between a researcher and an informant. It seems to be especially important for narrative-biographical interviews when people are asked to share their story of life. Frames of mutual expectations and notions as well as emotions play an important role here.

On the grounds that nationalists express their awareness of their negative image and hence, feel stigmatized or even marginalized, one could have impression that interview constitutes an opportunity to modify that unfavourable notion. Many of my interviewees appeared to censure their own opinions which was caused not only by possible notion about the researcher's views but also by the presence of a tape recorder. More than once I had impression that they try to present positively their activity and organization. They tell stories about initial fear concerning affiliation to a nationalist organization which disappeared just after the first meetings with its members. Some of them describe some extreme cases of people who wanted to join but they were rejected in recruitment process because of their radical views. What is quite common, they highlight that there are mostly students and well-educated (doctors, academics, lawyers) people in their ranks. Another example of attempt of destigmatization concerns statements about the goals and activities of an organization – the stress is put on charity, cooperation with schools, children's home or veteran's organizations. Analyzing interviews and discourse about multiculturalism and otherness, I was inspired by discursive strategies implemented by Ruth Wodak and Michael Meyer. They focuses on such question as: "How are persons named and referred to linguistically? What traits, characteristics, qualities and features are attributed to them? By means of what arguments and argumentation schemes do specific persons or social groups try to justify and legitimize the exclusion, discrimination and exploitation of others? (2009, p. 72-73).

### **Multiculturalism in the nationalists' view**

Narrators raised a concept of multiculturalism when they answered such questions as: (1) what do you find annoying in the contemporary world?, (2) what does a nation mean for you? It is presented as a sort of ideology as well as political project implemented from above.

Multiculturalism is associated with the European Union's activity and issues such as 'artificial tolerance' and threat to Polish culture and identity.

**Andrzej:** *I am not a racist, but I don't know...I think that not without a reason we have different colours of skin and the world looks in this way...there are spaces where live people with some colour of their skin...and specific culture follows this colour... mixing that is not just a loss for...in fact all people lose because some individual, cool cultures die..I would like to go to Africa and see something like that...and McDonalds will be soon in Africa as well...the same with incomings...today Europe...here [in Poland] is still so-so but on the West these Europeans are not able to say who they are...Europe means for them nothing else like European Union*

**Bartek:** *Tolerance, I mean a forced tolerance because it is known that...I generally think we know what I mean, right? Tolerance which is being pushed in media..that the multiculturalism has to be here because it just has to. Why multiculturalism does not have to be in Africa or in Japan, why it has to be here? So, generally such kind of tolerance seems to be an artificial tolerance which is promoted by leftists and it is an example of anti-value for me.*

Multiculturalism presented as the threat to uniqueness of all cultures – not only Polish – seems to be one of the strategies used by nationalist as a justification for their statements. Multiculturalism is associated here with unification. Telling about multiculturalism (labelled pejoratively as 'multikulti'), narrators usually mention tolerance as a concept which is artificial, forced and omnipresent.

**Kamil:** *It is impossible that two different groups, two different cultures which have origin in different civilization could live together in the same country. It was professor Koneczny who before the WWII framed the thesis about civilizations in which he stated that two different civilization will always fight each other. And today we have confirmation of this when we look at what happens in the Great Britain where it turned out that there is a huge group of immigrants...Muslims and they have problem with them.*

Another anti-multicultural argument which occurs in interviews concerns the failure of multiculturalism and experiences of some of the Western countries. It is quite coherent with discourse which is presented by some politicians and European leaders such as Angela Merkel, David Cameron or Nikolas Sarkozy (Lesińska, 2014, p.39). One of the nationalists refers to other countries in order to present possible danger caused by the increasing number of Muslims living in Europe.

**Antoni:** *The government in Germany and in France officially announced that in 2050 France and Germany will be caliphate and islamist republic. Currently there is a political party Islam in Belgium and by the 2030 it will be in 70 percentage Islamist country. In Netherlands, Haga city is completely islamized. [...] The West have been falling into this paranoia, right, multicultural and it will blast it out.*

Although he does not mention sources of these information, referring to the specific numbers and examples makes his opinion more reliable and his anxiety well-founded. The statement is constructed as a logical cause and effect. He describes the possible scenario of multicultural

development according to which Muslims and homosexuals will be fight each other about dominance over Europe. Multiculturalism is presented as a dangerous paranoia and failure. Other interlocutors stress the loss of the national identity in Great Britain, France or Netherlands. It becomes a part of a broader debate on 'clash of civilization' (Pakulski, 2014, p. 25). Andrzej states that immigration could be acceptable but only for people from European civilization identified with the Christianity. According to him, it would be easier to assimilate them but they would be obligate to speak Polish language, have historical knowledge, respect Polish heritage and public space as reserved to the Polishness.

Despite the fact that in most cases informants try to avoid of radical statement, there are some examples of more extreme opinions.

**Resarcher:** What do you like in Polish nation?

**Antoni:** *In a current situation...I like, I'll say badly but racism, radicalism and as we see and as you probably noticed, there are no Muslims in Poland because they could be scolded...Gypsies are discriminated and homosexual relationships are also discriminated. It is good for me because Polish people care for a Poland's good name and they don't allow to some minority to decide in Poland and destroy marriage institution or to led them to the country on a mass scale and increase percentage of people who in fact are not Poles.*

Taking into consideration the fact that Muslims constitute only a small percentage of the Polish population[1], it is quite interesting that they are so much present in nationalist discourse. Writing about world risk society after 9/11 Ulrich Beck states that 'terrorist enemy images are deterritorialized, de-nationalized and flexible state constructions that legitimize the global intervention of military powers as 'self-defence'(Beck, 2002, p. 44). Similarly, it seems that they constitute symbolic and transnational embodiment of the cultural other and imagined enemy constructed by anti-multicultural representatives. As Lentin and Titley state: "Muslim transnational disloyalty, arising from their inability to transcend the language and tradition of their 'countries of origin', or stoked by overriding transnational affiliations, mirrors fears about Jews' lack of allegiance in the pre-war period. The traditional anti-Semitic view seen Jews as a nation apart whose true allegiance is always kept for their co-religionists" (Lentin & Titley, 2011, p. 55). Contrary to expectations there are almost nothing about Roma people and Jews in analyzed interviews. It reveals that the discourse about multiculturalism concerns subjective and imagined rather than real cultural diversity (see: Dolińska & Makaro, 2013).

### **Who else is the 'unwanted other'?**

Some authors emphasize that anti-multicultural discourse includes economic issues. Magdalena Lesińska (2014) points out the Great Recession (2008) as the cause of shift attitudes toward migrants: „Uncontrolled immigrants, as well as the 'visible minorities', are portrayed by such leaders as competitors for scarce jobs and welfare, as a source of 'imported social problems' and as potential security threats" (2014, p. 39). However, arguments presented by my narrators concern rather cultural diversity issues.

There are debates on various understanding of multiculturalism. According to Jan Pakulski, the etymological meaning of multiculturalism 'is identical to 'cultural pluralism' – a view that modern national cultures are composites of many ethno-specific cultures, regional and generational subcultures' (Pakulski, 2014, p. 25). As Janusz Mucha states we can say about 'non-ethnic multiculturalism' (Mucha, 2005 in: Dolińska & Makaro, 2013, p. 12). Hence, critics of multiculturalism concerns not only ethnic or national minorities but any

groups who make the culture more diverse. Charles W. Mills presents even ‘multiculturalism as a ‘conceptual grab bag’ of issues relating to race, culture, and identity that ‘seems to be defined simply by negation – whatever does not fit into the “traditional” political map of, say, the 1950s is stuffed in here’ (2007, p. 89 in: Lentin & Titley, 2011, p. 11).

Homosexual minority seems to be one of the main nationalists’ opponent (Wrzosek, 2010). Homosexuality is associated by some of my informants with abortion, euthanasia and paedophilia. It seems that similarly as Muslims constitute the embodiment of cultural enemy who threatens to European civilization, homosexuals are identified with the danger of destroying Polish identity – family and pro-life attitudes are perceived as its crucial components. Homosexuals constitute an opponent who is embodiment of such phenomena as liberalism, relativism and postmodernism. Despite the fact that there is no connection between homosexuality and euthanasia, abortion or pedophilia, nationalists present it as a cause and effect danger.

**Dariusz:** *I don’t hate them, but similarly to the case of alcoholic, I perceive him as a sick person, I don’t hate him, I do not want to shoot him or sterilize him and the same with homosexual – I don’t hate him but I claim that he is sick and one should, according to John Paul II and his words in ‘Memory and Identity’, one should treat them, show them love, I mean, respect.*

For Dariusz and some others informants, homosexuality is an illness. That quite common view seems to be less popular nowadays. However, it is still present in some of the narrators’ statements. Invoking some authorities and well-known people is another strategy using in order to justify one’s personal views. Argument from religion, politics or nationalist leaders are taken up in private discourse.. It should be mention that membership in organization involves participation in summer or winter schools, lectures, writing papers and reading specific ideological books. All these activities cause that nationalists share similar views and often, use the same linguistic constructions as summarised in table 1.

Tab. 1. Discursive strategies in telling about homosexuals

Names	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homosexuals, deviants, queers, sick people</li> </ul>
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referring to sexual habits: abnormal behaviour, not natural, immoral, degeneration, deviation, illness, disgusting</li> <li>• Referring to their public action: demand rights in order to dominance over the law and over the others, promote of sexual deviation</li> <li>• Defining themselves in reference to sex orientation</li> <li>• Homosexuals as the threat</li> <li>• Threat</li> <li>• Niche problems</li> </ul>
Arguments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have the same rights – they shouldn’t demand anything else because such a niche reason</li> <li>• They have bad influence on children’s’ minds</li> <li>• They destroy a shape of traditional/normal family</li> <li>• Acceptance for them would be followed by other deviations – pedophilia and dangers – abortion, euthanasia, gay marriages, adoption kids by homosexual couples</li> </ul>

Telling about homosexuals, narrators rarely use offensive epithets. The most common name is 'homosexual'. After using the word 'queer' one of them, Andrzej, corrected himself quite fast, pointed out the tape recorder, smiled and mentioned political correctness. As one can see in his statement below, with the passing of interview time, he stopped to control the correctness of the language.

**Andrzej:** *Well we come for manifestations against...ee...those...queer manifestations and I have a friend who is queer, homosexual...ee...and it is not a problem for me to talk with him, nothing like that. He's a gay...I would never say that he is who he is...right...but he doesn't define himself referring to his sexuality..he is a great guy and if he didn't said me I wouldn't have found out...because he just wanted to tell me...I wouldn't know that he is...he is a queer and I don't like people who define themselves according to their sexuality. I think that is self-humiliation because I don't know...I have third tit...because I am queer...because I don't know [...]*

Homosexuals are criticized for two reasons: their claims and depraved behaviour. They are presented as people who demand equality of rights because of their otherness which is called 'an unimportant niche'. Many informants highlight a lack of grounds of their claims. It is rather attempt to gain a superiority over other people. Homosexuals are presented as people who want to be, or even already are, treated in a better way and use their sexual orientation to achieve power. Nationalists state that additional rights will be followed by other claims and demands. The important fact is that minorities are presented as active, not passive, group. Consequently, they are able to achieve their goals and became powerful. This strategy of presentation let nationalists to justify that the minorities are problematic, take too much for granted and tend to have too much power in Poland and therefore, destroy the Polish identity and heritage. One of the interviewees states that 'there is no more place for white heterosexuals'. It is interesting expression of fear of losing a dominant position.

Another, and more common, argument to support the exclusion of homosexuals concerns their influence on a shape of traditional family and children's' minds. There is a strong opposition between normal, traditional family and abnormal, deviant homosexuals who destroy the long-established order based on the Polish and Catholic values. Nationalists shape their identities around 'a set of fixed commitments, which act as a filter through which numerous different social environments are reacted to or interpreted' (Giddens, 1991, p. 90) Anthony Giddens calls such people 'the rigid traditionalists, in a compulsive sense' (1991, p.190).

What is common for talking about all minorities that they should make the adjustment to the majority and 'Polish norms'. Acceptance for them depends on degree of their public invisibility.

**Dominik:** *Once I met an Arab at the party...there were no conflicts, he lives here since his childhood...he does not promote...he just does not force his own rules, he just knows that he is in Poland and there are some rules and he accepts them.*

The same argumentation emerges out of the statements concerning homosexuals. Some narrators claim: 'I do not care what they do in their bedrooms, I just don't want to see them in public'. Hence, one could say about ostensible acceptance – the other is accepted only when he/she is not too visible with her/his otherness. There is strong distinction between the private sphere and the public sphere. While the former seems to be out of nationalists' interest, the latter one has to be reserved for the Polish – Catholic values.



### **‘We are not racists but...’**

I have already mentioned the awareness of political correctness and the negative notion of the nationalist organization. These issues cause that interviewees try to destigmatize their image. The denial of racism seems to be one of their strategies. Some narrators in their statements avoid of being labelled as racists. The consciousness of binding norms and law concerning racism involves aversion to being identified with such kind of practice (Billig, 1988 in: van Dijk, 1992, p. 89). As Taun van Dijk writes ‘this suggests that language users who say negative things about minorities are well aware of the fact that they may be understood as breaking the social norm of tolerance or acceptance’ (van Dijk, 1992, p.89), even if they frankly criticize the sense of tolerance. There can be different forms of denial: negative attitude can be acceptable only when concerns a specific feature of a given group, justification, mitigations (ibidem: p. 90-91). I would refer these strategies not only to case of racism but also discrimination or broadly speaking, hate speech. My interviews often express directly: ‘I am not a racist, but...’ and then justify their negative attitudes towards minorities pointing out their characteristics, behaviour or dangerous influence.

**Kamil:** [...] *we are not racists because it always comes to mind when you say nationalist. It is no racism. With respect to biology, right? We are not against anyone because of his biology. It is stupid, you know? That we are against because someone is black. Someone is Mongoloid, someone is..I do not know...Italian or anything, right? The idiocy, totally. We...nobody has such views. If we are against..for example immigrants in our country..it is not because their physiognomy but because of their culture.*

It is worth to consider how they define racism – Kamil associates racism with aversion to people because of their colour skin and appearance. However, he does not see anything wrong with justification of negative attitudes by the reference to the culture. One could say about ‘new racism’ or ‘post racism’ (Lentin & Titley, 2011) what implies that there is a new nature of racism: ‘cultural norms, values, tradition and life styles of outsiders are now held to be problematic, rather than physiognomy. In the so-called ‘differentialist turn’ racism became a regrettable but natural result of too much uncomfortable proximity through immigration’ (Lentin & Titley, 2011, p. 50).

Similar strategies can be observed in nationalists’ opinions about homosexuals. For instance Dariusz states that they are sick and deserve of compassion and help. It is a strategy of a denial of homophobia – he clearly emphasizes that there is no hate but respect. At the same time homosexuality is presented as disease and disturbance. Antoni presents completely different denial of being labelled as homophobe. He tells about his first manifestation.

**Researcher:** How did it come that you went for that manifestation?

**Antoni:** *No matter how it sounds, I am not a homophobe, I don’t accept the notion of homophobia because if there is a definition such as claustrophobia and it means fear of small space then homophobia means a fear of homosexuals and I am not afraid of them, I just hate them and find that phenomena disgusting. Hence, I am not a homophobe but I have aversion to them.*

In comparison to other interviewees, his opinions and the way of expression are the most radical and direct. Unlike Dariusz, he does not hide his feeling about homosexual and do not try to conceal his worldview.

In many cases nationalists present themselves as patriots. As Urszula Kozłowska-Grzymała claims 'the statements which from the point of view of the multicultural discourse could be described as xenophobic and racist, were presented in the ethno-nationalistic discourse as an act of courage, a testimony to true wisdom and patriotic duty' (2009, p. 73). Therefore, they seem to be, unlike the leftists and politicians, aware of threats and worried about the Polish nationality and uniqueness. They place themselves in a role of defenders of tradition, history and Polish values. At the same time they try to regain a control on public sphere and make it more homogenous. Contemporary nationalist movement can be perceived as a cultural resistance to moral liberalization, globalization and growing diversity in the public sphere.

## Conclusions

Multiculturalism involves different attitudes, opinions and emotions. While some commentators highlight the importance of cultural diversity, others tell about anti-immigrant stories and point to the danger of intercultural flows. Anti-multicultural discourse presented by nationalists concerns mostly the culture and civilization. Multiculturalism is perceived as a failure and threat. What is crucial, it is understood as losing national identity as a result of cultural homogenization. The others – mostly Muslims and homosexuals – are presented as threat because of their otherness, claims and aspirations for power and dominance.

Referring to Western countries' experiences and some authorities, nationalists state that their criticism of cultural others is well-justified. They make themselves defenders of the Polish values such as traditional family, Catholic heritage and norms or pro-life attitudes. Muslims and homosexuals became the embodiment of strangeness – the unwanted cultural other. Their presence and activities are exaggerated and understood as danger and disturbance of the order.

Nationalists' language and arguments seem to be not as radical as one could assume. Taking into consideration the fact that they are aware of their negative image on the one side and the importance of political correctness and law consequences on the other, they try to use subtle linguistic expressions and deny racism. Nevertheless, their statements can be perceived as racist and homophobic if we take into consideration the accounts emphasising the cultural nature of contemporary racists behaviours and attitudes (Lentin & Titley, 2011). Racism seems to be more cultural in its nature. Hence, it concerns not only people's physiognomy but also their cultural values or lifestyles.

## Notes

1. The population of Muslims in Poland is estimated at about 25–35,000, which represents 0.07–0.09% of the total population of Poland (Pędziwiatr, 2011, p. 170).

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**Abstract:** The aim of this paper is to present the discursive strategies used by the participants of the nationalist organizations when they tell about multiculturalism and the otherness. Multiculturalism meets with resistance and is presented as an dangerous ideology, a project forced from above, a threat to cultural uniqueness and a failure. The others – mostly Muslims and homosexuals – are presented as a threat because of their otherness, claims and aspirations for power and dominance. While Muslims constitute the embodiment of cultural enemy who threatens to European civilization, homosexuals are identified with the danger of destroying Polish identity. As the nationalists are aware of their negative image and political correctness, they avoid of radical statements and deny being labelled as racists. The article draws on the critical discourse analysis of the narrative-biographical interviews conducted with members of three Polish nationalist organizations: the National Radical Camp, National Rebirth of Poland and the All-Polish Youth.

**Key words:** nationalism, anti-multiculturalism, discourse, otherness.

# ‘Dare to be aware’: tailoring diversity workshops for international students in higher education

Roksela Miha

## Introduction

The Lauder Business School (LBS) is a University of Applied Sciences located in Vienna, Austria, committed to provide a state-of-art business education geared toward international business careers. Applicability and employability are the guiding principles of the degree programs and extracurricular activities offered at LBS. Coming from almost 40 different countries, LBS students are exposed in the course of their studies to knowledge, real-life business examples, career opportunities, extracurricular professional activities, and real-life business simulations – all in a challenging diverse setting. Moreover, while studying at the LBS, they are encouraged to benefit from their stay in Vienna, being a major European business hub distinguished for its urban diversity. Being part of such a learning environment, where infinite diversity endures infinite combinations, it is significant to manage and promote diversity among academic staff, administration, and students, in the course of teaching/learning routines and management procedures. LBS’s research department, which focuses on Diversity Challenges in International Management, and especially the Mobiliversity project served as the point of departure for particularly investigating the interaction of people from diverse background at workplaces, in learning environments and in global business relationships.

The exploratory study (focus groups and qualitative evaluation forms) was carried out among LBS students, in order to uncover their diversity experiences on three levels: *a. their studies at LBS (the microcosm)*, *b. the urban space of Vienna (the mesocosm)*, and *c. in interacting with Austrian authorities (the macrocosm)*, followed by in-depth interviews with selected members of the faculty, academic and executive administration staff in which they report on their experiences on LBS’s intercultural campus and on how they perceive challenges typically faced by students. The outcome of such research will then focus on designing and conceptualizing a series of diversity workshops which are being attended by LBS students, lecturers and administrators. *The aim of such workshops is mainly to raise awareness towards diversity, understand the ways in which diversity enriches our individual and collective experiences, stimulating each other’s attitudes and developing critical thinking skills.*

The challenges and activities of such workshops aim at developing students’ critical thinking skills; creating a level of ‘comfort, confidence, and belonging’; encouraging them to actively engage with other members of this learning environment across the boundaries of difference; assisting them in creating self-awareness and intercultural competence; promoting equal opportunities, which is not about treating everyone the same, but ensuring that everyone has the same chances and rights throughout all daily aspects and activities.

By stimulating their attitude and behaviors while protecting the bottom line, and valuing their own personal identity, values and cultural background, participants (students, administrative and academic staff) face various challenges and activities such as: Thinking ‘outside the box’; Belonging to a group; Reflective thinking; Prioritizing; First impressions; Respect and its meaning at an introductory level, Trash your Ego, Self-assessment; Circle the circle; and many more.

This paper will first give a short introduction on the working definition of diversity as well as its significance throughout the process of knowledge transmission in higher education. This shall be followed by detailed information on the objectives as well as on the process of conceptualizing tailored diversity workshop content. In pursuit of creating inclusive excellence, the conclusion will report on propositions to further transfer/outsource the diversity workshops from their original environment to other settings, such as institutions of higher education, organizations and/or companies.

### **Diversity at a glance: Building the strength of an infinite variety among international students of higher education**

According to Thomas (2010) diversity is defined as the differences and similarities, and related tensions and complexities that characterize mixtures of any kind. On the other hand, the meaning of diversity per se, its complexity and ambiguity is much more than race and gender (Thomas, 1999).

A modern fable, 'The giraffe and the elephant', is often mentioned and analyzed in diversity related literature, in which an individual may project oneself in either being a 'giraffe' or an 'elephant'. This story is used mostly to assist people in understanding the dynamics of what diversity really is, comprising so the complexity of attributes, behaviors, beliefs, and talents.

The story which includes in a metaphoric way the main characters illustrated as the giraffe and the elephant describes how a friendship between the two animals is threatened when the house which is built for a tall and skinny giraffe can certainly not accommodate the bulky elephant. Lessons from this story might help most of us acquire certain skills, and achieve a level of maturity in our actions and way of thinking about diversity as a phenomenon.

To understand, cope with and appreciate the diversity phenomenon, individuals of today's globalized world arguably need education and further trainings, while aiming at creating a culture that embraces diversity. The moment an individual, being that a student enrolled in an international higher education, a lecturer, or a member of the administrative staff, will reach a level of confidence and build trust, it is then when these individuals will make use of the infinite variety among us. The existence of differences and an infinite variety among us may encourage individuals to strongly identify their potentially great value and conditionally accept them, while at the same time becoming stronger in achieving a common goal and manage diversity. Sustaining and mastering these skills and competences, building further knowledge on the significance and strength of an infinite variety, developing attitudes, requires continuous learning and introspection.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2013) the number of international students in higher education may rise to 8 million by 2025. These students are aiming at relocating themselves to a completely new environment, while being confronted with many diversity challenges. These challenges comprise some very basic features such as body, behavior, emotion, space, and time.

Students start developing competences in recognizing cultural and national perspectives. Furthermore, they develop the ability to communicate at ease and successfully across cultural differences, and to build respect as part of learning in one of the most rewarding environments and seeking excellence. This is being done with the goal in mind to master any challenges throughout their study time.

In today's globally changing world, which is becoming more diverse than ever, it is particularly important for students to successfully interact with people who represent a

different culture, nation and/or socio-economic status. Therefore, experiencing and learning about diversity while gaining knowledge and enriching learning experiences in a different setting, is quite beneficial in enhancing a student's personal development and adaptability. Moreover, a diverse study environment as such represents for students one of the best opportunities to encounter different thinking styles, gain a deeper pool of knowledge, and acquire different skills and perspectives. Integrating diversity as such into the process of knowledge transfer may often be challenging, but in the end harvesting its benefits is very significant for each individual. In the upshot, the following objectives can be achieved by means of diversity workshops: managing diversity; increasing awareness towards such phenomena; encouraging students to actively engage with other members of a new learning environment; promote equal opportunities; and assist them in creating self-awareness and intercultural competence.

### **The Diversity Workshop**

The need to value, manage and increase awareness towards diversity is becoming increasingly important. The process of managing and embracing diversity is certainly challenging, however this dynamic process has raised considerable interest of many different fields, including higher education. Vedder (2006) argues that diversity is a humanistic point of view, and as such being concerned with how to handle the diverse and heterogeneous nature of humankind in not only a meaningful but also a beneficial way to all the parties involved (p. 6). Successfully managing diversity and tackling the great variety of diversity challenges, it is worth making effective use of diversity trainings/workshops. According to Pendry (2007) diversity training is defined as 'a diverse set of programs intended to facilitate positive inter-group interactions, decreasing prejudices, and enhancing the skills, knowledge and motivation of participants to interact with other member of their close environment' (pp. 18-20).

### *Research at a glance*

In identifying the diversity challenges and being able to conceptualize and develop tailored diversity workshop to effectively manage diversity challenges, the Mobiliversity team at LBS conducted primary research with focus groups followed by secondary data analysis. A series of five focus groups were conducted in order to retrieve information on the diversity challenges faced by students of LBS coming from almost 40 different countries. The objective of such primary research was to discuss issues LBS students have been confronted with resulting from diversity at three levels, namely studying at LBS (microcosm), life of LBS students in the urban space of Vienna (mesocosm), and dealing with Austrian public authorities (macrocosm). The focus groups were conducted in a sample size of 31 students and alumni coming from almost 14 countries, such as Albania, Brazil, Bulgaria, Israel, Hungary, Ukraine, Russia, Austria, U.S., and many more. The analysis of the data retrieved from the focus groups did not merely focus on who said what, but rather on the problems and suggestions raised at each of the three levels mentioned above.

These focus groups were followed by in-depth interviews with selected members of the faculty, academic and executive administrative staff in which they report on their experiences on LBS's intercultural campus and on how they perceive challenges typically faced by students. Moreover secondary data on best practice examples of Universities worldwide addressing diversity were collected and analyzed thereafter, in order to gain more knowledge on the very topic under investigation and for further elaboration. In the end, we

conducted qualitative evaluation research with participants and experts in the field of psychology, human resources, diversity.

### *Diversity Workshop – Objectives, Design and Conceptualization*

#### Experiencing diversity challenges – is this a common daily paradox, or...?!

The underlying concept of the workshops can be summarized as follows: Protect your bottom line, value your own personal identity, language, values and cultural background, but be willing to create an environment which appreciates the uniqueness of every single individual... LBS students are exposed on a daily basis to different working styles, different priorities, and different ways of time management. Our empirical research has revealed that most of them assume that they have become part of a so called golden cage; this might be because of convenience and limited exposure to challenges. Nevertheless, the students have expressed their willingness to explore what is different.

By identifying diversity-induced challenges through the help of the above mentioned focus groups and creatively addressing them in the diversity workshops, we at LBS are committed to enhance the creation of a learning environment in which students of all backgrounds can thrive. This constitutes a vital part which influences the student's growth, learning and achievement, while we encourage them to abide to a sense of belonging and community.

The goal of such tailor-made workshops, which do not merely address diversity-related conflicts but also proffer a participatory platform to devise solutions, at first glance is to increase awareness towards diversity and help students and/or alumni cope with diversity related challenges in the future. One of the biggest challenges in conceptualizing tailored diversity workshop content for all incoming students is to consider them as individuals who are worried and overwhelmed by a sense of intimidation in fitting in a completely new environment. To ensure that these workshops engage the participants as fully as possible, it is important to concentrate more on the coaching approach throughout the different workshop sessions rather than on the mentoring one.

The workshops which take place throughout the academic year, are named 'Welcoming Diversity Workshop' and 'Diversity Spring Workshop', and their themes are associated with the three levels on which diversity challenges are being experienced such as the *microcosm* (the University Campus), the *mesocosm* (Vienna's urban space) and the *macrocosm* (the country's public authorities). The *Welcoming Diversity Workshop*, which takes place at the beginning of each academic year, is tailored for all freshers. This workshop marks the beginning of a journey towards embracing diversity, and as such it consists of a series of activities and discussions on topics related to:

- Raising awareness of diversity, which means understanding, valuing, respecting and embracing differences – seeing people as individuals rather than members of a group. Where are borders of difference? Where are the borders of tolerance?
- Initiating an expression of understanding 'diversity' through creative works while sharing individual culture roots
- Thinking outside the box
- Understanding, listening and respecting different points of view – seeing the same event with different eyes
- How to cope with the function of 'power'?
- Enhancing interaction in a group by analyzing certain actions, problem solving, and cultural practices

- Analyzing the phenomenon of ‘first impressions’.

These topics aim at developing a fresher’s critical thinking skills, a level of ‘comfort, confidence and belonging’; encouraging them to actively engage with other members of this learning environment across the boundaries of difference; assisting them in creating self-awareness and intercultural competence; promoting equal opportunities, which is not about treating everyone the same, but ensuring that everyone has the same chances and rights throughout all daily aspects and activities.

The *Diversity Spring Workshop* is divided into three parts and staged on three different evenings. It reaches out to Bachelor’s and Master’s students as well as members of the academic administration and staff (the latter being present only in the final part), who are willing to embrace diversity through an exchange of ideas, perceptions, and involvement in challenging and entertaining activities. By stimulating their attitude and behaviors, but also by protecting the bottom line and valuing their own personal identity, values and cultural background, participants get involved in various challenging workshop activities. Details on the activities and the respective objective(s) are given in the below table.

Activity Name	Description	Objective(s)
<b><i>Circle the Circle</i></b>	Ask participants to create a circle and link hands. A hula-hoop will be placed around a set of linked hands (so that their hands are in the hula-hoop circle). The group must remain in contact during the whole time. Set up a time, and then ask the group what they are willing to do in order to decrease the time, and make it faster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Become aware of the importance of working and collaborating successfully within a team in order to reach a pre-defined goal</li> <li>- Learn how to motivate yourself and have fun in a group through adaptive goal accomplishment</li> </ul>
<b><i>Beer-coaster tower</i></b>	Participants will be divided in groups of 7-10 (depending on the number of participants in the evening of diversity thrill). They will be provided materials which consist of 100 pieces of coasters, and will need to build the highest coaster tower. The tower must be stable, and it cannot fall over. In case the tower falls over, the team is disqualified. The team who builds the highest coaster tower wins the game. Remark: Members of teams will swap after approx. 10 minutes. The teams will have 25 minutes of working time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learn to energize within the group; build a team atmosphere</li> <li>- Learn to challenge yourself and keep the group together as a unit</li> </ul>



Activity Name	Description	Objective(s)
<b><i>First Impressions – What is our perception?</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Handouts of the ‘Hermann Grid Illusion’ will be distributed to each participant. Discussion (give participants the opportunity to share and discuss their real life examples or those experienced in a working environment):</li> <li>– Ask the participant to share their first impression of this image. Do you see any gray dots in the white spaces? What about the second figure, do you see any white dots appear and disappear at intersections?</li> <li>– Do you really believe and perceive this image as you described it? (This can happen when we think we have seen things, which instead do not exist – the same might happen when we see people too)</li> <li>– Have you ever had a wrong first impression of someone who came from another culture or a different background? Did someone have a wrong impression of you? How did you react to that?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Learn how to acknowledge and improve the understanding toward the phenomenon of perception</li> </ul>
<b><i>Mobiliversity Bingo</i></b>	Each participant will be getting a bingo worksheet, in which there will be listed qualities representing some dimensions of diversity. Participants who will meet the description may sign in the perspective box. Only 12 participants will be asked from the crowd. The task will be finished after 7 minutes, unless there will be someone who will finish first. In order to win, the participant must have a complete row of boxes (horizontal, vertical, diagonal) signed by other players. Once the time is over, a discussion will take place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Have the opportunity to mingle and learn more about one another</li> <li>– Creatively reveal sensitivity towards diversity</li> </ul>
<b><i>Exploring Hot Buttons – what did you just say?</i></b>	3-6 note cards will be placed on the chairs of each participant prior to their arrival at the workshop. Words or statements (which can be perceived as quite provocative and discomfiting) will be written on each of the 3- 5 note cards. Give the participants 5-10 minutes to read them carefully. Watch carefully their reaction, and then start the discussion part.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Become more conscious and sensitive as to how words/statements can affect one another</li> <li>– Acknowledge ways of reacting to these situations; how to avoid conflict(s) and misunderstanding(s); and how to become aware of cultural differences</li> <li>– Learn how to prevent misinterpretations</li> </ul>
<b><i>Respect: its meaning at an introductory level</i></b>	Participants will be asked according to their willingness to find a respective conversation partner and start an introducing conversation. They will be given 5-10 min of time to talk about RESPECT. What does it mean for you to show respect and/or to be shown respect? Does respect equal to fear? What is the so called ‘Golden Rule’ when talking about respect? Once the conversation is over, the participant will be asked to return to their seats, and share their opinions and thoughts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Aim at building a community in which respect is constructed and maintained</li> <li>– Become more familiar with the way how each of us perceives respect</li> <li>– Get to know more about the differences and similarities of individuals in a group</li> </ul>

Activity Name	Description	Objective(s)
<b><i>Trash your Ego</i></b>	Participants will be given a piece of paper, on which they will be asked to write the letter 'I'. They will have 3-5 minutes to decorate it as they wish and if they wish so. After everyone has finished decorating, participants will be asked to tear the paper into as many pieces as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reflect upon and discuss whether 'Ego' becomes the reason for not being able to accomplish tasks or handle critical situations</li> <li>– Learn how 'Ego' may encourage positive attitudes</li> </ul>
<b><i>Connect the Dots – Thinking how to use the right resources</i></b>	Connect all the nine dots with four straight lines. Make sure that you do not lift your pen/pencil off the paper. Do not retrace any line. Lines may cross if necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Know how to use the right resources wisely</li> <li>– Acknowledge the fact that we often subconsciously limit our perspectives, alternatives and solutions towards a matter or concern</li> </ul>
<b><i>Mobiliversity Fashion Show - The concept of 'Prioritizing'</i></b>	Participants will be divided in groups of approx. 10. They will be given the task of dressing up two models (male and female). The theme of the fashion show is to dress up for the graduation ceremony. Participants will be given raw materials and assigned a preparation time of 40 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increase awareness towards making the best use of your time and resources</li> <li>– Understand better the concept 'Prioritization', which is an essential skill</li> <li>– Learn how to focus more on energy and attention, i.e. on things that really matter</li> <li>– Learn how to allocate time most wisely</li> <li>– Carefully manage tasks</li> </ul>

Diversity should be considered as a source of inspiration and strength. Without the certain variety that differentiates us from one another, life would be boring and lacking challenges. Appreciating all the differences can be as such considered as the real fun part of diversity, and that is the reason why creative activities and simulated situations are used in these Diversity Workshops. Despite the fact that participation in the diversity workshops was on a voluntary basis, these workshops were very well attended. These workshops earned positive feedback (provided via e-mail, in person, during and/or in the end of the workshop) from the participants, while sparking some changes among our students. Admittedly, this cannot replace broader evaluation research; however it gives a first impression of the workshop's reception by its targeted audience, enabling us to carefully and thoughtfully implement any possible comment(s) and/or critical opinion(s).

### **The transfer of diversity workshops – future potentials**

Applying diversity in organizations and institutions is considered not only as quite significant in today's globalized world, but also bearing potential in delivering a competitive advantage within a working environment. Notably, one of the author's master students implemented our workshop concept with RBI (Raiffeisen Bank International AG), thus expanding it to the needs of professionals in the internationally operating banking business. Aiming at creating inclusive excellence, higher education institutions may take interest in applying the tool of the diversity workshops to companies and other organizations.

The study which was carried out on the process of implementing the workshops with RBI examined how a diversity training program should be conducted in order to avoid

cultural misunderstanding within a diverse team while appreciating each other's differences in behavior, attitudes, beliefs, and cultural background. RBI served as a pilot company, and the study resulted in recommending the integration of such customized diversity workshops in several training and development strategies.

Another exciting and enthusiastic initiative by another master student of the author currently investigates the possibility and need of transferring the diversity workshops to the ERASMUS Program. Relocation, interaction within a diverse student and faculty body, challenging encounters, integration in a new environment, and exploring a new culture can be quite demanding and still very exciting for every student participating in the Erasmus study exchange. Therefore, assessing the needs and expectations of Erasmus participants in Vienna regarding challenging situations is one of the starting points in designing and implementing tailor-made diversity trainings which can be highly beneficial for them in overcoming the challenges imposed by their relocation experience. These two studies serve as a point of departure in further investigating the potentials and drawbacks of possibly transferring the diversity workshops to different settings.

## **Conclusions**

Every individual human being has their own characteristics based on gender, culture, social background, etc.; in other words, uniqueness. We believe that a student who is able to embrace the uniqueness of oneself and that of others already in the course of his/her studies will have a significant advantage in his/her future career development.

Engaging with diversity in different situations can prove to be a complicated task and therefore it is exactly why any higher education is recommended to provide diversity workshops. Within the framework of teaching students on the challenges of diversity as encountered in social, learning, and working environments, we chose customized diversity workshops as the beginning of a journey that will assist them in embracing each other's uniqueness. The reason for doing so is that in our opinion embracing diversity is not taught through reading material alone, but particularly by stimulating interaction among students.

The workshops aimed at providing students and future alumni in understanding cultural diversity and recognizing its potential value already in the course of their studies. Moreover, they equip them with a sense of security in managing certain tasks in a diverse business environment. The tailor-made diversity workshops consisted of interaction between students, academic and administrative staff to share opinions, critical thoughts, and reflections. In doing so, we aimed at creating an educational experience in which each participant develops cognitive knowledge, social skills and competences in becoming an active member of a rapidly developing global economy.

The diversity workshops were divided into two parts; theory and interactive challenge activities. The theory provided the students with insights on how to solve diversity issue, increase their flexibility, creativity, and innovativeness. The students were challenged to use the theory and apply it to the activity in such a way that they themselves would then discover the added value of theory on diversity.

Among the core qualities and skills gained by workshop participants, one can find improvement in problem solving, flexibility, creativity and innovation, high intellectual engagement and motivation, growth in active thinking process as well as a new approach in looking for and using diversity constructively. Additionally, it is worth considering a future investigation on the potentials that customized diversity workshops may have if transferred from the original learning environment and expanded to the needs of professionals in internationally operating companies or students participating in exchange study programs.

In the end, no matter as to how challenging and complex diversity might be perceived, the process of managing it can be experienced as quite rewarding. As such, in pursuit of creating inclusive excellence, higher education institutions may consider and further evaluate the need in applying the diversity workshops tool for their own purposes and possibly integrating it into the study curricula.

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**Abstract:** Classrooms, workplaces and communities are becoming increasingly diverse, and as such learning to effectively interact with dissimilar individuals while understanding, valuing and embracing differences is quite essential for members of such organizations. In comparison with other tertiary education institutions in Austria, Lauder Business School's (LBS) most striking feature is the high degree of diversity within its student body. Our concept of diversity encompasses personality dimensions, life circumstances and organizational framework. Hence, LBS puts individuals and their multiple-changeable and unchangeable-identity features and group belongings center-stage. Recruiting students from more than 40 different countries as well as having an international faculty, we at LBS are permanently confronted with diversity-related challenges in teaching routines and management procedures. As we wish to raise the awareness towards such diversity while creating a learning environment in which students of all backgrounds can thrive, we have conceptualized content-tailored

diversity workshops[1]. The process of conceptualizing tailored diversity workshop content was made possible through data generated from an exploratory study as well as an analysis of best-practice examples of comparable institutions. These workshops do not merely address diversity-related conflicts but also proffer a participatory platform to devise solutions. Additionally, higher education institutions, which permanently confront diversity-related challenges in teaching routines and management procedures, may apply such a tool (diversity workshop) by implementing it into its study curricula and by proposing to outsource/transfer this tool to companies. The significance of diversity workshops, its goals and objectives, followed by a detailed presentation of the process of its tailor-made conceptualization will be further addressed in this paper at hand.

Note to the abstract:

1. This endeavor was greatly facilitated by funding for the Stadt Wien Kompetenzteam (Lehre) für Bildungsmobilität und Diversität – Mobiliversity (*Municipality of Vienna competence team for teaching on student mobility and diversity*) during the period of 2011-14.

**Keywords:** diversity management, product development, sales management and marketing in international business contexts.

# Inter-ethnic boundaries between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch inhabitants of the Netherlands

Lisa Niederdorfer & Kutlay Yağmur

## Introduction

According to the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics (2013) one fifth of the population in the Netherlands is "allochtoon", a label given to people who were either born outside the Netherlands or of whom at least one of the parents was. This distinction was adopted and used by researchers (e.g. Andriessen & Phalet, 2010; Huijnk, Verkuyten, & Coenders, 2012; Tolsma, Lubbers, & Gijsberts, 2012) mostly in quantitative designs employing acculturation models such as by Bourhis, Moise, Perreault and Senecal (1997). These and other studies have drawn attention to phenomena such as education or marriage patterns of immigrants and their offspring in accounting for their acculturation patterns in the Netherlands. However, the existence of distinct ethnicities is taken for granted implying that they are 'discrete, sharply differentiated, internally homogeneous and externally bounded groups' (Brubaker, 2002, p. 164) and can be viewed 'as basic constituents of social life, chief protagonists of social conflicts and fundamental units of social analysis' (Brubaker, 2002, p. 164). Thus, ethnicity is treated as a part of the explanation instead of something that needs to be explained and the world is presented as a mosaic of different ethnic blocs (Brubaker, 2002) or as Herder (1968) put it a garden with different nation-plants.

Rather than taking ethnic groups for granted, this study investigates the construction of ethnic boundaries in Dutch society. The focus of investigation is the boundary between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people. This topic is especially interesting, as previous research has shown that the perceived distance between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people is the largest (Schalk-Soekar, Van de Vijver, & Hoogsteder, 2004), as well as that very little social contact takes place between them (Vervoort & Dagevos, 2011). Moreover, the Dutch majority has a rather negative perception of Moroccans living in the Netherlands (Kamans, Gordijn, Oldenhuis, & Otten, 2009). These are all indicators that a boundary with high closure might exist.

For efficiency reasons a distinction is made between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people in this paper, though the compartmentalization of people into ethnic categories has just been pointed out to be problematic. Nevertheless, this distinction is only used to approach the topic of boundary-making and not as an explanans for persons' thoughts and behavior.

## Boundary-making paradigm in inter-ethnic studies

To investigate the ethnic boundary between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people, Wimmer's (2007, 2008, 2009) boundary-making paradigm following Barth's (1969) concept of ethnicity as social organization is adopted. According to this view ethnic groups are not based on actual cultural differences between people, but the result of ascription based on socially relevant factors (Barth, 1969). This implies that 'no simple one-to-one relationship between ethnic units and cultural similarities and differences' (Barth, 1969, p. 14) can be assumed. While vast differences might be ignored, small ones could be regarded as significant by the actors involved (Wimmer, 2009). Of importance is thus not an objective, observable presence or absence of similarity, but the symbolic weight of certain attributes. Moreover, this implies that ethnicity is not something that exists naturally in the world, but only a concept that

becomes real through our perception, interpretation, categorization, representation and identification (Brubaker, 2002). This does not mean that such boundaries are "less real" - once established they become a distinction that shapes people's behavior, mental orientation and everyday lives (Alba, 2005). Following Barth (1969) and Wimmer (2009) what we must investigate is the ongoing process of boundary-construction between people along subjective markers instead of trying to describe 'the cultural stuff' (Barth, 1969, p. 15) using ethnicity as a self-evident unit of analysis. We should scrutinize the ethnic boundaries canalizing social life (Barth, 1969) treating them as something that needs to be explained instead of as a part of the explanation itself.

Numerous properties exist along which people might create boundaries; however which of those become significant is highly situational due to their dependence on micro, median and macro factors. Thereby the micro level of persons' individual experiences is embedded in the context of median level, such as public discourse, as well as macro level factors, such as state policies (Barth, 1994). This might be one reason why vast differences can be found between countries regarding properties used for boundary-making. For example, while Germans often view Muslims as *Gastarbeiter*, people in France demand "nationalization" of this religion (Bail, 2008). In America, on the other hand, where Spanish is perceived as an equally large threat as Islam in some European countries, language plays a much more important role in boundary-making than religion (Zolberg & Woon, 1999). In general, having certain language skills is almost always a prerequisite for being perceived as the member of an ethnic group. However, while one can speak English with a thick accent and erroneous grammar in the United States and still be accepted, this is less tolerated in Denmark or France (Wimmer, 2009). Nevertheless, boundaries might not only differ depending on the situation, due to their processualist quality they might also change over time.

Ethnic boundaries are not a static concept (Brubaker, 2002), but subject to constant creation and recreation. The degrees of closure of a boundary may increase; it may harden and become more clear-cut. One example might be that in the Netherlands Muslims are viewed more negatively since 9/11 and the murder of newspaper columnist Theo van Gogh (Kamans et al., 2009). Thus, the religious boundary has hardened. In case closure decreases, a boundary may blur and shift or vanish altogether, making who was once alien a member of the group (Zolberg & Woon, 1999). A boundary-shift can for example be achieved by promoting other principles of categorization and social organization than currently used (Wimmer, 2008). In some cases it will be possible to relocate the boundary in this way, thus those once situated on the outside will become members of the group. However, boundary-shifting might also lead to the exclusion of those who were once insiders. In either case, a shift demands the reconstruction of a group's identity and thus usually involves a high amount of tension (Zolberg & Woon, 1999), as it involves a political struggle over inclusion and exclusion in which all members of a society are involved (Wimmer, 2009). Thus, shift is only, but not necessarily possible after a substantial amount of boundary blurring and crossing have taken place (Zolberg & Woon, 1999). Consequently, in the boundary-making paradigm inclusion or exclusion do not depend on assimilation or other strategies by the individual immigrant, but on both the immigrants' and the majority members' boundary-work.

## Methodology

To investigate the boundary-making between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people, 29 semi-structured interviews in English or Dutch administered between September and October 2012 lasting between 10 and 63 minutes were analyzed using a coding strategy according to

Charmaz (2006). The interviewees were 15 native Dutch people as well as 14 persons living in the Netherlands with a Moroccan background. This means that they were either born in Morocco and immigrated to the Netherlands later in their life or that at least one of their parents or grandparents was born in Morocco. The interviewees had a mean age of 31.5 years ranging between 15 and 60. 13 men (five Moroccan-Dutch, eight Dutch) and 14 women (eight Moroccan-Dutch, six Dutch) were interviewed. The gender of two participants is unknown due to the interviewer not noting it down. The interviews focused on how group boundaries between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch are constructed on a micro and median level. Due to a lack of time the macro level was not evaluated.

## Results

In line with the twofold structure of the interviews, the results will be presented in a micro and a median level part. The capital letters refer to the interviews quoted. However, participants are not grouped into Dutch or Moroccan-Dutch, as many did not clearly assign themselves to one of those categories. Dutch quotes were translated into English by the first author.

### *Markers for group boundaries between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch*

Salient markers that emerge from the data as being used for boundary-construction between the Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch population of the Netherlands are religion, habitus and language.

### Religion

Religion is the most salient boundary, as it is named most often and by the largest number of participants. This is not surprising, as labeling in religious instead of national-origin, racial or other categories has surged in the last decade (Brubaker, 2012).

The religious border is constructed along two different lines. Dutch people perceive Moroccan-Dutch people, who are almost always associated with being Muslim (MATL, 14-17; MBI1D, 64-65), to be more religious than they are themselves (MATL, 116; MBI3D, 122; LT3D, 124). Thus, the border seems to be constructed with the distinction in religious and non-religious people. When talking about ethnicity, however, the argumentation changes and it seems that Moroccan-Dutch people or more specifically Muslims do not belong to the Netherlands due to their religion not fitting in with the Christian heritage of the country, '... the Dutch religion in general is Christian or Catholic. Islam has not been here from the beginning, it was imported with the arriving immigrants, with Turks and Moroccans...' (MBT3D, 101). In line with this argumentation the construction of mosques or wearing of certain religious symbols are seen as not fitting with the Dutch Christian heritage (MATL, 165; JTY, 226-227). The border is now constructed with a partition in a Muslim and Christian community. Consequently, depending on the topic, different dimensions emerge as salient enough to create a boundary.

The strength of the religious boundary depends on the domain; religion seems to play a much more important role in private than in professional life. While wearing a headscarf and praying during work seems to constitute a minor problem (RI1D, 124; JTY, 272; MATL, 34, 50), religion is seen as a major obstacle for close private contact, especially marriage (MBT3D, 151, 248; MATR, 421; RCID, 168). This might be due to the fact that many participants are of the opinion that to marry someone Muslim, one has to become Muslim



oneself (RCI2M, 198; MBT2M, 343; LT4M, 128; MATR, 413-415) and that the joint upbringing of children is seen as a potential source of trouble (JTJ, 208-213; LT1D, 129-130; LT3D, 238). It seems that the more intense the contact, the more salient the religious boundary becomes.

From the gathered material it becomes clear that most Moroccan-Dutch of the second generation were raised with Islam (MATR, 186-191; SKI2M, 112-114) and also want to continue this religious upbringing with their offspring (MATS, 210-223; LT4M, 131-134), but in a rather liberal way. The third generation might choose for themselves whether they want to fast during Ramadan (MBT2M, 252) or to wear a headscarf (MATR, 455-456; MATS, 220-228). Regarding these findings and the above result, that Muslims are seen as not belonging to the Dutch society, the religious boundary is likely to last.

### Habitus

The behavior and practices of Moroccan-Dutch people perceived as deviating from the norm by the Dutch is a marker for boundary-construction (RCI2M, 170; RCI4D, 112). The source for this perceived different behavior seems to be rooted in religious practices such as Ramadan, going to the mosque or praying during the day (LT1D, 167). Religion is often reduced to these visible items, as not all Dutch people possess knowledge regarding the underlying ideas of Islam (MATL, 14-17; MATH, 46-53). Another perceived origin for non-Dutch behavior are differing norms and values, as Moroccan-Dutch 'have different ideas about things' (JTJ, 90) and even though it is not clear whether these ideas have to be left behind (MBI4D, 79), it becomes obvious that at least from the outside everyone needs to behave in a Dutch way (MBT3D, 171-172; JTF, 135-143). Consequently, religion, but also different norms and values leading to behavior deviating from the Dutch norm, are used for the construction of a boundary by the majority population.

The data shows that this perceived boundary already might be decreasing in the sense that Moroccan-Dutch people are adapting to the Dutch norm. One Moroccan-Dutch participant reports 'we are just trying to pick the nice things from both cultures' (JTA, 217). Moreover, a member of the third generation declared that he grew up with the Dutch norms and values and learned to live with them (LT2M, 158). However, these statements indicate that while Moroccan-Dutch are adapting to the Dutch habitus and norms, they also keep some of their own. Thus, in order for the boundary to vanish completely the norms and habitus accepted as the norm by the majority population might have to widen to also include Moroccan-Dutch people.

### Language

Just like acting in a 'Dutch way', the Dutch language seems to constitute an important variable for boundary-construction. Not learning Dutch is associated with boundary-making (MBI3D, 181-184) and the Dutch language is seen as a necessary skill in order to integrate properly (MKI1D, 47; MATS, 185) and to belong to Dutch society (MKI3D, 70-71). The language boundary plays an important role in preventing private social interaction (LT3D, 118; MBT3D, 165-167), especially friendship relations (MBT1D, 83; MATL, 150) and marriage (MATR, 395-400; MATR, 405-408). Additionally, speaking the Dutch language well is important for social interaction at the work place, 'the customers reduce you to the fact that it is difficult for you to use the language' (MBT3D, 167) and getting a job, 'I think Surinamese people have an advantage above Muslims or Moroccans, because their mother tongue is Dutch or Papiamentu, so they have more chances in the labor market' (MBT3D,

188-192). Consequently, excellent knowledge of the Dutch language is seen as a prerequisite to become part of the Dutch society.

Moreover, language seems to be linked to a feeling of belonging. First of all, in addition to acting in a Dutch way the Dutch feel Dutch due to them speaking the Dutch language (RCI4D, 76-78). Secondly, the belonging of a Moroccan-Dutch person to the perceived either Moroccan or Dutch group is closely related to the language spoken. For example, one participant states that she feels more Dutch and thus also speaks more Dutch (MKI4M, 164), while another reports that when speaking Dutch at work she feels Dutch, but when at home she feels more Moroccan due to using a Moroccan language (MATR, 146-151). Thus, the Dutch language is not only an important factor for other-, but also for self-identification.

It seems that the boundary constructed via language is decreasing with each generation. While the first generation, especially women (MATL, 148-149), speak Berber or Arabic very well and Dutch rather poorly (MBI2M, 68-80; SKI2M, 58-60), the younger generations are better at and prefer Dutch to Moroccan languages (LT2M, 48-51; LT1D, 319; RCI2M, 76-82). For example, a Moroccan-Dutch participant stated that he is actually better in expressing his feelings in Dutch than in Berber (SFI2M, 58). Therefore, the language boundary between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people might vanish over time.

### *Boundary-makers and boundary-reducers*

From the data it seems that the media and politics have a strengthening influence on the perceived boundaries. Intergroup contact and time may reduce boundaries, depending on whether they are perceived as positive or negative.

### Media & Politics

Earlier research found that migrants are often presented in a negative manner in the media and in the political arena. Especially the framing of Islam as a threat has emerged as dominant in Dutch media and politics triggered by (inter)national events such as 9/11, the war in Iraq or the murder of Theo van Gogh. This is for example manifested through the new focus of parliamentary activity on the prevention of Muslim radicalism or the protection of the country from terrorist attacks (Vliegthart & Roggeband, 2007). This discussion is encompassed by media reports focusing on terrorism, extremism, international conflict and integration problems (Lünenborg, Fritsche, & Bach, 2011). Additionally, the media does not cover immigration as a topic continuously, but floods the media space with dramatic reports if something negative happens while paying no attention to the subject at "normal times" (Gemi, Ulasiuk, & Triandafyllidou, 2011). Thus, the public is usually confronted with the topic in a problematic way and starts to associate immigration in a framework of conflicts and difficulty.

Many participants are aware of the exaggerated negative representation of Moroccan-Dutch in the media and politics and have identified practices such as indicating that a perpetrator has a Moroccan background, but not if such a person has a Dutch background (MKI3D, 54; MKI4M, 77-81; LT3D, 106) or reporting on certain topics through the eyes of the majority, such as the headscarf as a symbol of oppression (MATS, 181; MBI4D, 147). However, while many agree that a crime by a migrant is more likely to be reported, no doubts exist regarding the truthfulness of these reports (MBI2M, 199-203; MBI4D, 162-168; MKI4M, 99-102; RCI3M, 138; JTJ, 208). In addition, the political discussion in the Netherlands, especially the right-wing politician Geert Wilders and his party the PVV is identified as having a negative

influence on the perceived boundaries. Wilders is associated with using the situation to win seats by framing immigrants as a threat (JTF, 40-44; MBI4D, 142-144). This might be especially successful with Dutch who in real life do not have any interaction with Moroccan-Dutch people (MATR, 258; JTF, 47-48). However, it seems that while the interviewees are aware of the media and politics framing immigrants in a negative light, the source of the information in general is still seen as trustworthy.

The finding that negative framing in the media and the political arena does not stay without consequences, even though people are aware of it, complements earlier studies (Kamans et al., 2009; Siebers, 2010; Siebers & Dennissen, 2012). Through this negative framing in politics Moroccan-Dutch are stigmatized (LT3D, 114; 184-188; JTF, 52-58) and the displayed negative behavior is overgeneralized (MATR, 256; MBI2M, 195; RCI3M; MBT3D, 161; JTA, 120). Thus, the discourse seems to contribute to the creation of negative stereotypes regarding Moroccan-Dutch people (SKI1D, 34-36; JTA, 149; MBT3D, 161). In some cases these stereotypes seem to confirm negative personal experiences (LT3D, 109-110) or even replace them (MATH, 72-81). This and also the unfavorable image displayed in the media affects Moroccan-Dutch participants (RCI2M, 138; MATH, 85; MBT3D, 161) and might lead to a counter-reaction (RCI3M) or feelings of exclusion (LT3D, 165-168). Consequently, the negative framing potentially increases the boundary between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people and it is not surprising that under the increased tension of the media and political discourse Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people have negative personal experiences with each other.

### Intergroup contact

Another factor influencing the boundary-making is interactions that people experience with each other in their daily lives. Both Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch participants report that they have had bad experiences with each other. For example Moroccan-Dutch people may be cursed on the street (MBI2M, 175-194), while Dutch report assaults such as being beaten up (MBI4D, 107-111) and problems when cycling through a Moroccan-Dutch neighborhood after sunset (MBT3D, 224-226; LT3D, 91-96). Nevertheless, all of these participants also report positive contact with the other group and a large number of interviewees reports only positive experiences. Domains where positive interaction seems to occur most often are in the neighborhood, at sport clubs, at school, at institutions of tertiary education or at work (LT2M, 33-36; LT3D, 66; LT1D, 159-160; SKI1D, 8; MBI1D, 31-38; MBI2M, 38-47; LT4M, 127; MBT2M, 325-331; MKI4M, 145-146; JTF, 45-48; JTJ, 25-36). When investigating the situations in which positive or negative experiences occur differences between them become salient. Negative contact seems to happen when one person is confronted with a larger number of out-group members. In positive situations, on the other hand, groups are more mixed and usually have to work together in an institutional setting. These findings confirm earlier research on different contact settings (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011). Consequently, one might conclude that certain situations are more likely to foster positive contact than others.

The more important question, however, is whether the positive face-to-face interaction leads to a generalization beyond the immediate situation. Generally, positive intergroup contact reduces prejudice against the outgroup as a whole or even all outgroups, since the contact might trigger more acceptance towards others in general (Pettigrew et al., 2011). Many participants seem to be aware of these processes, since they state that through positive contact with each other one can foster understanding of the other and overcome boundaries such as religion (e.g. MBT1D, 126-131; MBT2M, 323; MATR, 348-350; MATS, 307-314). As the data suggests that a large amount of positive intergroup contact is taking place and the

participants as well as former research agree that this can reduce prejudice and foster acceptance, one might conclude that the boundary between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people is likely to disappear in the future.

Nevertheless, the reported negative contact might have the potential to increase prejudice and thus strengthen the boundary between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people. Few studies have investigated the role of negative contact on prejudice, thus little is known on whether negative experiences affect group stereotypes negatively just as positive experiences do positively (Stark, Flache, & Veenstra, 2013). Data by Paolini, Harwood and Rubin (2010) suggests that during negatively valenced interaction group membership becomes more salient than during positive interaction. Barlow, Paolini, Pedersen, Hornsey, Radke, Harwood, Rubin and Sibley (2012) conclude from this result that negative contact might have a greater capacity to increase prejudice than positive contact might have to decrease it and confirm this suggestion in their study testing the prejudice of Australians towards Black Australians, Muslim Australians and asylum seekers. Stark, Flache and Veenstra (2013), on the other hand, found that the generalization of feelings towards an outgroup member was about equally strong for positive and negative interaction. However, their research was conducted with class mates instead of strangers, which might have led to different results. Thus, while the positive contact helps in reducing the boundary between Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch, a smaller amount of negative contact is simultaneously building it, even though we do not know to what extent.

### Time

Similar to intergroup contact, time seems to be a double-edged sword. Participants state that time helps to reduce boundaries since Moroccan-Dutch people, especially the second generation, are adopting typically Dutch or Western traits (MBT1D, 132-133; RCI1D, 97-102; SKI2M, 81-83; MATL, 147; MATS, 325; MATH, 130-131) and that a mixture of both cultures emerges (JTA, 231-234; RCI1D, 97-102). Furthermore, over time positive intergroup contact increases and familiarization takes place (MKI2D, 47; LT2M, 175-176; MBI1D, 110-112). However, Martinovic, van Tubergen and Maas (2009) have found that intergroup contact does not increase in the same way for all ethnic groups in the Netherlands. For Surinamese-Dutch and Antillean-Dutch immigrants, intergroup interaction increases more steadily over time than for Turkish-Dutch and Moroccan-Dutch people. Nevertheless, even if direct intergroup contact might not occur very often, familiarization might still reduce group boundaries. This effect assumes that people's perceived level of threat through an outgroup is eventually reduced through unavoidable contact and is hypothesized to be one of the factors responsible for perceived threat by Muslims being lowest in some of the largest cities of the Netherlands (Savelkoul, Scheepers, Tolsma, & Hagendorn, 2010). On the other hand, negative events such as 9/11 have the capacity to increase the boundary (MBI1D, 136-146; MKI4M, 30-35). Thus, time in general seems to reduce boundaries, while this process strongly depends on what happens in the time passing by.

### **Discussion & Conclusion**

This study showed that treating ethnic groups as self-evident units of analysis might be problematic due to them changing through environmental and social circumstances. This becomes evident in the religious border playing a much more important role in the private than in the public sphere or in the feeling of belonging changing due to the language spoken. Moreover, that the role of habitus and language decreased over generations indicates that

borders are not stable over time. Thus, ethnicity is a much more complex phenomenon than suggested by Herder (1968) and substantial research is needed in order to explore its full complexity.

In addition to showing that ethnicity is an intricate process rather than a stable category, with a Barthian (1969) perspective one might suggest that opposed to claims by Scheffer (2000) the multicultural society in the Netherlands has not failed. The boundary-making approach proposes that boundaries cannot only be crossed, but also soften and disappear or shift. This means that boundaries themselves might change, for example through familiarization, if an indigenous measure of normality is abandoned (Awad, 2013). Therefore, the concept of who is Dutch might simply widen over time and potentially include people who have been excluded before.

Several factors were shown to influence the processes through which boundaries are constructed and broken down. Through framing Islam as a threat both the media and politics seem to contribute to building a religious boundary. However, while the public discourse remains rather negative, the direct contact between people seems to be positive, which if generalized, might decrease boundaries. Thus, one might say that positive interaction should be fostered under ideal conditions for example at school, sport clubs or at work. Through this approach the responsibility of a working society has shifted from the immigrant to the society as a whole including its institutions.

In order to map the complex processes underlying boundary-making substantial research is needed. Future work could focus on a diachronic perspective not over generations, but how ethnic self- and other-identification may change over the course of a life-time. In addition, more insights regarding the situational and social variability of different boundary-markers are needed.

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**Abstract:** Instead of assuming ethnic group as an explanans, like many studies investigating phenomena such as education, marriage or acculturation patterns of immigrants and their offspring in the Netherlands do, this research follows the boundary-making approach by Wimmer (2007; 2008;

2009) focusing on the group construction process. This approach stipulates that boundaries between ethnic groups are the result of social processes of closure and distancing along markers perceived as relevant by the groups between which the boundary is erected. To explore these issues semi-structured interviews with 15 Dutch and 14 Moroccan-Dutch people were conducted and analyzed based on Charmaz (2006). The results show that the markers used for boundary-construction are religion, habitus and language. Influential processes are negative personal experiences and the current discourse in media and politics. Time, however, is associated with reducing boundaries if positive experiences with members of the other group are made.

**Keywords:** inter-ethnic boundary making, boundary-making approach, group construction, Moroccan immigrant, The Netherlands.

# Transnationalism – An Alternative Perspective on Heterogeneity, Complexity and Inequality?<sup>[1]</sup>

Angela Pilch Ortega

Due to the globalisation of economy, worldwide migration movements, the internationalisation of the media and the facilitation of communication processes that cross national borders, current societies are confronted with social spaces which are increasingly pluricultural, heterogeneous, inconsistent, fragmented and less regionally bounded. Even though globalisation can in no way be considered to be a new social phenomenon, it can be argued that the facilitation of means of crossing boundaries has led to an increasing frequency in transnational movements which have fundamentally transformed the structures of social interaction and communication. As an effect of increasing transnationalisation, it can be said that social relations are less embedded in physical structures; presence in a local place is losing its function as a precondition of social interaction. Furthermore the concept of nation-state as a reference system is becoming more and more porous and loses its main function as a political and social regulator (Mau, 2007, p. 8). Global theorists argue in this context that social actors are relatively emancipated ‘from the constraints of geographical space’ (Dürschmidt, 2007, p. 27; cf. Schroer, 2006); they allude to the de-territorialisation of space (Appadurai, 1996) and note the ‘disappearance and disaggregation of place in a space of flow’ (Bittner, 2007, p. 27). In contrast, transnationalisation theorists emphasise that the emancipation of place doesn’t mean that place is losing its relevance in structuring and organising processes (Mau, 2007, p. 8). Transnational spaces can in no way be regarded as a homogeneous phenomenon. How and under which conditions social actors develop their social relations, how transcultural references are created in everyday life and how these processes support the transformation of regionally embodied structures and practices varies widely. Furthermore, transnational spaces should not be understood as locations on a map or as sealed containers, but instead as relational social areas which are composed of various relationships.

Transnationalisation from the bottom-up, with its subject and action oriented perspective, focuses in particular on structural transformation processes which are initiated and carried out by social actors. In contrast to globalisation discourses, which mainly analyse the interaction of anonymous market forces on the macro level such as financial markets, transnational companies and global players, the transnationalism approach pays special attention to transnational social activities and practices which are initiated and developed by people.

## **Transnationalisation and social inequality**

The participation in transnational spaces requires specific capacities, competencies and resources. Relatedly, the social resources of people are not equal distributed and the general conditions for participation in transnational networks and cross-border movements differ. Transnational spaces are unequally configured and are characterised by social conflict and tension. This highly competitive arena is structured by power relationships and hegemonic forces.

New communication and transportation technologies open up possibilities for cross-border interaction and this ‘has given rise to new patterns of mobility’ (Bittner, 2007, p. 31). Bittner (2007) emphasises that tourism and migration movements are not only a physical



reality but also states that the images produced have the function of becoming normative standards which leads to the division of globally moving actors and people who are staying closer to home; they are more regionally bound due to a lack of financial, cultural and/or social resources which do not allow them to participate in transnational interactions (p. 31). Baumann (1998) argues in this context as well that 'mobility has become the most powerful and most coveted stratifying factor' (p. 9 quoted in Castles, 2007, p. 39). While the politically and economically well-off are able to move beyond borders at will, the poor have to stay at home: 'the riches are global, the misery are local' (p. 74 quoted in Castles, 2007, p. 39). Generally it can be said that 'in recent years, the disparities in income, social conditions, human rights and security have increased' (Castles, 2007, p. 39). Therefore Castles claims that because of unequal development and the high level of inequality between North and South, 'Migration control is essentially about regulating North-South relations. Because northern countries are doing their best to stop migration – with the exception of the highly skilled – movement can often only take place through means classified as illegal by receiving countries' (Castles, 2007, p. 39).

Over the past decades, legal regulations concerning cross-border movement has fundamentally changed. On the one hand the free movement of tourists, goods, provision of services and the movement of financial capital was deregulated (primarily benefiting "Western" countries); on the other hand new barriers were erected, mainly for goods and people coming from "poor" countries. Furthermore, residence permission and labour permit requirements were tightened. It is not only in Europe that the new regulations and the establishment of intensified border controls (Fortress Europe) seek to repel migration flows of misery; also within the United States, as a traditional immigration destination, the situation for non-citizens is becoming more and more precarious. In this context, research should take into account that re-nationalisation processes structure cross-border movements as well and result in diverging possibilities for participation in transnational activities. In addition Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton (1999, p. 9 quoted in Vertovec 2007, p. 162f.) suggest that 'the power of national governments is not necessarily diminished by globalization but on the contrary is being reconstituted and re-constructed in response to the growing complexity of processes of governance in a more interconnected world'.

Against this background transnationalisation cannot be considered as a homogeneous phenomenon. Transnational structures and spaces are characterised by social tensions, inequality and conflicts. Economic, cultural and social capitals play an important role in defining the possibilities of participation and the acquisition of special competencies for transnational acting. Apitzsch (2003) emphasises as well that transnational spaces cannot be seen as congruent. She argues that migration flows do develop paradoxically to political and economic relations. Because of political persecution or precarious economic situations, migrants often have to leave their countries, and they mainly choose destination countries which are different to their country of origin (p. 68).

The transnational space as a highly competitive arena also becomes visible by means of the development of new social movements which also act beyond national borders. Against the backdrop of the dominance of the financial market, the impacts of neoliberal deregulation, increasing unemployment and social inequality and the exploitation of natural resources, to a greater extent people are organising themselves into social movements around the world in order to counter hegemonic power. Even though these "new" forms of civil resistance are quite heterogeneous, the communication and social interaction through transnational structures allows them to widen their influence on regional and global structures. Tyson Darling (2006) argues for instance that 'While a minority elite push for further regressive neoliberal and monetarist policies, now is the time to summon the collective will to restore global rules for transparency and accountability that promote human security for the many,

protect biodiversity and the survival of natural evolution, and promote sustainable development and an environmentally sound economic growth' (p. 45f.). These social protest platforms can be seen as collective strategies to (re)gain the power of performative action with regard to social and natural circumstances. Transnational structures support the exchange of information, the discussion of and reflection on social situations and the formation of solidarity alliances. On the one hand globalisation and neoliberal policy partially re-enforce the powerlessness of people, and on the other hand transnational spaces and structures open up opportunities for global formations which bring the hegemonic power of the elite into question and allows for the bolstering of human needs and alternative solutions to current problems and challenges.

Confrontation with transnational spaces with overlapping social references initiates learning processes in everyday life, but this can also lead into excessive demands on participants. A non-uniform and temporal facet of transnationalisation can be seen as well related to current developments of cities which are increasingly confronted with fundamental transformation processes due to global opening processes and cross-border movements to a greater extent than rural areas. Increasing complexity, diversity and inconsistency have become a normal reality of everyday life for urban residents. For this reason, it seems important to point out that not only migrants are involved in transnational spaces; also a broader range of people appear as global actors. Here I would like to add that "multiculturalism" as a discourse addresses mainly migrants as "provocateurs" of difference, wherein so-called cultural differences are overemphasised. Yildiz and Ottersbach (2004) argue that on the one hand states lose their power over social inclusion and their central relevance as a frame of reference for the orientation of city dwellers. On the other hand, re-nationalisation processes and the appearance of new forms of nationalism and fundamentalism show that the national space as an imaginary force is regaining its social and political relevance in people's perceptions (p. 11f.).

### **Transnational articulations**

Processes of the transnationalisation of migrants and global acting people, their biographies and cross-border activities are becoming a central point of research interest. Transnational theories in particular argue in this context that the form and quality of migration movements has changed over the last decades. Migration as a one-time movement from one country to another loses its importance. Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szeanton (1992, p. 1) suggest for example that the Earlier conceptions of immigrant and migrant no longer suffice. The word immigrant evokes images of permanent rupture, of the uprooted, the abandonment of old patterns and the painful learning of a new language and culture. Now, a new kind of migrating population is emerging, composed of those whose networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both their host and home societies. Their lives cut across national boundaries and bring two societies into a single field.

Transmigration processes nowadays can entail various changes in geographical place and location. Migrants establish social relations between different countries due to physical distance from their family and friends. The social relations which migrants maintain through the uses of new technologies and possibilities for low priced transportation are pluri-local, characterised by permanence and intensity than ever before.

In this context, I follow the proposition of Apitzsch (2003) who suggests that biographies of global actors and migrants reference such transnational spaces as well as Lutz (2004) who talks in this regard about transnational articulations. Due to the fact that their families and friends live in other countries, people are confronted with the challenge of

maintaining their social relationships despite the geographical distance. On the one hand new technologies and the decreasing costs of cross-frontier movements and communication support social interaction beyond borders; on the other hand the convergence of divergent structures of sense and orientation as well as the emergence of new overlapping social areas challenge the life paths of social actors. As was already described, the transnational space is understood to be a highly competitive arena where power relations and hegemonic forces structure the circumstances of social actors. Experiences with cross-border acting and the social practices involved in dealing with transnational spaces are being biographically gathered and reflected on. The overlapping social areas bring new challenges which have to be mastered as part of the everyday organisation of life. The complexity, contradictoriness and inconsistency within transnational spaces need to be acquired by the social actors. As such, new “coordinates of orientation” are created and diverging systems of references are being related or integrated. These processes increase the transformation of regionally embedded structures and practices. As Guarnizo (1997) argues, these current changes can lead to the habitualisation of transnational experiences.

Biographies reference transnational spaces and make clear creative strategies used to deal with complexity, heterogeneity and inconsistency. The social practices which are developed are characterised by individual logic and ways of making sense of things. This leads to a question: How do humans create their own transcultural references in their everyday lives and how do these support the transformation of regionally embedded structures and practices? This certainly cannot be answered here.

## **Final remarks**

The transnationalisation of social spaces in general is on the increase. Due to global opening processes people are confronted with social contexts and relationships that are pluri-local, more complex, heterogeneous and less regionally bounded. Social actors create their social connections through diverging cultural references. Beside economic resources, the participation in transnational spaces requires particular competencies for managing and reflecting on transnational experiences. It can be said that due to the transnationalisation of life-worlds, the impetus toward learning and developing strategies is enormous. Transnationalisation in general transforms the everyday orientations of social actors and encourages the hybridisation of life-worlds. As was mentioned, transnational spaces are unequally configured and are characterised by social conflict and tension. The highly competitive arena is structured by power relations and hegemonic forces. Transnational spaces offer new possibilities for interaction despite geographical distance but also entail the risk of widening social disparity.

Transnationalisation from the bottom up as a research approach offers a perspective which makes social actors, their transnational activities and strategies for coping visible. In particular, it should be pointed out that the transnationalism approach focuses to a greater extent on transnationalisation from the bottom up with a subject and action oriented perspective. Social actors and their life-world, involvement in transnational activities and the development of transnational practices are at the centre of research interests. Transnationalism as a theoretical and empirical approach offers (from my point of view) a useful perspective on heterogeneity, complexity and inequality of current societies. Other than the discourse of multiculturalism which at least in Austria has been used more as a model of assimilation, differences are not overemphasised and power relations are not denied. Moreover, transnationalisation appears as a social phenomenon in which not only migrants but a broader range of people are involved.

## Notes

1. This paper is a slightly modified version of the article “Transnational Social Relations – A Challenge of Everyday Life?” which is published in: Pilch Ortega, A., & Schröttner, B. (2012) (Eds.), *Transnational Spaces and Regional Localization. Social Networks, Border Regions and Local-Global Relations*. Münster, New York, München, Berlin: Waxmann Verlag.

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**Abstract:** The transnationalisation of social structures can be seen as a growing phenomenon resulting from global and cross-border activities in which not only migrants but a broad segment of the population is involved. This paper focuses on transnationalism as a theoretical and empirical approach which offers a perspective on heterogeneity, complexity and inequality of current societies where differences are not overemphasised and power relations are not denied. Transnationalisation from the bottom-up highlights the transnational activities of social actors, their social relations and strategies for coping. First the paper gives some introductory thoughts about the transnationalisation of social spaces and the related impacts of power relations. The focus will be also on biographies of global actors and migrants who reference such transnational spaces. Finally the question whether transnationalism functions as a useful theoretical and empirical framework for highlighting the heterogeneity, complexity and inequality of current societies will be discussed.

**Keywords:** transnationalism, transmigration, social inequality, biographical research.

# “Poles have adapted here, but the English haven’t”: instructive needs of Polish migrants in the East Midlands

Renata Seredyńska-Abou Eid

## Introduction

Poland’s accession to the European Union in 2004 resulted in a massive migration of Polish citizens to the United Kingdom (UK), where the labour market became fully accessible for new member states.[1] Despite passport control on British borders, the number of Polish migrants who settled in the UK is only an estimate. Due to inefficiency of migration measurement tools, neither British nor Polish authorities are able to specify exact migrant numbers or migration triggers other than economic motives. Borderless structures of the EU enable and encourage free flow of people, which, in turn, leads to new multi-ethnic, multicultural, and multilingual patterns within European societies. For a myriad of reasons Polish migrants settled in the UK and other European countries; therefore, issues of adaptation, acculturation and inter- and cross-cultural encounters became more prominent, not to say paramount. Nonetheless, ten years on (May 2014), everyday themes such as adaptation, lifestyle, cultural translation and understanding (emic or etic) are very much blurred by political populism. In the times of economic instability, though, multiculturalism has become a favourite cliché in political campaigns of the ruling parties and the opposition in the United Kingdom. The consequent politicization of the term resulted in observable dichotomy between the social and cultural perspective and political jabbering with regard to migrant adaptation.

This paper focuses on the preliminary analysis of the results of a doctoral project *Translating Cultures – Adapting Lives* conducted among Polish post-2004 first-generation migrants in the East Midlands, UK. Cultural elements of adaptation, interpretation of cultures and their numerous aspects, language issues, comprehension of the environment and expectations versus reality have been researched in the light of challenges of social integration. The latter has been contested by some respondents through their claims that “Poles have adapted here [the UK], but the English haven’t.” It should be noted, though, that local attitudes towards Polish migrants are beyond the scope of the research project and this paper; however, they have great research potential ten years after Poland joined the European Union. Moreover, during data collection some potential respondents offered their response to the survey title without even looking at the questionnaire. Some said: “I can tell you straight away – 70% yes, 30% no” or “There is nothing to adapt to. We are in their country, so we should follow their rules.” Others were truly moved when I explained the purpose of the study and commented “Someone is finally thinking of us.”

Since the study was aimed at measuring the occurrence and range of cultural translation in the context of migrants’ cultural knowledge and awareness within the host society, the volume of data significantly exceeds the size and scope of this paper. Therefore, I am going to focus only on certain aspects that could be categorized within the educational strand of culturally translated lives of migrants.

## Methodology

The research study *Translating Cultures – Adapting Lives* was conducted in the East Midlands, a region that comprises of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire,

Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, between 1<sup>st</sup> May 2013 and 25th March 2014. Since Polish migrants live in cities, small towns and villages of the UK, the area was chosen for practical reasons, i.e. accessibility for the researcher and virtual impossibility to do a cross-country research for a project as small as a doctoral research study. Moreover, Lincolnshire, apart from London, is the area where many Eastern European migrants settled as there are many opportunities to find seasonal jobs, mainly in agriculture. That also proved counter-productive for me as a researcher as in Boston (one of the highest proportions of migrant population in the UK) Polish migrants were rather withdrawn and not eager to participate due to noticeable hostility among the local population and due to the fact that many researchers and journalists go there to interview newcomers.

The research study was aimed at Polish migrants in the East Midlands who moved to the UK after Poland's accession to the European Union (1<sup>st</sup> May 2004). According to Migration Observatory (2012), the latest Census of 2011 shows resident population in the region at the level over 4,5 million of whom 9.9% were born outside the UK and of whom 5.3% were non-UK passport holders. Among those born outside the UK, the largest population is of working age (between 20 and 50 years of age) with virtually equal gender distribution. Among non-UK passport holders, as many as 50,740 reported Polish citizenship (Migration Observatory, 2012), though the number reflects only those who willingly declared their country of origin. Hence, the number of Polish migrants in the East Midlands can be much higher.

When designing my research I assumed that I could collect a statistically representative sample; however, that proved challenging. Initially, I planned an online survey to reach large numbers of respondents and a few face-to-face interviews with respondents who declared their willingness to share their experience in a narrative way. Information about the project and a link to the online questionnaire were posted on various forums (e.g. Polonia Nottingham, Polonia Leicester, GBritain/Nottingham, Polak w Northampton, etc) and in the Polish newspaper – *East Midlands po Polsku* [transl.: *East Midlands in Polish* or *East Midlands the Polish Way*] to reach a broader audience.

Although technology offers numerous opportunities to communicate and engage with people, it turned out that potential respondents were rarely interested in completing the questionnaire when they saw the project advert or a post on a community forum; however, their interest rose significantly when information and requests were spread as word-of-mouth, whether orally or via Facebook and e-mail. Hence, the snow-ball sampling technique appeared effective, which also denotes features such as trust that become prominent with regard to the Polish community.

Eventually, the online survey was accessed 195 times, with 116 completed responses. Out of the latter, 103 qualify for further analysis as the remaining ones were completed by migrants from other parts of the UK or second-generation migrants. That again points towards a particular cultural feature of the studied migration group, i.e. either not reading instructions or assuming that additional information could be useful. The questionnaire comprised of 80 questions of various types (Likert scale, Yes/No/Not sure, multiple choice, open-ended and demographic questions) with a comment option offered across. All questions were divided into six (five + one) categories, i.e. identity (ID), cultural awareness (CAw), cultural adaptation (CAAd), cultural translation (CT), language (LG) and general demographic (G) and they were encoded accordingly to enable easier classification in further analysis. The questions, the project description and the consent form were available in two languages, English and Polish, to accommodate all possible language preferences of the respondents with regard to reading comprehension and their expression in the response. Apart from the survey that targeted individuals, institutional interviews were also conducted in order to establish the

response of the authorities and adaptation support options migrants could possibly consider in their lives in the East Midlands.

## **Results, analysis and discussion**

Currently, among key adaptation issues for Polish migrants in the East Midlands are language, knowledge and awareness of the local culture and customs and formal education. Regardless of the reasons behind the decision to move to the UK, many if not most Polish migrants in the East Midlands focus on improvement, self-development and utilization of potential opportunities that arise in their lives. This, on the other hand, reflects their flexibility and adaptability to conditions (see also Isański, Mleczko & Seredyńska-Abou Eid, 2013; White, 2011; Kaczmarczyk, 2010; and Burrell, 2009), not necessarily to local customs. Therefore, the titular instructive needs should be taken into account in the analysis of the levels of cultural adaptation of Polish migrants in the UK.

### *Migration Decision Triggers – Examples from the East Midlands*

Among many cultural and social issues that the participants of the study face in everyday life in the East Midlands, the significance of knowledge and education in their adapted life seems to be consistent in the responses. The matter does not necessarily relate to formal education as such. Participants' language proficiency, their knowledge and awareness of social and cultural issues in the host country and the perception of the quality of education delivered in the UK are all mentioned under the general term *education*. Moreover, economic drives do not justify all migration decisions as a small proportion of respondents declared *studies* as their main reason for coming to the UK.

With regard to reasons for moving to the UK, many respondents in this project reported economic drives behind their decision to migrate, though some respondents left Poland for economic reasons to achieve further goals, e.g. 'to earn money to continue education in Poland' or 'to find a job and continue my studies'. In addition, some participants also admitted that they decided to move for family reasons, e.g. 'mąż podjął decyzję i dołączyłam do niego' [transl.: my husband made the decision and I joined him] or

*My boyfriend was living in the UK (he also studied here) when I met him and after a couple of months I decided to join him - this was the main reason. Moreover, I wanted to improve my English, met people from different cultures and I needed a change in my life. I wanted to do something new and exciting, I always wanted to live abroad, however, I did not specify for how long.*

Other respondents also declared that spontaneity and new experience motivated them to migrate, e.g. 'przyjazd był spontaniczny: koleżanka zadzwoniła i zapytała, czy przyjeżdżam, więc się spakowałam i przyjechałam' [transl.: my move was spontaneous: a friend called to ask whether I was coming, so I packed my suitcase and came over here], 'do pracy, kolega zadzwonił' [transl.: to work, a friend phoned] or '[n]ie miałam co robić po liceum, przyjechałam na wakacje i tak zostało' [transl.: I had nothing to do after I finished secondary school, I came for holiday and that's how it happened].

Moreover, a small group of participants mentioned studies as the main reason for moving to the UK while others indicated 'interest in more experience opportunities and ability

to self develop'. This is in line with the analysis presented by Isański et al. (2013) who claimed that *Project ME*, a strong sense of gaining individual benefits from migrants' decision to move lives, is clearly visible within the new migration wave. Migrants' focus on self-development, e.g. learning a language, acquiring new skills and qualifications or enriching personal experience, differentiates the post-2004 wave from previous migratory groups, with an exception to the post-war Displaced Persons (DPs) of Polish origin.

### *Education*

More than 40% of the participants of this survey declared tertiary level of education while more than half reported completed secondary education. Only single participants declared primary or vocational level of their education. Nearly half of men and nearly 45% of female participants declared that they were employed in line with their qualifications. It is worth noting here that nearly all of those who stated that they were working below their qualifications were women. Whether it is a gender-related feature of openness or seeing it as a failure is open to discussion. Also, about one third of respondents, most of them in the 26-35 age group, declared that they completed part of their education in the UK while about five percent of participants across three age groups, i.e. 26-35, 36-45 and 66+, reported that they were in the process of receiving education. The latter issue may include either language courses or various non-degree qualification courses. This clearly shows that Polish migrants do look for better opportunities as a vast majority of them are interested in gaining better qualifications while many are not afraid to undertake jobs that lie below their qualifications in order to earn the living or support their family. Migrants' zeal for self-development and their readiness to accept the results of the confrontation of dreams and harsh reality can prove that the highly politicized populist theory of benefits tourism seems to be rather illusive.

Perception of the educational level of local people was another angle of education that was revealed in this research study. Namely, many respondents indicated the quality, richness and depth of education as one of the differences between Polish and English/British people. Those respondents often said that they had an impression that in the UK people receive very general education that does not broaden their horizons or increase knowledge of the world. Ironically, only 39% of the respondents correctly disagreed with the statement that 'a person of Pakistani origin is English' (Q46, CAw9) which clearly indicates that although education in Poland might place emphasis on different aspects of training, the kind of socio-cultural knowledge necessary in the British setting is often a missing element in the education of Polish migrants. Therefore, this kind of awareness needs more attention and action taken by the local authorities in cooperation with Polish organizations in the East Midlands.

A good example of the latter is community outreach organized by the Nottinghamshire Police and Derbyshire Constabulary. Both either employed Community Outreach Officers who speak community languages or organized regular meetings to raise social and legal awareness within migrant communities and to present the structure and the role of the Police in British society. Although at first glance the police have got the same responsibilities everywhere, it seems that attitudes towards the police force have been formed within historical experiences of particular societies and nation states. Hence, lack of trust towards the Police and towards authorities in general seems to be a dominant feature of the relations of Polish migrants with the Police in the UK. Therefore, promotional and/or explanatory meetings (like the one organized by the Signpost to Polish Success (SPS) in Nottingham on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2014 or similar meetings organized by the Polski Klub Grantham, Lincolnshire) with the Polish community are needed in order to enable migrant efficient functioning within the host culture and to prevent social frictions misunderstanding may cause.



Moreover, a lack of awareness of legal differences or rather assuming similarity instead of a difference is another threshold in migrant adaptation. Issues like driving someone's car when your name is not on the insurance of the car, the length of time allowed for driving a foreign car in the UK or rules regarding the length of time your waste bin can occupy the pavement on the day of collection are prescribed in the local law, but are not common knowledge out of the country. Migrants cannot learn about such issues in language courses back in their home country; however, they could possibly access a brochure published by the Federation of Poles in Great Britain: *Jak żyć i pracować w Wielkiej Brytanii* [transl.: *How to live and work in Great Britain*]. Nonetheless, as some respondents stated and the Polish Consul, Dr. Łukasz Lutostański,[2] and the chairman of the Federation of Poles in GB, Mr. Tadeusz Stenzel,[3] concluded in their interviews, Poles do not rely on official information as they do not trust it. They prefer a word-of-mouth as a friend of a friend or an uncle of a friend usually knows better than the official sources. Hence, awareness of local rules should be raised on a regular basis along the mental change within the migrant population. The latter is a complex and long-term process that will inevitably take place among Polish migrants in the UK, though nearly 70% of respondents of this study agree or strongly agree with the statement that '[i]t is important to know local customs as in the proverb "when in Rome, do as the Romans do"' (Q6, CA1).

Another educational issue that most certainly requires a separate paper, not just a small section, is Polish education for migrant children in the UK. According to Dr. Lutostański, there is a noticeable deficiency of Polish Saturday Schools in comparison to the number of Polish children who live in the UK with their families and would be potential beneficiaries of such schools. On the other hand, the Polish community initiates educational enterprises on their own as the language is a strongly unifying factor and a basic identity element for the Polish migrant community. The Skegness Polish Educational Association (SPEA)[4] is a prominent example in the East Midlands. A needs analysis exercise within the Polish community in Skegness indicated the demand for a Polish school; however, it was the determination and strong will of Mr. Wojciech Pisarski, a Pole born in the UK – a second generation migrant, that resulted in the opening of the Polish Saturday School in September 2013. The parents of the students expressed their high satisfaction with the fact that their children were learning the native language and the history of Poland and interacted with other Polish children and teachers in a Polish-speaking environment. Moreover, the school provides English support classes for those children who have language problems in English schools. As stated by a school committee member and a mother of one of the students, the school organization that is based on the age group and proficiency in Polish and English seems to be a highly effective one as the feedback from students is very positive. Consequently, adaptation needs of migrant communities are partly fulfilled by education enterprises undertaken and run by those communities themselves.

### *Language*

Further to the language issues mentioned above, it is worth noting that the 2011 Census revealed that the Polish language is the second most spoken language in England and third in Wales (BBC, 2013), which reflects and further confirms the strong attachment of migrants to their culture of origin and home country. Nonetheless, nearly 96% of respondents of this study strongly agreed (80.2%) or agreed (15.6%) that 'proficiency in English is important for [their] live[s] in the UK' (Q18, LG5). In their comments, survey participants added that 'bez biegłej znajomości języka nie byłabym w stanie wykonywać swojej pracy' [transl.: I wouldn't be able to do my job if I was not fluent in the language] or 'zwłaszcza w pracy' [transl.:

especially at work] or stated that language proficiency is ‘fundamentalna’ [transl.: fundamental]. Similar results were obtained in earlier studies on Polish migrants in the UK (see White, 2011).

In addition, nearly 90% of respondents declared that their proficiency in English improved since they moved to the UK, regardless of their length of stay in the country. In the comments box, many respondents admitted that they did not speak English when they came to the UK or they were learning at school, but ‘jak to w szkole, wiadomo jak uczą’ [transl.: school is school, you know how they teach]. The last comment made by a young female (age group 19-25) who was in the UK for about only three months at the moment of completing the questionnaire indicates shifting responsibility as a justification strategy to explain the imperfections and deficiency in their current life situation. Nonetheless, other participants stated that they learnt the language through their hard work while not all of them attended more formalized language training. Dialectal and regional differences are also mentioned as a communicative barrier as the language taught in English courses is more of a standardized type, hence the Nottingham accent or the language of Derbyshire can be challenging for newcomers.

Furthermore, inability to communicate in English, even at a very basic level, is mentioned as one of the most significant barriers preventing migrant registrations with GPs in Lincolnshire in addition to claims that many migrants seem to be unfamiliar with procedures, possibly due to the fact that in their country it is organized differently or expectations of staff and patients are different.[5] Moreover, a lack of language proficiency can also impact on migrants’ communication with the police in emergency cases such as domestic violence.[6] In both cases, medical and crime issues, using translation services may be impossible or inconvenient for the patient or victim due to the sensitive nature of the above-mentioned matters. Therefore, apart from various campaigns organized by the NHS[7] or the Police, organizations such as the SPS in Nottingham, the SPEA in Skegness or the Square Mile Project in Leicester[8] organize English lessons for migrants to help them improve their ability to function in the host culture and society. Nonetheless, the irony of this survey is that over 85% of respondents claim that they have adapted to life in the UK (Q15, CAD6), regardless of their level of proficiency in English, length of stay or understanding of local customs, traditions and norms. Therefore, a further study would be required to established migrants’ criteria of adaptation in their target culture.

## Conclusions

The quote in the title reflects the opinion of many Polish migrants in the East Midlands who reported that they felt discriminated, different, or looked down upon. It could also suggest that both local residents and authorities do not know how to deal with migrants; therefore, they adopt a non-inclusive approach. There is no straightforward answer as the issue of socio-cultural co-existence and adaptation is complex and does not really fit within rigid frames or standardized procedures. In addition, the understanding and good will is necessary on all sides of the matter.

In the project *Translating Cultures – Adapting Lives*, migrants were asked to reflect on a number of social, cultural, language and adaptation issues. The results clearly point in the direction of language proficiency and general social knowledge as the main elements of migrant successful adaptation to their target culture. A relatively high number of respondents have undertaken or are in the process of receiving education, whether through degree or qualification training courses. On the other hand, a heuristic approach is used as a way of adapting, i.e. the method of experimenting and trials and errors seems to be working for those

migrants who speak very little English or are not educated enough to transfer and translate their accumulated experience into their new lives. Issues such as trust need a longer period of time and require much more effort from the authorities in order to build a more harmonious and inclusive society in the East Midlands. Certain steps have already been undertaken, though it should be stated here that much more needs to be done in terms of needs analysis and the identification of the trigger points of cultural misinterpretation of expectations and actions.

## Notes

1. 2004 accession countries:

A8 = Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia

+ A2 = Cyprus and Malta

2. Interview conducted in the Polish Consulate in Manchester (the catchment area for the East Midlands) on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013

3. Interview conducted at the University of Nottingham on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014

4. Interview conducted in Skegness on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2014

5. Interview with Ms. Karen Duncombe, Equality and Diversity Manager in Greater East Midlands Commissioning Support Unit of the NHS in Lincolnshire, conducted in Lincoln on 19th March 2014

6. Interviews with Ms. Bogusława Motylska, Pre-Crime Manager in the Nottinghamshire Police Pre-Crime Unit, conducted on 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March 2014

7. The NHS Lincolnshire is about to launch a campaign *Register with a GP*

8. The Square Mile Project has been organized by De Montfort University in Leicester as a community engagement activity. Leicester is the first city in the UK where the non-English people slightly outnumber white English population. The interview with Mr. David Hollis, Operations Manager of the project, was conducted in Leicester on 15th January 2014.

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**Abstract:** After Poland joined the European Union in May 2004, many Polish people migrated to the United Kingdom in search of a better or different life. The project Translating Cultures – Adapting Lives conducted in the East Midlands was aimed at measuring the levels of cultural translation among Polish post-2004 migrants for the purpose of social and cultural adaptation. Among the main findings, the need for high language proficiency and the need for more instructions regarding nuances of socio-cultural were emphasized by the respondents. The attitudes of local communities towards migrants were beyond the scope of this study; however, they present great opportunities for further research.

**Keywords:** encompass cultural translation, cultural issues in migration and diaspora.

# How can institutions of adult education respond to migration?

## A critical view on approaches to dealing with diversity and discrimination in adult education.

Annette Sprung

### **Introduction**

The focus of research and discussions about adult education in migration societies is mainly on immigrants as learners or as a target group. The most common topics are best methods and related concepts for teaching migrant learners, or the barriers that hinder their access to adult education (Sprung, 2011). Barriers can be identified as a lack of social capital, language issues and socio-economic factors, among others. Not least here, the institutions of adult education themselves cause exclusion and reproduce it as well. I want to emphasize that issue in the following. The aim of my paper is to discuss challenges to organizational change (in adult education) aimed at enhancing diversity and avoiding discrimination. I would like to present a critical analysis of three main approaches which are described in the literature and referred to in the German speaking context. These are also the main approaches that are being practically realized at the moment. The concepts are entitled as intercultural opening, managing diversity and fighting institutional discrimination. The approaches differ concerning their main goals, their traditions, their fields of practice and the discourses of legitimation which stand behind these concepts (for example social justice, recognition of differences, economic success, etc.) I will also look critically at the hype surrounding ‘diversity’, and the consequences in terms of de-politicization.

My analysis is part of an Austrian applied research project which we conducted from May 2012 to May 2014. The study explored the representation and access of migrants to professions and appropriate qualification programs in the field of adult and continuing education. We analyzed the structure and practices of selected institutions as well as the perspective of migrants. One of our main goals was to identify criteria for institutions of adult education wanting to undergo a process of organizational development to cope with the complex challenges related to migration. To this end we generated a set of guidelines which we discussed with stakeholders from adult education in April 2014 during our final project conference in Graz/Austria. The discussion will go on, and we are now preparing strategies to encourage more institutions to step into the process, meaning that we want to give inputs to institutions for reflection on their strategies for dealing with diversity and inequality.

### **Intercultural Opening**

The first approach I want to describe is known as ‘intercultural opening’ in the German speaking countries (Griese & Marburger, 2012). It was developed in the 1990s in Germany in the context of social services and public administration. Some empirical studies had shown that the services did not reach migrants to the same extent as they were accessed by native residents, although the social situation of the immigrant population indicated an even higher need for support (Barwig & Hinz-Rommel, 1995; Schröer, 2007). Several analyses showed diverse barriers, and so the concept of ‘intercultural opening’ was developed to change the

situation. The new thing about this approach was that *the institutions* were asked to take responsibility and to become 'open' for all citizens by adapting their offers and their strategies. Before this time, many tasks concerning migrants had been delegated to specialized institutions for integration issues (and this is still the case in the present day, but there has been some change). The normality of a diverse society should be faced in an appropriate way by *all* organizations. At first such new concepts were realized in public social services for younger people, and later on in additional organizations like hospitals and educational institutions. The public administration of the city of Munich (Germany) was one of the first organizations that developed a strategy of intercultural opening for its youth welfare office. The idea is to promote change on all levels of the organization, including a clear mission statement, new procedures, human resources development and also more concrete programs and activities geared towards the users (Schröder 2007, Hagemann & Vaudt, 2012). Many concepts suggested that change should be implemented in processes of quality management (Göhlich et al., 2013). The discourses behind those approaches can be labelled as *equality* and *inclusion*. If we look for terms like anti-discrimination or racism in papers on the topic, we hardly ever find anything. In some parts there are implicit ideas of anti-discrimination, but the dominant wording is about inclusion.

One of the areas that can be viewed critically is terminology: when we speak about 'intercultural opening' the focus is on 'culture', and I have doubts about the fact that culture is the most important category in this context. On the contrary: analyzing inequality in terms of cultural difference quickly leads to an 'othering' of migrants and to concealment of aspects like social status and structural deficits (Mecheril et al., 2010). Another point of criticism concerns practice – we can see that most institutions that claim to work on their openness simply delegate the responsibility to their employees and tell them to better qualify themselves in the intercultural field (Foitzik & Pohl, 2009; Sprung, 2011). The challenge thus becomes individualized and personalized. Finally, we can state from an intersectional viewpoint that the approach does not consider other aspects of inequality like gender and age, among others (Winkler & Degele, 2010).

## **Diversity Management**

The second approach to be discussed is diversity management. It has become well-known, not only in the German speaking world. Diversity management considers several dimensions of diversity; not only ethnicity and religion. I would say that there has been significant hype about diversity in recent years, and we could reflect on the reasons. The idea of diversity management fits rather well into the semantics of managing, administration and measuring – which are also influential trends in adult education. Maybe the vagueness of the term also causes its high interconnectedness for many actors and institutions – in many contexts diversity has already become a buzzword (Baader, 2013).

Diversity management originates from two sources. On the one hand, it was developed in management contexts within companies and relates to economic goals by handling diversity as a resource. I like to call it, referring to Abdul-Hussain & Hoffmann (2013) the *market approach*. On the other hand, it is rooted in movements of empowerment and civil rights in the US, and aims to counter discrimination. Abdul-Hussain & Hoffmann (2013) call that a *political-normative approach*, or in other words we can identify the two poles as 'equity' and 'business' (Emmerich & Hormel, 2013). Many concepts – and that is a central point of critique – put the idea of economic profit at the center and neglect power relationships and inequality. The trend for mainstreaming processes could be seen as a 'normalization of difference' (Kessl & Plöber, 2010). Consequently, programs which focus

explicitly on exclusion and discrimination could be seen as expendable (likewise affirmative action, etc.). Because of critical impacts in the discourse, today many institutions simply claim that they are able to combine both concerns (profit and anti-discrimination). If this is even possible, and if they seriously stick to their claim is doubtful (Emmerich & Hormel, 2013; Gomolla, 2013). Finally we should reflect on whether the inclusion of potentially all dimensions of diversity leads to a lack of attention being paid to the specific aspects, the differences, and also the various needs that could be linked with those aspects. In practice we often find only a gender strategy behind the label diversity management and only isolated actions are realized. In many cases, an enhancement of image is at the center, so we always have to ask critically if it is just 'diversity talk' – or there more to it? The question cannot be answered easily because there are different practices behind the label of diversity management – I would state that diversity itself became diverse!

### **Fighting institutional discrimination (racism)**

The third perspective is the dismantling of institutional discrimination which is not a very common concept in the German context (Gomolla, 2010). Nevertheless it is discussed in this paper because I think it contains important ideas in terms of fighting racism and discrimination and it should become a central approach in adult education. Institutional discrimination and racism have been discussed intensively for the last 15 years in the UK. The well-known McPherson report drew attention to the fact that organizations and services sometimes fail in providing appropriate support to some people simply because of their ethnic origin (Gomolla, 2010, p. 68ff.). Discriminatory actions are often embedded in institutional and organizational contexts. Moreover, institutional discrimination does not encompass only one organization but a whole set of laws, political strategies, professional norms, organizational structures and established practices and values from the socio-cultural context.

Discrimination comes from prejudice, and also from ignorance and small-mindedness. Non-recognition of discrimination leads to such practices becoming an important part of an organization's culture (Gomolla, 2010). Racial and ethnic stereotypes act as sources of discrimination. Furthermore, sources of discrimination could be gender constructions or the category of social class (among others) which often intersect with racism.

Institutional discrimination occurs for example if a general rule seems to be 'neutral', but nonetheless has discriminatory effects – this is because the different living conditions and circumstances of the people concerned are not taken into account. Institutional discrimination involves forms of direct discrimination as well as inequality that results from 'neutral' regulations (Hormel, 2007, p. 79ff.). A simple example would be the entrance examinations used in vocational training, which sometimes put people at a disadvantage because they are not native speakers, or the questions might be posed in specific ways, which emphasize the dominant cultural understanding. Equal conditions do not automatically ensure equal chances. Such practices ignore the fact that there are privileged and disadvantaged groups predisposed to different outcomes in realizing their agency.

Compared to the two approaches managing diversity and intercultural openness the idea of fighting institutional discrimination focuses explicitly on discrimination, racism and power relations. It is important to become aware of the phenomenon as not only being an individual challenge but also emphasizing the structural side. A critical objection against this perspective is the risk of victimizing migrants and neglecting the perspective of the actors and their strategies.

Another difficulty – and this is especially true for Germany and Austria – concerns the fact that racism and discrimination are taboo, not least because of the Nazi history of the

region. When talking about racism, many people clearly show resistance and are no longer open to reflection. Nevertheless, I am convinced that we should not be too cautious or too diplomatic in this respect – it is necessary to name such phenomena and to act against them. By using a specific and clear terminology, we contribute to establishing new ways of understanding things and encourage better opportunities for appropriate action.

Finally, I would like to add a perspective to the theories of institutional discrimination which results from critical whiteness studies. The concept of white privilege also points to invisible and unquestioned norms (Colin & Lund, 2010; Tißberger et al., 2006; Röggla, 2012). White privilege becomes manifest under certain hegemonic structural and institutional conditions, but whereas theories of institutional racism mainly address the consequences for the subjects who are disadvantaged by these structures, we learn from critical whiteness theory to draw attention to the question of how the agents of the dominant context profit from the exclusion of others.

This is why the claim of critical whiteness in regard to white privilege has to be strengthened in theories of institutional discrimination. To change structures, institutions should become aware of the advantages they gain from the exclusion of certain groups, and they have to be ready to give up upon those benefits.

## **Reflection**

In a last step, I want to look at the three approaches again and encourage some general discussion. What should be reflected on critically in any case is the starting point of all the concepts – strictly speaking, the idea of a specific meaningful *difference*. A difference is constructed due to certain characteristics, which leads to the definition of categories and in the end to the attribution of (educational) relevance to these categories. Consequently, there are reactions in terms of the concepts of diversity and multiculturalism – the reactions are mostly expressed in the semantics of recognition (Emmerich & Hormel, 2013, p.13): diversity is reinterpreted from being a potential problem into being an opportunity. The problem is that an affirmative way of dealing with differences reproduces practices of labeling and likewise the categories themselves. However, the practices and the patterns of differentiation and ascription that underlie the approaches should be questioned and deconstructed (Mecheril & Tißberger, 2013, p. 69). In this way, the analysis of the social context and the interests of the different actors, including power relations, come to the fore. Without reflection and deconstruction of the basic categories, the concepts contribute to de-politicization.

## **The Austrian Situation**

Lastly, I will offer just a few words about our research project (the results will be published in detail in a book in summer 2014). Our empirical research showed that most adult education institutions in Austria did not implement far-reaching reforms in terms of diversity or anti-discrimination. Some of them offer courses for migrants, and some of them seek to better qualify their employees.

Good practice examples of institutions that act on different levels at the same time can be found, but these are isolated cases. In general, organizations that traditionally deal with disadvantaged learners have made more progress than others, for example some of the folk high schools in the capital of Vienna where most immigrants live. We also found some institutions in the field of women's education to be more up to the challenge. The diversity

management approach is most common; explicit strategies aimed at anti-discrimination are rare.

As we think that there is not much awareness of the necessity for anti-discrimination in Austrian adult education, we see our research as an opportunity to provide an impetus in the fields of practice, and to that end we have worked out guidelines for adult education in terms of anti-discrimination. The guidelines should evoke reflection and discussion within institutions. They point to the general principles of an institution, aspects of human resource development (like recruiting), language policies and others. Our first discussions with stakeholders about the paper, which took place recently, were rather inspiring.

We also work together with the Austrian Ministry of Education, which is interested in encouraging all organizations active in adult and continuing education to deal with the topic, so we will get support in working out further strategies in this field – the guidelines could be one tool. Furthermore we hope that there will also be discussions about tools for oversight at the ministry level. It is clear that there cannot be one individual strategy because the field of adult education itself is very diverse. Also important, I want to mention that universities should likewise be confronted with the need to reflect on anti-racism – this is another field of activity where the challenges named have been neglected up to now.

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**Abstract:** This paper deals with organizational development in institutions of adult education aimed at enhancing diversity and avoiding discrimination of migrants. A critical analysis of three approaches (managing diversity – fighting institutional racism – intercultural opening) will be presented. These concepts differ concerning their main goals, their traditions, their fields of practice and the discourses of legitimation. The paper is based on theoretical and empirical results from an Austrian applied research project which explored the representation and access of migrants in/to professions in the field of adult and continuing education. After the discussion of the three main concepts the conclusions offers a general reflection about their basic categories (like cultural difference). Finally some transfer activities of the Austrian project are described.

**Keywords:** migration, institutional discrimination, diversity management, intercultural opening, critical whiteness.

# Attitude towards Immigrant Students: A Study among the Native Students of Tamil Nadu, India

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## 1. Background of the study

India is the Union of the States, comprising of 28 States, and 7 Union Territories. According to 2011 census, the population exceeds 1.2 billion. Currently, it is estimated that no less than 1652 spoken languages, including 63 non-Indian languages are spoken in India (Basu, 2010). There are various ethnic groups, with different cultural background, beliefs and values. There are many religions in India including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity etc. Despite these diversities, the people of India have tolerance to others' religion, language, culture, beliefs etc. The people of India respect people belonging to various regions. However, in the recent past there is a large scale internal migration which affects the social equilibrium to some extent. In other words, though India is based on the principle of "Unity in Diversity" internal migration is leading to the host state to hostility and discrimination towards the immigrant groups, such discrimination has the adverse effects on both the host state and the immigrant groups (Stephen, Renfro, Esses, Stephen and Martin, 2005). Further, there is a conflict between the natives and the immigrants. Such a situation questions the fundamental principle of 'multiculturalism' which is evident through the problems in the sphere of employment and education. A large number of students from other states, particularly from north-eastern states come to Chennai to pursue their studies. It is generally perceived that the native students consider the immigrant students as competitors while sharing the resources, employment opportunities etc. Against this background, a study has been carried out among the student community in Chennai city to examine their attitude towards immigrant students on three dimensions, namely, multicultural attitude, intergroup attitude and institutional attitude. An overview of the existing literature shows that several studies have been conducted in different parts of the world on the attitude towards multiculturalism, acculturation, intergroup values, institutional attitudes, prejudice and so on. The overview of such literature is presented below.

Oudenhoven & Hofstra (2006) discussed two studies in their paper on the attachment style and acculturation attitude of immigrants (N=177) and majority members (N=243) in The Netherlands. The lateral study investigates the relation between their attachment style and their attitude towards acculturation by immigrants. The respondent's attachment styles were measured with Attachment Style Questionnaire and their attitude to acculturation were measured by affective reactions to four scenarios which were randomly presented to each respondent. Result concludes that a secure attachment is associated with positive attitude towards integration. Marginalization was by far the least appreciated form of acculturation. In the same year (O'Rourke & Sinnott, 2006), another study was conducted to know the attitude of individuals towards immigration. The research was based on the survey data provided by the International Social Programme in 24 countries. It explored both the non-economic and economic determinants of preference with regard to immigration and also considered the difference in attitude between the skilled and unskilled participants. The results revealed that non-economic factors are important in determining attitude towards immigrants. The nationalist sentiment is an extremely strong determinant of attitude towards immigration and has a large positive effect on anti-immigration sentiment. In contrast with the previous studies this paper indicated that women appear to have less favourable attitude towards immigration than men. The results also concluded that elder participants and unemployed participants has a significant positive effect on anti-immigrant sentiment. Further, the results

also explained that highly skilled participants had a less opposite attitude towards immigration than less skilled participants.

A comparative study by Navas, Rojas, Garcia & Pumares (2007) conducted among the African immigrants and the host population to examine the acculturation attitude. They adopted Relative Acculturation Extended Model (RAEM), an acculturation model to differentiate the real and ideal planes of acculturation. The model contains seven dimensions political, work, economic, social, family, religious, and ways of thinking respectively. They found that the respondents (N=1523) from both natives and immigrants are more associated with the dimensions of work and economic and also with the integration process. They have also found from their study that immigrants have preferred to be separate from the natives in the dimensions of social, family, religious, and way of thinking, whereas natives preferred assimilation in all those dimensions.

Acculturation is a process of individual change that result from the direct conduct with the members from different ethno cultural group (Redford, Linton & Herskovits , 1936 cited in Leong (2008)). Leong (2008) classified the perception of the immigrants under acculturation into three categories, namely, inter group relation, individual level differences, and cultural level differences. He has conducted a study (N=318) in Newzealand among the people to find out their attitude towards immigrants. It was found that there is a significant relationship between the inter group relations with the native people's acculturation strategies. However, people with less individualistic perception showed more negative attitude towards immigrants. He also conducted another study (N=792) to find out the influence of acculturation attitudes on immigrants attitude and found that acculturation attitude is associated with the native attitude towards immigrants.

In three states of Australia a research was conducted (N=740) on the attitudes towards multiculturalism, immigration, and cultural diversity of dominant and non-dominant groups. The results indicated that women, youth and highly educated participants had more favorable attitude towards immigrants and diversity than elder, male, and less educated. Further, the study revealed that participants with negative attitude towards Muslims were less favorable to multiculturalism and diversity (Dandy & Pua 2010).

In the recent past, a number of researches have been carried out in different part of the world. For example a survey was conducted among 202 college students in Mainland China to examine the relationship between individual value incongruence with out-group members and their intergroup attitude along with the moderation role, if any, played by common identity and multiculturalism. The results show that intergroup attitude was negatively related to individual value incongruence with Hong Kong Chinese, positively related to the Chinese identification and multiculturalism. The results were arrived at through co-relational analysis and additional regression analysis (Guan, Verkuyten, Fung, Bond, Chen & Chan, 2011).

Almost during the same period, another study was conducted among the personnel of The Netherlands Armed Forces to examine the change in Multicultural, Muslim, and Acculturation attitudes in the Dutch military at two points in time: 2006 and 2008. The focus of the study was on the changes in majority attitude towards Multiculturalism and Muslims from 2006 to 2008 and on rank, age, gender, and educational differences in those attitudes in 2008. The results of the survey conducted in 2006 showed a slightly negative attitude towards multiculturalism. However, the survey conducted in 2008 showed that attitude towards multiculturalism had become more positive as compared to 2006. It was found that women are relatively more positive on multicultural attitude than men, there was no significant relation between the age, rank, and their attitude. However there is a relation between education and their attitude. That is the higher the education level more positive the attitude towards multiculturalism (Richardson, Buijs & Zee (2011).

In Ukraine a study was carried out to examine how the attitudes towards immigrants are formed. The concept of relative deprivation/satisfaction was applied to study the formation of attitudes towards immigrants in Ukraine. From this paper it is inferred that a perceived feeling of relative deprivation is an important factor that affects the formation of attitudes towards immigrants. The paper offers an explanation to the formation of attitudes by linking it to the feeling of relative deprivation or satisfaction that native-born may perceive when compared themselves to immigrants. The results revealed that there is a negative relation between age and attitude towards immigrants and gender and education has no significant relation with the attitude towards immigrants. It was found that participants employed in the state sector tend to be less favourable towards immigrants. From this study it is concluded that relative deprivation has a negative impact on acceptance and attitude towards immigrants (Aleksynska, 2011).

One of the recent researches was conducted among 548 fifth and sixth grade native Dutch students from 38 school classes in The Netherlands to examine the contribution of peer group belief of multiculturalism to ethnic attitude of native Dutch adolescents. The study tests whether children's ethnic attitudes are related to the multicultural beliefs of their classmates and whether these relations depend on children age and perceived acceptance. The study also examines whether the link between ethnic attitudes and classmates belief are mediated by children's own multicultural beliefs. In the correlation between age and beliefs both multicultural and classmates belief the younger children had stronger beliefs than the older ones. It was also inferred that the elder children had high peer acceptance and that is negatively related to classmate's belief. Classmate's multicultural beliefs were found to have a negative but marginally significant relationship with pre-adolescent in-group attitude. The study concludes that normative multicultural beliefs of classroom peers matter for the ethnic attitudes of early adolescents, especially when they have strong acceptance. The study also demonstrates that intergroup evaluations are related to both individual characteristics and social context (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2013).

Against the background of the existing literature, the present research was carried out to find out the native student's attitude towards the immigrant students with reference to the three dimensions, namely, *Multicultural Attitude*, *Intergroup Attitude*, and *Institutional Attitude*. Multiculturalism is defined as an idea that an individual can hold two or more cultural identities (Baker, 2001). The concept of multiculturalism is further defined as a man whose identity is adaptive, temporary and subject to change (Adler, 1977). In light of the above the term *Multicultural Attitude* is defined in the present study as an attitude of adopting different culture from the people who are internally migrated to Tamil Nadu from other states of India. *Intergroup Attitude* is defined as an attitude emerge between the two different group of peoples when they are in contact with each other (Guttman & Foa, 1951). It can be either positive or negative. For example, 'difficulties in making friendship with a student from another state'. Thirdly, *Institutional Attitude* is also similar to Intergroup Attitude. Institutional attitude is an intergroup attitude in an institution of the society which may include place of stay, place of work, and place of study and so on. In the present study the term *Institutional Attitude* was used to measure the intergroup attitude in educational institutions.

## **2. Methodology**

### *2.1 Sample and Sampling Procedure*

A study was conducted in Chennai, the capital city of Tamil Nadu. More than 100 colleges and few Universities are there in Chennai, offering graduate, post-graduate, and research

degree programs. There are both government, government aided and self-financing colleges. In other words, there are both public and private institutions. A random sample of 202 students was drawn from both public and private colleges/universities. The aim of the research was explained to the participants, and they were informed that all data gathered was confidential. Only those participants who understood the aim of the research and agreed to participate were included in the sample.

## *2.2 Research Tool*

The attitude of the students was measured using a five-point likert scale. A total of 32 items were used to measure the three dimensions of attitude namely multicultural attitude (12 items), intergroup attitude (8 items), and institutional attitude (12 items). The respondents were presented with both positive and negative items and were asked to respond on scale ranging from strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree. Besides, 11 questions were included in the questionnaire to obtain the data such as age, gender, nativity, education, nature of institution, religion, community, duration of stay in Chennai, number of languages the respondents speak, and the number of states they visited.

## *2.3 Statistical Analysis*

The items “multicultural attitude”, “intergroup attitude”, and “institutional attitude” were scored on a five point likert scale to measure the attitude of the students towards the immigrant students. Positive responses were assigned high scores and negative responses were assigned low scores in descending order. For example, an item – “I am able to easily make friends from other states” was assigned scores as follows: “Strongly Agree” – 5, “Agree” – 4, “Neither Agree nor Disagree” – 3, “Disagree” – 2, “Strongly Disagree” – 1. The total score of all related items was analyzed. The higher the score, the more positive attitude of the respondents.

# **3. Results and Discussion**

## *3.1 Profile of the Respondents*

The profile of the respondents, namely, the native students include age, education, nature of institution studying, religion, community and so on. From Table 3.1, it is inferred that more than 60 percent of the respondents are 20-25 years of age. Around 57 percent are male. Around 68 percent of the respondents grew up in either urban or semi-urban areas. 68.3 percent of them are pursuing their post graduate degree. More than three fourths of the respondents are from public government educational institutions. Majority (87.1%) are Hindus and one fourth of the respondents belong to SC/ST communities. It is interesting to note that more than 50 percent of the respondents are living in Chennai less than 5 years. With reference to the number of languages, the respondents speak fluently other than English, it is found that more than 50 percent do not speak any other language than the native language. The above Table also reveals that around 21 percent of the respondents have not visited any other states than their home state (Tamil Nadu) (See Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Profile of the respondents

	Frequency (N=202)	Percentage (100%)
<b>Age (in years)( Mean = 22.02, S.D. = 2.65)</b>		
Below 20	55	27.2
20-25	128	63.4
20-30	19	9.4
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	116	57.4
Female	86	42.6
<b>Mention the area in which you grew up as a child</b>		
Urban	105	52.0
Semi- Urban	33	16.3
Rural	46	22.8
Semi – Rural	18	8.9
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
Under Graduate	46	22.7
Post Graduate	138	68.3
M.Phil.	9	4.5
Ph.D.	9	4.5
<b>Nature of Institution</b>		
Public/Government	156	77.2
Private/Self- financing	46	22.8
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	176	87.1
Christian	20	9.9
Muslim	6	3.0
Others	0	0
<b>Community</b>		
Schedule Caste/ Schedule Tribes	50	24.8
Most Backward Caste	38	18.8
Other Backward Caste	79	39.1
Other Caste	35	17.3
<b>Living in Chennai (in years)</b>		
Below 5	103	51.0
5-10	24	11.8
10-15	7	3.5
Above 15	68	33.7
<b>Languages speak fluently other than English</b>		
Only one	61	30.2
Two	24	11.9
Three	11	5.4
Four	2	1.0
Not at all	104	51.5
<b>Other states visited</b>		
Below 2 states	70	34.7
2-5	65	32.2
5-10	18	8.9
Above 10 states	5	2.5
Not at all	44	21.8

### 3.2 Attitude of the students

The attitude of the students was measured on a five-point scale. The students were provided with statements both positive and negative in nature and were asked to respond on a five-point scale. The attitude of the students was measured on three dimensions, namely, multicultural attitude, intergroup attitude and institutional attitude.

#### 3.2.1 Multicultural Attitude

The following table (Table 1) includes the findings related to the attitude on multiculturalism.

Table 3.2.1 Multicultural attitude

Statements	Response (N=202, 100%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I celebrate the festivals of other states and other religions.	38 (18.8)	61 (30.2)	45 (22.3)	38 (18.8)	20 (9.9)
I am willing to visit the home town of my friend, who is from another state	64 (31.7)	85 (42.1)	42 (20.8)	10 (5.0)	1 (0.5)
I would like to eat food varieties of other states.	76 (37.6)	83 (41.1)	30 (14.9)	8 (4.0)	5 (2.5)
I go to parties and other gatherings that are organized by the people from other states.	32 (15.8)	65 (32.2)	61 (30.2)	24 (11.9)	20 (9.9)
I watch movies/programs in other languages other than my mother tongue.	77 (38.1)	77 (38.1)	26 (12.9)	19 (6.4)	9 (4.5)
I can easily accept the culture/beliefs of the people from other states.	47 (23.3)	76 (37.6)	49 (24.3)	17 (8.4)	13 (6.4)
There is no problem in falling in love with a girl/boy belonging to another state	60 (29.7)	58 (28.7)	53 (26.2)	16 (7.9)	15 (7.4)
I will feel comfortable while participating in a cultural event with a fellow student from another state.	64 (31.7)	92 (45.5)	35 (17.3)	10 (5.0)	1 (0.5)
I will help my fellow student belonging to another state to learn the language and culture of Tamil Nadu.	91 (45.0)	86 (42.6)	19 (9.4)	5 (2.5)	1 (0.5)
Learning Tamil language must be added as a compulsory paper in the curriculum for all students, including students from other states.	29 (14.4)	45 (22.3)	49 (24.3)	41 (20.3)	38 (18.8)
The dress code followed by women from other states provokes the people to commit any form of violence against them.	32 (15.8)	48 (23.8)	66 (32.7)	21 (10.4)	35 (17.3)
I am willing to accept a person from another state as a role model.	67 (33.2)	68 (33.7)	46 (22.8)	14 (6.9)	7 (3.5)

Values in ( ) denotes percentage

It is found that nearly 50 percent (Strongly Agree =18.8% and Agree=30.2%) of the respondents expressed that they celebrate the festivals of other states and other religions. A

large percentage (73.8) of the respondents said that they are willing to visit the home town of their friends from other states. Almost, an equal percentage (78.7) of the sample stated that they would like to eat food varieties of other states. The results have also shown that the respondents do not agree with ideas such as making native language a compulsory paper to students from other states. That is, only 36.7% (Strongly Agree =14.4% and Agree =22.3%) felt that learning Tamil language must be added as a compulsory paper in the curriculum for all students including students from other states. Similarly, only 39.6 percent of the respondents are of view that the dress code followed by women from other states provokes the people to commit any form of violence against them. The other results relating to the attitude of native students on multiculturalism is presented in the above table (see Table 3.2.1).

### 3.2.2 Intergroup Attitude

The intergroup attitude was measured with a set of items and the results are presented in the above table (Table 3.2.2). Only around 43 percent of the respondents felt that they find it difficult to start a conversation with students from other states. However, more than 60 percent of the respondents stated that they are able to easily make friends from other states. Similarly, more than 80 percent of them said that being friends of people from other states help them to learn more about their world. The results also have shown that the native students have positive attitude towards immigrant students. Only a small percentage (25.8) of the sample expressed that they get irritated when people from other states speak in their native language. The other results relating to intergroup attitude are presented in Table 3.2.2.

Table 3.2.2 Intergroup attitude

Statements	Response (N=202, 100%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I find it difficult to start a conversation with students from other states	24 (11.9)	63 (31.2)	40 (19.8)	40 (19.8)	35 (17.3)
I am able to easily make friends from other states.	42 (20.8)	81 (40.1)	56 (27.7)	21 (10.4)	2 (1.0)
Being a friend of people from other states helps me grow as a person/learn more about the world.	80 (39.5)	85 (42.1)	23 (11.4)	10 (5.0)	4 (2.0)
I am willing to share my seat with a person from other state in the public transportation.	80 (39.5)	86 (42.6)	23 (11.4)	9 (4.5)	4 (2.0)
I get irritated when people from other states speak in their native language.	25 (12.4)	27 (13.4)	76 (37.6)	47 (23.3)	27 (13.4)
During the course of conversation/discussion on some topic, if a person from other state argues with me, I will not agree with him/her.	9 (4.5)	34 (16.8)	66 (32.7)	56 (27.7)	37 (18.3)
I will give emotional support to people from other states, if they are ill-treated by people of Tamil Nadu (native state).	80 (39.6)	77 (38.1)	32 (15.8)	7 (3.5)	6 (3.0)
I will give respect to the elders from other states.	115 (56.9)	65 (32.2)	18 (8.9)	3 (1.5)	1 (0.5)

Values in ( ) denotes percentage



### 3.2.3 Institutional Attitude

Table 3.2.3 Institutional Attitude

Statements	Response (N=202, 100%)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am willing to accept a student from another state as my roommate.	75 (37.1)	78 (38.6)	30 (14.9)	10 (5.0)	9 (4.5)
I am able to develop my fluency in English when I have friendship with students from other states	86 (42.6)	73 (36.1)	32 (15.8)	7 (3.5)	4 (2.0)
I will accept a person from another state as a class leader.	70 (34.7)	81 (40.1)	30 (14.9)	9 (4.5)	12 (5.9)
I will accept a person as my teacher who belongs to other states.	82 (40.6)	87 (43.1)	18 (8.9)	11 (5.4)	4 (2.0)
People from other states should not be given admission in my institution.	10 (5.0)	15 (7.4)	27 (13.4)	40 (19.8)	110 (54.5)
The teachers in my University/College favor/appreciate students who belong to other states than the students from Tamil Nadu.	36 (17.8)	60 (29.7)	61 (30.2)	20 (9.9)	25 (12.4)
I will take the help of students from other states to complete my assignments	51 (25.2)	76 (37.6)	52 (25.7)	15 (7.4)	8 (4.0)
Students from other states are better at studies than students from Tamil Nadu.	14 (6.9)	36 (17.8)	86 (42.6)	29 (14.4)	37 (18.3)
I will accompany with a fellow student from other state for an internship program/field visit/industrial visit.	50 (24.8)	101 (50.0)	37 (18.3)	10 (5.0)	4 (2.0)
Students from other states are given more scholarship than students from Tamil Nadu.	18 (8.9)	31 (15.3)	85 (42.1)	46 (22.8)	22 (10.9)
There should be a separate classroom allotted for the students from the other state.	7 (3.5)	11 (5.4)	35 (17.3)	39 (19.3)	110 (54.5)
People from other states should not be allowed to take part in campus interviews.	5 (2.5)	22 (10.9)	33 (16.3)	54 (26.7)	88 (43.6)

Values in ( ) denotes percentage

A large percentage (75.7) of the sample stated that they are willing to accept students from other states as their roommates. Almost an equal percentage (78.7) felt that they are able to develop their fluency in English when they have friendship with students from other states. The results have also shown that the respondents have positive attitude with respect to accepting persons from other states as their class leaders and as class teachers. That is, nearly 75 percent (Strongly Agree=34.7% and Agree=40.1%) said that they will accept a person from other states as a class leader. Also, a very high percentage (83.7) of them stated that they will accept persons as teachers who belong to other states. It is interesting to note that only a small percentage (12.4) of them strongly agreed and agreed with a statement “people from

other states should not be given admission in my institution”. Similarly, only a small percentage (24.2) of them felt that students from other states are given more scholarship than students from Tamil Nadu (see Table 3.2.3 for other results).

To examine the influence of the socio- demographic characteristics of the respondents on their attitude, one way ANOVA was applied. The outcome of the analysis is presented in the following table.

Table 3.4. Socio- demographic characteristics of the respondents and their attitude

Variables (N=202)	Multicultural attitude		Intergroup attitude		Institutional attitude	
	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Age	5.4	0.005*	4.7	0.010*	10.6	0.000**
Gender	0.5	0.47	0.07	0.78	0.3	0.59
Education status	4.4	0.005*	3.6	0.014*	5.9	0.001
Nature of institution	11.4	0.001*	9.6	0.002*	17.1	0.000**
Community	4.9	0.003*	2.7	0.046	3.5	0.018

\*p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01

As stated elsewhere the influence of socio- demographic characteristics such as age, gender, education, nature of institution, and community on the attitudes’ multicultural attitude, intergroup attitude, and institutional attitude was examined. Interestingly, except gender all other variables namely age, education, nature of institution, and community have significantly influenced the various dimensions of the attitude (See Table 3.4 for detailed results).

## Discussion and conclusions

As against the general perception the respondents of the study namely the native students of Tamil Nadu have positive attitude towards the immigrant students. The findings of the present study are almost similar to some studies conducted in different parts of the world. For example, Dang and Pua (2010) in their research, in three states of Australia found that highly educated participants had more favorable attitude towards immigrants. Specifically, in the present research all the dimensions of the attitude of the native students are found to be positive. That is, most of the items measuring multicultural attitude were responded positively by the native students. Similarly more than 80 percent of them said that being friends of people from other states help them to learn more about their world, which is a part of intergroup attitude. The results have also demonstrated that the native students have positive institutional attitude. These findings indicate that the native students do not consider the immigrant students as competitors or as threats. The positive attitudes of the students are due to social and cultural factors prevailing in the State of Tamil Nadu. The state is the birth place of many progressive, democratic and left movements. As a result of such movements, by and large, people of Tamil Nadu are secular in their attitude and tolerant to people belonging to other religions, regions and cultures.

Findings of the present research have established that, the age, education, nature of institution and community background of the respondents have significantly influenced all the dimensions of the attitude examined in the present study. For instance, age, education and nature of institution the students studying have significantly influenced the institutional attitude. To some extent the present findings are in conformity with one of the recent researches conducted in The Netherlands carried out by Thijs & Verkuyten (2013). They

found out that in both multicultural and classmate's beliefs the younger children had stronger beliefs than the older ones.

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**Abstract:** India is renowned for its unity in diversity as the people value and respect each others' religion, language, culture etc. India is a 'multicultural society'. Of late due to the process of globalization, there is a large scale internal migration – movement of people within the country. Such internal migration indirectly reflects the level of development and regional imbalance in economic and

educational opportunities. On the one hand, the immigrants face various miseries in the places where they have migrated, and on the other hand the native population considers the immigrants as threat or competitors. As a result, there is a conflict between the natives and the immigrants. Such a situation questions the fundamental principle of 'multiculturalism' which is evident through the problems in the sphere of employment and education. A large number of students from other states, particularly from north-eastern states come to Chennai to pursue their studies. It is the general perception that the native students consider the immigrant students as competitors while sharing the resources, employment opportunities etc. Against this background, a study has been carried out among the student community in Chennai city to examine their attitude towards immigrant students on three dimensions namely multicultural attitude, intergroup attitude, and institutional attitude. A sample of 202 students studying various colleges in Chennai city have been selected for the purpose of the study. The attitude of such students was measured using five-point Likert scale. The results revealed that socio-demographic status of the respondents have significantly influenced the various dimensions of the attitude. By and large the respondents have positive attitude towards students from other states.

**Keywords:** multicultural attitude, Intergroup attitude, and Institutional attitude.

# What can we learn from art practices? Exploring new perspectives for critical engagement with plurality and difference in adult education.

Danny Wildemeersch

In this contribution I will explore further the relationship between (adult) education and public issues. The experience in various social-pedagogical and andragogical practices where sensitive issues of public concern, like migration, racism, justice, sustainability and poverty are at stake, attempts to convince participants about 'correct' ways of analysing such matters, often encounter resistance on behalf of the participants. Many educators have experienced, to their own detriment, that the convictions of these participants are often entrenched in firm and fairly immovable belief-systems. They even admit that such attempts may have counterproductive effects. These experiences have often raised questions and discussions on how to understand this resistance, on what to do about it, and on how to create alternative approaches.

In this paper I look for answers to these questions by drawing a parallel with discussions related to art practices. In art there also exists an on-going debate on how art can be relevant to matters of public concern. The arguments have often been grounded in philosophical, epistemological and ethical reflections. In recent times, the French philosopher Jacques Rancière has made a major contribution to these reflections, while commenting on practices in diverging domains such as art, education and politics. The richness and depth of his reflections can inspire practitioners and researchers when thinking about emancipatory educational and art practices, aiming at the empowerment of participants confronted with matters of injustice, exclusion, dominance, etc...

I will start with the description and analysis of a concrete case of art education in a community organization I am familiar with. The case is called 'take a line for a walk' and refers to Paul Klee who in the 1920's in his famous Bauhaus-teachings in Berlin used this sentence as a metaphorical way to redefine modern art practice. In the second place, I will explore how the Belgian/Mexican artist Francis Alÿs apparently revitalizes and materializes Klee's mission in recent performances such as 'Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Reach the River' and 'The Green Line', whereby he explores the relationship between poetry and politics. Both the community organization practice and the Francis Alÿs-practice do not attempt to convince people to develop 'correct' interpretations on public issues. However, in both cases, there is a clear emancipatory dimension that opens new perspectives on how to engage with such sensitive matters of concern. Jacques Rancière helps to re-conceptualize what is at stake in these experiences and how the emancipatory dimension could be redefined with reference to notions such as dissensus, equality, and ignorance.

## **Take a line for a walk**

Seven years ago, the community organization 'LerenOndernemen' working with families in poverty in my university town, decided to experiment with art education practices. This experiment took a start when the community worker convinced some of her participants to join her on a visit to a museum of modern art in the centre of the town. At that occasion, the unconventional curator invited them to bring all kinds of objects they used to collect at home. In response, they delivered collections of buttons, stamps, music records, cups, pieces of needlework, etc.. An artist in residence integrated some of these artefacts into his own work-in-progress, whereby the objects were transformed from ordinary collector's items into works

of art exhibited in the museum. This experience was an eye-opener for the participants who had never before had visited a museum of modern art and who could now experience how the displacement of objects from an everyday context into the context of a museum involved a dramatic displacement of meaning. This experience stimulated their curiosity and it was decided to further explore the possible contribution of (modern) arts practices to the emancipation of the visitors of the community centre. Together with an arts education organization, several workshops were set up in the following years, whereby children and adults, with the support of artists, experimented with the transformation of objects into works of art. At regular occasions exhibitions were organized in the centre, demonstrating the potentiality of merging so-called low art and high art, and more importantly, creating opportunities for people in poverty to creatively explore and co-create the transformation of lines, planes and colours into objects with a radical different meaning.

One of these workshops was called ‘take a line for a walk’. The name evokes a famous sentence used by the German artist Paul Klee in his teachings at the Bauhaus institute of modern art in the 1920’s in Berlin. With this sentence Klee expressed the wish to liberate arts practices from the traditional codes that had long been the norm for the production of artworks. ‘Artists tried to free the static line from its vast contour and fixed picture plane and declared this vertical position towards the world as no longer viable’ (Couchez, 2012, p. 104). The line, being one of the basic elements in visual arts, should be enabled to move freely, while exploring intensely the myriad configurations and compositions that could possibly emerge from this emancipatory act. Klee compared this emancipation of the line with the liberation of the walk from its functional, predetermined pathways, creating opportunities to explore unexpected scenes, views, encounters and events. In his lecture notes, he expressed his ideas on this as follows. ‘Mobility is the condition of change. The primordial movement, an agent, is a point that sets itself in motion (genesis of form). A line comes into being. The principle and active line develops freely. It goes out for a walk, so to speak, aimlessly for the sake of the walk’ (Klee, cited in Couchez, 2012, p. 104). The walking line symbolizes the liberation.

The workshop in the community centre called after Klee’s metaphorical sentence explored, in mixed events with children and adults, how a simple line, taken as a point of departure, could be transformed into unexpected and complex drawings, forms, gestures, designs and garments, while making use of recycled materials such as crocheted wool, furniture, photos, paintings, textile, etc.. The entire process was facilitated by an arts educator. It drew on the competences of the participants and the creativity available in the sewing workshop. And it received inspiration from collaborating artists (photographers, designers) coming from outside. Eventually, the experience of what can be done with a simple line, was taken out into the neighbouring streets, where a live performance symbolized the potentiality of taking the line for a walk. Various other workshops operated in the same way and resulted into remarkable artefacts and enthusiastic commitment of both the participants, the visitors to the centre and the workers. The pictures below illustrate the process and the quality of some of the products that were made during consecutive workshops.

Image 1



Image 2



Image 3



## Lines and borders in the work of Francis Alÿs

The experiences with the ‘take a line for a walk’ experiments initiated an intensive and on-going discussion with a visiting colleague from South-Africa who is both intrigued by and sceptical about various art practices she got to know in recent years. We have reported about our discussion elsewhere (Wildemeersch & Von Kotze, forthcoming). However, it’s worth recalling some of her comments on initiatives of the community centre. On the one hand, she appreciated these experiments as wonderful examples of anti-systemic art practice: new insights may emerge as the material is considered and seen in a new light. On the other hand, she expressed some doubts about the emancipatory effects of the initiatives. In her view, and in line with Bertolt Brecht’s perspective on dramatic arts and John Berger’s arts critiques, artistic practices should create an ‘alienating effect’. Or, in the words of Ira Shor, such practices should create opportunities for ‘the extraordinary to re-experience the ordinary’. Such processes inevitably involve a degree of risk, since in these cases the comfort zone of the participants (the audience, the readers, the viewers) needs to be interrupted. Von Kotze was not sure whether the experiments in the community centre created the necessary inconvenience triggering a degree of alienation. ‘I am not sure how explicit the dialogue between artists/facilitators, participants and their media and experimentation was about this process of uncertainty(..). But I would agree that potentially, a process of experimentation that puts what is into question, is a useful way of bringing to consciousness the whole issue of safety, security, certainty and risk. So many creative artistic moments and public art interventions that I have seen or been part of lack this dimension – and the experience goes nowhere, the assumed agency was just in that moment, in that space and is unavailable to be translated into new moments /spaces’ (Wildemeersch & Von Kotze, forthcoming).

This comment reflects an on-going discussion on the extent in which critical art practices need to have a direct or indirect political dimension. Also in the reflection on critical education practices, such debate is going on. This reminds me of ‘A story of deception’, an exhibition by Francis Alÿs, a Belgian/Mexican visual artist that was staged in recent years in Brussels, London en New-York. This particular exhibition and the entire work of the artist have been extensively commented by art critics, but also by academics, particularly because they stimulate the debate on the political responsibility of art. Before I go deeper into these comments, I need to give some more information about Alÿs’ work. The artist has gained some celebrity with multi-media experiments through which he explores, scrutinizes and deconstructs the meaning of physical lines and borders, often related to societal conflicts and tensions, such as the borders between Mexico and the US, between Africa and Europe and between Israel and Palestine. He does so with drawings, actions (performances), video-recordings, pictures, maps, transcripts of diaries, etc.. whereby he reports about his physical explorations of such lines and borders.

Image 4



Image 5





An example is 'The Green Line' in Jerusalem. In his performance he walks the border-line that in 1948 was drawn with a blunt pencil on a map by Moshe Dayan at the moment of a cease-fire in the war between Israel and Jordan (Godfrey & Biesenbach, 2010). The border was redrawn after the six-days war in 1967, when Israel extended its territory. Dayan's initial action provoked the separation of entire communities. The bluntness of the pencil in reality created at certain places a border with a width of more than sixty meters. Alÿs walked along this line for two days, carrying a leaking can of paint, while dripping a green line behind him, thereby evoking the meandering border drawn, in an act of violence, by Dayan with an insecure hand. In his work, Alÿs is not explicitly political, in the sense of openly criticizing such acts of power and discrimination. He wants his art to be poetic in the first place. However, he also mentions that 'sometimes doing something poetic can become political, and sometimes doing something political, can become poetic' (quoted in Godfrey & Biesenbach, 2010). At another occasion he suggested that: 'Through the gratuity or the absurdity of the poetic act, art provokes a moment of suspension of meaning, a brief sensation of senselessness that reveals the absurdity of the situation and through this act of transgression, makes you step back or step out and revise your prior assumptions about this reality. And when the poetic operation manages to provoke that sudden loss of self that itself allows a distancing from the immediate situation, then poetics might have the potential to open up a political thought. (Francis Alÿs, cited in Fisher, 2011, p.21).

Alÿs has also intensively engaged in stories about (the impossibility) of migration. A powerful performance in this respect was staged on the shores of Cuba (Havana) and Florida (Key-West), where he invited communities of fishermen on both sides to construct a line of fishing boats, evoking the possibility of a connection between both countries that had been separated since the establishment of the socialist regime in Cuba in 1959 (Alÿs, 2013). The idea was not to make a real connection (which would anyhow have been impossible), but to create an 'illusion of a bridge' as a sign of the political impasse in the relationship between the two states and the consequences for the (im)mobility of the inhabitants on both sides. The act was only partly successful for different reasons. As a consequence, Alÿs wanted to replicate this initiative at another place and in another context. He chose the Strait of Gibraltar, a narrow passage of 14 kilometres between the Spanish and the Moroccan coast. 'The Strait seemed like the obvious place to illustrate this contradiction of our times: how can one promote global economy and at the same time limit the global flow of people across the continents?' (Alÿs, 2013, p. 47). Initially he again wanted to create a line of boats on both sides. He eventually gave up this idea for practical reasons and replaced it by two lines - one starting from Gibraltar in the Iberian peninsula, and the other one from Tanger in Morocco - of young people who walked into the sea with model boats made of flip-flops (rubber sandals) and babouches (North-African sandals) and were thrown back on the shores by the waves.

Image 6



Image 7





About this reorientation, which was also the consequence of unexpected circumstances, Yuki Kamiya observed the following: ‘Relinquishing the mature and therefore political standpoint in turn granted Alÿs the free and creative thinking of a child. In retrospect, this project essentially began with failure – it came to be only because it failed’ (Kamiya, p. 111). And about the decision not to really connect both shores, but only symbolically refer to a bridge, Alÿs himself said the following. ‘But even supposing I could get enough cargo boats to close the Strait and connect the two continents, wouldn’t that turn the whole project into an engineering enterprise or a military operation (..)? The difference between a military operation and an artistic gesture lies precisely in the missing fragment of the bridge: the gap that has to be filled by our imagination. That’s what triggers the poetry and makes the artistic operation happen, that’s what opens a moment of suspension’ (Alÿs, 2013, p. 47-50).

Image 8



Image 9



Image 10



Characteristic of Alÿs’ performances is that they do not and cannot be developed along a precise, prefigured pathway. The complexity of the initiative makes it unpredictable and necessitates creative answers to unforeseen circumstances. As Mark Godfrey (2010) who curated the *Story of Deception* observes, the work is not fixed in preconceived objects, images, and installations in a gallery or an idea. More important is that the viewer is invited to develop his own interpretation and critique. In this way, the installation becomes an arena for discussion and differences in opinion, where you are more than a passive witness of an absurd act. For others, like Kazuhiko Yoshizaki[1], the art of story-telling is the crux of Alÿs’ artistic practice. ‘His works are marked by the consciousness that stories exert far more influence than transitory actions when they become internalized in the community as part of a collective memory. While the movement of people can be monitored, the propagation of stories cannot be controlled’. Stories can pass freely across borders. Stories, when shared beyond communities, have the power to evoke imaginative responses in people regardless of cultural differences, and facilitate platforms for dialogue – or shared horizons’ (Yoshizaki, 2013, p. 103). And he further observes that the narrative emerging from such stories embraces two opposing extremes: the political and the aesthetic.

This brings us back to the relationship between art and politics. Not everyone agrees with the suggestion that Alÿs’ contributions have a political dimension. In the *New-Yorker*, Peter Schjeldal (2011) is very sceptical about the critical and political dimension of Alÿs’ art performances, when commenting on an exhibition in the Museum of Modern Art in New-York (MOMA). “Alÿs confronts issues critical to contemporary societies: urbanism, economic cycles, and differing concepts of modernity and progress,” the introductory wall text at MOMA declares. In truth, Alÿs barely grazes the subjects, while being quite ready to accept credit for affirming humane values amid geopolitical vexations. He attenuates, to an intellectual mist, the old avant-garde truculence toward established authorities and conventions. Recalling Jean Cocteau’s formula of “knowing how far to go too far,” he goes

just far enough to suggest offending, without giving offense'. Schjeldal, in his critique, echoes the radical position on the political responsibility of the artist as repeatedly expressed by arts critics in different domains.

An example of this kind of radicalism is given by Tony Fisher (2011) reminding us of the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre who, when being confronted with Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*, expressed his scepticism about the possible effects of that artistic creation as follows: 'Does anyone think that it won ever a single heart to the Spanish cause?' (2011, p. 7). According to Sartre, such forms of 'opaque aestheticism' lack a direct connection between the form and the content of the artwork, and hence they are not really capable of affecting the hearts and minds of the audiences. In his view and contrary to what is produced in contemporary visual arts, it is literature that has the capacity to produce such effects, at least in the way he conceived of it. To Sartre, literary writing was 'equivalent to a speech act possessing a certain illocutionary force; "style" was understood as the form through which the art of persuasion was to produce its effects on the reader; and finally, reading was grasped, not just in terms of a better understanding of the political dimension of the situation, but in terms of the generation of actual perlocutionary outcomes as directed by the author's explicit intention vis-à-vis the situation in question' (Fisher, 2011, p. 7). The message of Sartre is clear: literature, and by extension other forms of art, should aim at directly affecting, not only the hearts of the people, but also their minds and especially their deeds. This is quite different from what Alÿs aims to achieve with his performances, and it is quite opposite to how Rancière conceives of the relationship between art and politics.

### **Jacques Rancière: questioning art, politics and education**

As mentioned before, Alÿs does not search to persuade his audiences about his political convictions. He rather tries to affect his audiences while expressing how he is touched by the situation at hand and how he has tried to respond to it in his own personal way. He suggests that the cases where he has managed to strike a chord within the local community, and sometimes also outside this community, did not occur because one idea was better than the other. It rather took place because his own concerns at that occasion happened to coincide with the concerns of a certain place, at a particular moment in its history (Alÿs, 2006, p. 98). The happenstance element in his work, due to the lack of preconceived cause-effect logic, is the consequence of trying not to be too missionary. It relates the possible direct, enlightening effects of an artwork and simultaneously leaves the interpretation of what is presented to the imagination of the viewer, the reader, the listener, etc.. Such approach is in line with the philosophy of Jacques Rancière who claims that 'There is no straight path from the viewing of a spectacle to an understanding of the state of the world, and none from intellectual awareness to political action' (2010, p. 143). Rancière's view on the serendipity of art practices is grounded in the way he conceives of aesthetics. Aesthetics refers to the 'order of the sensible' (Barbour, 2010), which is about the 'specific distribution of space and time, of the visible and the invisible, that create specific forms of "commonsense", regardless of the specific message such-and-such an act intends' (Rancière, 2010, p. 141). Hence, in this view, politics, as well as education and arts are aesthetic because they relate to (the questioning of) this order of the sensible. And therefore changes in aesthetic regimes often are signals or symptoms of changes in the way we understand the social, cultural and political order.

In line with his broad concept of aesthetics, Rancière pays much attention in his work to the notion of 'dissensus'. Dissensus is 'not a designation of conflict as such, but it is a specific type thereof, a conflict between *sense* and *sense*'. Dissensus is a conflict between a

sensory presentation and a way of making sense of it, or between several sensory regimes and/or 'bodies' (2010, p. 139). Dissensus relates to an interruption in the taken-for-granted (or natural) perception of reality. It is 'a rupture in the relationship between sense and sense, between what is seen and what is thought, and between what is thought and what is felt. What comes to pass is a rupture in the specific configuration that allows us to stay in 'our' assigned places in a given state of things. These sorts of ruptures can happen anywhere and at any time, but they can never be calculated' (ibid., p.143). This observation of unpredictability goes against the ambitions of those critical artists who want their work to have a particular political effect. Rancière claims that such ambitions reflect a particular 'pedagogical' logic that 'posits that what the viewer sees (...) is a set of signs formed according to an artist's intention. By recognizing these signs, the spectator is supposedly induced into a specific reading of the world around us, leading, in turn to the feeling of a certain proximity or distance, and ultimately to the spectator's intervening into the situation staged by the author' (2010, p. 136).

This analysis interferes with the hopes that various practices, be they artistic, political or educational, can instrumentally change the hearts and the minds of people in an expected direction. In addition, he argues that such practices, since they start from the assumption of inequality (between the teacher and the student, the expert and the lay-person, the policy-maker and the citizen), often are the cause of (unintended) stultification. Stultification is the consequence of treating the audience as ignorant, passive people who undergo the manipulative actions determining their lives and hence, are in need of emancipation. Though such action may be well intended, it 'constantly confirms its own presupposition: the inequality of intelligence' (2009, p. 9).

As an alternative to such practices, Rancière repeatedly suggests start from the presupposition of 'the competence of the incompetent', or 'the capacity of anybody at all to judge the relations between individuals and the collectivity, present and future' (2005, p. 83). This 'equality of intelligence' he sees at work in many people, 'from the ignoramus, spelling out signs, to the scientist who constructs hypotheses' (2009, p. 10). The ignoramus and the scientist, each in their own way, engage in what he calls a 'poetic labor of translation', grounded in 'an intelligence that translates signs into other signs and proceeds by comparisons and illustrations in order to communicate its intellectual adventures and understand what another intelligence is endeavoring to communicate it' (ib. p. 10). In line with this argument, audiences of art practices are not the presupposed passive participants, but both distant spectators and active interpreters. 'Spectators see, feel and understand something in as much as they compose their own poem, as, in their way, do actors or playwrights, directors, dancers or performers' (ibid. p. 13).

In Rancière's view, it is important to assume that in education, as well as in arts and in politics all actors are initially capable of engaging intelligibly in one or other way with what is presented in the class, on the scene, or in the domain of politics. They are all potential translators of signs into other signs, of creating linkages between what they see, hear and what is being done. By consequence, equality is not the outcome at the end of the process, but an assumption in the beginning of the process. 'Equality exists insofar as someone asserts that equality exists. More accurately equality exists to the extent that some subject acts and speaks on the assumption that equality exists. In either case, equality can neither be planned nor accomplished. It can only be practiced and through this practice verified' (Barbour, 2010, p. 255). This is the main intuition underpinning Rancière's philosophy: "there is not, on the one hand 'theory' which explains things and, on the other hand, practice educated by the lessons of theory. There are configurations of sense, knots tying together possible perceptions, interpretations, orientations and movements" (Rancière, 2009a, p. 120).

## Public pedagogy: a pedagogy of contingency?

In line with this argumentation, also in educational theory and practice, a new conception of 'critique' is being explored. A point of departure here is that, contrary to the suggestion that experts, activists, 'public intellectuals' or artists can show the way towards better conditions, there is the experience that for many challenges we face today, there are no clear answers or directions on how to develop solutions. Many important challenges remain unaddressed or unresolved because the technical, political, educational answers remain inadequate. And such challenges in some cases create moments of crisis or 'limit situations'. These are moments or situations where the preconceived perspectives fail and unprecedented solutions have to be examined.

However, the very fact that there is a lack of secure perspectives may create opportunities to open spaces of experimentation where a plurality of perspectives can be confronted and explored. Such limit situations have the potentiality to become moments of democratic, public pedagogy. They can be democratic moments because the familiar hierarchies between expert and layperson, teacher and student, leader and follower, vanguard and masses, lose their meaning, since all of them are insecure about the solution to the issues at stake. In this approach to public pedagogy, the point of departure is not the 'knowing' of the expert, but rather the commitment to create a (public) space where both the teacher and the learner in their own way, and departing from their particular capabilities, engage in a process of co-investigation and joint experimentation without having a clear answer of what the outcome of the process will be. This 'pedagogy of the unknowable' (Ellsworth, 1989, 2005) or 'pedagogy of the unknown' (Sandlin et al, 2010) could maybe be redefined as a 'pedagogy of contingency', as von Kotze suggests (see: Wildemeersch & von Kotze, forthcoming), since it is ignorant of the effects it will produce. In spite of this uncertainty, such pedagogy is also a critical pedagogy. However, it is not only critical about the societal conditions but also about the master who has the 'right' answer. In Rancière's terms, the opposite of such 'master explicator' is the 'ignorant schoolmaster' (Rancière, 1991). In this concrete situation of insecurity, this schoolmaster 'does not teach his pupils *his* knowledge, but orders them to venture into the forest of things and signs to say what they have seen and what they think of what they have seen, to verify it and have it verified'. (Rancière, 2009).

There are currently various pedagogues who search ways to redefine critical pedagogy and emancipatory practice. Often they come to the conclusion that education is most meaningful when it contributes to what Rancière calls the 'disruption of hierarchical order' (ibid., p. 118). Inspired by this statement, Biesta (2006, 2011) argues that democracy is in the first place not a particular 'regime or social way of life', but rather a *moment* wherein the existing social order is interrupted. 'The moment of democracy is therefore not merely an *interruption* of the existing order, but an interruption that results in a *reconfiguration* of this order into one in which new ways of being and acting exist and new identities come into play' (Biesta, 2011, p. 4). In such approach to democracy and critical educational practice, what is needed is not so much a big reservoir of expertise, but rather an attitude that creates opportunities for a plurality of voices to 'come into presence' (ibid.) as competent contributors in a space where new, unexpected answers can emerge. One could call such pedagogy metaphorically a 'poor pedagogy' (Masschelein, 2010) in contrast with the 'sophisticated pedagogies cultivated by experts who need to demonstrate their advanced instruments in view of acquiring or sustaining legitimacy as a trained expert.

One of the protagonists of this poor pedagogy is Tara Fenwick (2006). In an interesting contribution called 'the audacity of hope', she raises the question if and how pedagogy can still articulate hope without again constructing a new grand narrative. Her response to this is that we should have a closer look at how pedagogy in practice works. "So

we look at what really happens *among* actors in pedagogic encounters. At micro-levels, this means examining what is really happening between our actions, tools, bodies and our changing purposes and meanings. At macro-levels, it means tracing systems of relations between researchers, practitioners, histories and whatever passes for knowledge.” (Fenwick, 2006, p.9) She also calls it a shift to the immediate, which for her is the articulation of a ‘poor pedagogy’. In her view, it may be better to leave behind too large ambitions, while concentrating on the concrete, everyday practices and see what happens there. Too often the hope is abstract and distant. For Fenwick the hope is in the concrete relationships between actors involved in educational activities. ‘I suggest we might *shift* our attention: from recovering and projecting a pre-given world to enacting the immediate. Ultimately what matters is how we reach out to participate in this moment with people, ideas and situations in front of our noses” (Fenwick, 2006, p. 19). She thereby pays much attention to how *difference* is at work in these practices. So, in her view of a poor pedagogy, the practice is not aimed at overcoming the differences in the first place, but at letting new, unpredictable actions and understandings emerge from the confrontation of the differences. “The coming-together of difference creates borders, and at borders emerge new possibilities. In contrast to the dire fears of some educators, these pedagogies often successfully subvert, refuse, or resist dominant discourses of economic efficiency. Mindful engagement is attuned participation: understanding that the whole unfolds from and is enfolded within the part(icipant)” (Fenwick, p. 20). In a similar way, Masschelein (2010) claims that an emancipatory pedagogy today should be a poor pedagogy. To him this poor pedagogy is about educating the gaze, which means ‘freeing our own gaze’ rather than ‘freeing the gaze of the others’. “It is not about becoming conscious or *aware*, but about becoming *attentive*, about paying attention. Educating the gaze, then, is not depending on method, but relying on discipline; it does not require a rich methodology, but asks for a poor pedagogy, i.e. for practices which allow to expose ourselves” (Masschelein, 2010, p.43).

## **In conclusion**

The notion of poor pedagogy is controversial. It does not mean ‘poor’ in the sense of unsophisticated, poorly managed or unprofessional. It rather means a pedagogy that is restrained in its ambition to emancipate the people it has chosen to work for. Emancipation cannot be given. It has to be taken by those who are invited to respond in their own way, and with their own voice, to experiences of dissensus, when the common-sense is interrupted by the extra-ordinary events, stories or practices. The art education experience in the community centre has shown us that the participants, even when they live a life in disturbance, do not necessarily respond negatively to such moments when familiar objects, practices and routines obtain a new meaning. On the contrary, both children and adults who are not familiar with expressions of modern art are eager to engage in the experiments and broaden their horizon, each of them in his or her personal way. And out of these personal responses often emerge unexpected creations of which the participants never would have dreamt before. What matters here is that in such circumstances a space is created that is open to imagination, discussion, experiment and that it is not nailed down by a master who pretends to know the unique answer. In the cases of Alÿs performances, a similar process seems to have taken place. The artist engages with concrete situations of societal tensions and contradictions. While choosing these particular sites he shows his concern for the political and human tragedies within reach. However, he clearly states that his ambition is not political in the first place, that he does not want to convince his audiences of his opinion. He rather wants to tell stories that evoke imaginative responses. In his work he is definitely inspired by the ideas of Rancière

about the relationship between art and politics, who claims that, 'If there exists a connection between art and politics, it should be cast in terms of dissensus, the very kernel of the aesthetic regime: artworks can produce effects of dissensus precisely because they neither give lessons nor have any destination' (ibid., p. 140). In a similar way, Rancière opens up new perspectives for pedagogical and andragogical practice and theory. Precisely with regard to matters of public concern, such as migration, racism and discrimination, it is very difficult to give the 'right' answers once and for all. The conditions of plurality and diversity in which we live today and which will be the reality of the times to come, create many tensions, contradictions and paradoxes. Education can and should play an important role in dealing with these challenges. However, as we have learned from the experiments analyzed in this paper, the practices of the 'master explicator' are inappropriate in these circumstances. A pedagogy of contingency that acknowledges its limitations is probably a better answer to these challenges than a pedagogy that has unrealistic expectations about its power to make people think and act in the 'right' way. In doing so, it can create a space where the emancipation of the participants is taken as an evident point of departure and where equality is the thrust for a creative search for personal answers by all the participants involved, be they educators, visitors, artists, community workers, students and policy makers.

## Notes

1. Kasuhiko Yoshizaki is the curator of the 2013 exhibition 'Don't Cross the Bridge Before You Get to the River' in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo.

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**Abstract:** The paper investigates approaches in the world of art to bring into the open issues of public concern such as discrimination, racism, migration. We look at projects of community art, but also at practices of the Belgian-Mexican artist Francis Alÿs who organizes individual and collective performances related to such issues. We interpret these actions with the help of Rancière's philosophical insights on politics, art and education. The analysis opens interesting perspectives on how (adult-)education could engage with matters of public concern, without being too patronizing.

**Keywords:** art practices, public issues, sensitization, awareness raising, adult-education.

# Education for democracy in a multicultural context: towards multicultural identity recognition

Cinzia Zadra

## Introduction

This paper presents the first results from a research project conducted in an Italian-speaking primary school in South Tyrol, a trilingual and tri-cultural autonomous province in northern Italy that has just designed and implemented new and reformed school curricula.

My research aims to investigate, through the use of a case study, how the process of the creation of interaction-, communication- and learning-networks between school and community (libraries, cultural institutions, civic organizations, police, sports organizations, music schools, social services, clubs, etc.) is linked to the promotion of social, civic and intercultural competences. The research questions investigated in particular: (a) the establishment of interaction-, communication- and learning-extended contexts; (b) the perception and awareness of everyone involved in terms of being part of, and belonging to, a wider context of learning, democratic participation, awareness, and social and civic engagement.

In South Tyrol there exist three different school systems. School pupils are taught in their mother tongue (Italian or German), while the other language (German or Italian) is taught for a few hours a week as a second language. The Ladin ethnic group has a multilingual school system, where German and Italian are both languages of instruction.

This German-speaking territory was occupied by Italy at the end of the First World War. Under the Italian fascist regime, the German language was forbidden until Italy and Austria negotiated an agreement in 1946, recognizing the rights of the German speaking population. Government policy still maintains a strict segregation of the language groups and does not recognize bilingual or multiple identities. In order to reach a non-discriminatory allocation of jobs in the public service, a system called 'ethnic proportion' has been established. Each citizen has to declare formally as to which linguistic group they belong or want to be aggregated to. According to the results, the government decides how many people of which group are going to be employed in public service. According to the census of 2011 and these linguistic declarations, South Tyrol has 62.3% German-speaking population, 23.4% Italian, 4.1% Ladin and 10.3% other languages. Migration is a relatively new phenomenon compared to other provinces in Italy or other countries in Europe. The number of non-EU migrants has grown sharply, going from about 13,900 in 2000 to 41,699 in 2010.

The problems of this separated school system that does not accept bilingual education arise particularly for mixed families and for migrants, because they may not feel affiliated to either system.

The school where I am conducting my research is one of the few initiatives which offer German and Italian as the languages of instruction (CLIL methodology). The pupils come to this school with diverse linguistic backgrounds: 30% of them are Italian speaking, 18% are German speaking, 16% comes from a bilingual (German and Italian) family, 27% are migrants with various linguistic backgrounds and 9% are bilingual (Italian-English, German-Finnish, etc.).

This school was also chosen because it has the primary aim of favouring the design and implementation of a vertically-centred curriculum focusing on skills rather than on content. The school promotes the progressive cognitive and behavioural autonomy of pupils in terms of social and civic attitudes and positive interpersonal relationships, cultural



coexistence, as well as for an awareness of, respect for, and protection of, different ethnic and linguistic identities (School Programme, POF, 3).

In recent years, following the introduction of new national and provincial curriculum guidelines, the attention of this school has been focused on the so-called education for citizenship that each school in Italy has declined or interpreted in terms of a different number of objectives, considered in the cognitive, pragmatic and affective dimensions.

Civic and social competences have been defined as: '...particular form of participation which should be promoted within Europe in order to ensure the continuation of participatory and representative democracy, to reduce the gap between citizen and governing institutions and to enhance social cohesion' (Hoskins, 2009, p. 459). Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that the concept of active citizenship involves an '...awareness of belonging to a worldwide *community of destiny*. We are world citizens not only because we belong to the human race, but also because we live in a reduced and interlocked world and therefore share a condition that, until a few years ago, was a prerogative of a nation-state' (Milana&Tarozzi, 2013, p. 3).

The aim of the school involved in my research is to promote these social and civic competences as part of the curriculum as cross-disciplinary content. These competences are built through the creation of strong links that emphasize the role of the school in its connection with the political, economic and social environment in which it exists.

### **Education for social and civic responsibility, and democratic participation**

Concerning the definition of social and civic competences within a social justice framework, I have moved from the description and preliminary analysis of local, national and European documents dealing with citizenship education, to a deeper understanding of some of the concepts put forward by John Dewey and Martha C. Nussbaum, in order to take into account critical approaches related to the promotion of social and civic competences by the European community.

For Dewey, education is basically experience, a process of relationship and interaction between individuals and the environment. So, in itself, it contains an active element and a passive aspect and emerges as a practical and theoretical process, as action and reflection on the difficulties encountered. In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey argues that each individual is part of the world and shares experiences and, can procure his safety only in an intellectual identification with the things around him.

Dewey emphasizes, therefore, the concepts of reflective thought and action, and on this basis, he condemns the school's verbosity and promotes an education based upon situations of real experience. In *Experience and Education*, Dewey feels the need to further clarify his definition of educational experience through the criteria of continuity and interaction as '...an interplay of these two sets of conditions' (Dewey, 1938, p. 16). The school experience should be in continuity with the extracurricular experience lived by the pupil as part of a family and in terms of relationships with the community and must be prospective, in the sense that it produces new experiences. With regard to the principle of interaction, he also points out the close link between the experience of the individual and the environment. The individual and the world are not separate entities, but establish, in the concreteness of experience, a relationship of exchange. "A primary responsibility of educators is that they not only be aware of the general principle of the shaping of actual experience by environing the surrounding conditions but that they also recognize in the concrete what surroundings are conducive to having experiences that lead to growth" (Dewey, 1938, p. 15).

Moreover, in reference to the links between democratic participation and the processes of identity formation, I explore the educational philosophy of Martha C. Nussbaum and, in particular, her idea of world citizenship, which she discusses in her works, *Cultivating Humanity. The classics, multiculturalism, contemporary education and Not for Profit. Why democracy needs the humanities*.

There are three capacities that Nussbaum considers crucial for citizenship in a pluralistic and democratic society: the capacity for critical self-examination and critical thinking about one's own culture and tradition; the capacity to see oneself as a human member of a heterogeneous nation and world and, finally, the capacity of narrative imagination, understood as the ability to imagine sympathetically the lives of other people, to empathize with others and to put oneself in another's place.

Democracies need citizens who can critically assess historical evidence and economic principles, who have '...the ability to think well about political issues affecting the nation, to examine, reflect, argue, and debate, deferring to neither tradition nor authority' (Nussbaum, 2010, p. 25).

Nussbaum refers to Dewey in his statements on critical thinking, citing his position about democracy as a constant state of 'crisis', struggle of ideas, diversity of opinions and groups in conflict, and therefore, having a continued willingness to change. So Nussbaum reaffirms the values of inquiry, open-mindedness, doubt, hypothesis, cooperation and tolerance that are the root, not only of the spirit of science, but also of the values of democracy.

Nussbaum's reference to the concept of belonging to a heterogeneous world is based on the thoughts of Dewey, when he says that education should produce citizens who are flexible and capable of adapting to the nature of the current reality. Martha Nussbaum recommends the acquisition of the rudiments of world history on the part of the young and a deep understanding of the major religions; a fluent competence in at least one foreign language; a knowledge of other cultures, especially non-Western cultures, to be studied in their complexity, in their multiple spheres of thought, in their present and their past, focusing on understanding how the differences of religion, race and gender are strongly associated with different life chances. She believes that all this should be promoted by a re-evaluation of the humanities, which would allow an understanding of the historical and economic development of the world from a critical and humanistic point of view.

Finally, narrative imagination is defined by Martha Nussbaum as the ability to imagine sympathetically that makes it possible to understand the motivations and choices of others which are no longer absolutely distant and different, but prove to share the same problems and potential.

Dewey, argues Nussbaum, as well as the Indian thinker Tagore, argued that the cultivation of imaginative sympathy is the key to good citizenship, the tool needed to properly prepare to face moral interaction (Nussbaum, 1997).

The establishment of collaborative links and networks means the recognition of the historically central role of the school in the community and the power of working together for the common good, as well as the creation of the necessary conditions so that every child can learn at the highest possible level, in line with the concept of John Dewey's school as a community centre and as a democratic space. In such a school, Dewey writes, children are encouraged 'to act as a member of a unity, to emerge from his original narrowness of action and feeling and to conceive of himself from the standpoint of the welfare of the group to which he belongs' (Dewey, 1897, p. 77).

## **Theoretical framework**

The theoretical perspective I refer to has its roots in cultural-historical activity theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and the studies of expansive learning developed by Yrjö Engeström (Engeström, 1995, 1999, 2001), according to which the processes of learning have a situated character (Resnick, Saljo, Pontecorvo & Burge, 1997), and take place within a specific learning context considered from the point of view of the socio-relational dimension of culture.

Engeström considers workplaces to be contexts that generate new forces of production that can lead to deep change and then offer an optimal situation for researchers to observe and analyse the development of individual and collective learning processes and knowledge. According to Engeström, I underline the crucial idea that a context is not just something that is around us but something that holds us together. Learning does not just happen in one context but can create it too. As Engeström points out, to study complex contexts such as those that contain a high level of cultural diversity, there is a need to introduce the concept of networks of activity in which two activity systems are placed in interaction. In the expansive learning theory, the whole system of activities, such as complex interactional systems, is regarded as the fundamental unit of analysis. Another important principle is that of polyphony, inspired by Bakhtin, understood as a plurality of points of view, traditions and interests that are amplified in the networks of the activity system.

The principle of historicity, in addition, allows us to understand the problems and potential of a system of activities, bearing in mind evolutionary history. Another principle of this theory is that of contradiction that can create conflicts but also positive developments. These contradictions arise naturally from the opening up of the systems.

Recognizing an activity system in a school means seeing the school as a plurality of functions. It must be emphasized that the effectiveness of a school community is closely related to the activities carried on outside the classroom. Hence the network and the relationships built with local agencies, and the recognition of informal and extramural activities, means that valuing the different forms of learning means redesigning the school system as an open and interactive one.

Studies inspired by the expansive learning theory emphasize the need to break with the patterns of notional learning in school systems by introducing the three major dimensions of criticism, discovery and application, which '...highlights the powers of social relevance and embeddedness of knowledge, community involvement and guided practice' (Engeström, 1991, p. 255). Engeström proposes to break the tragedy of '...the encapsulation of school learning' (idem, p. 257) that cannot be useful and us able in society, but is us able only in academic circles for its own continuity and preservation.

In summary, Engeström's theory proposes to break this encapsulation of school learning, by expanding the learning objective and then transforming the learning activities inside the school, not only through the same curricular learning contents and taking into account that it is a long distributed process, but that it is not a transformation dictated from above, once and for all.

Engeström's approach thus allows us to consider the interaction between the school system and all the other neighbouring systems in their actions and interactions, and sharing of some nodes in the network, recognizing what Engeström calls the boundary zone, the area that is at the margin and that is the real place of the relationship:

[...] because it is a hybrid, polycontextual, multi-voiced and multi-scripted context, the boundary zone is considered as a place where is possible to extend the object of each activity system and to create a shared object between them. In this way, the activity

itself is reorganized, resulting in new opportunities for learning (Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström & Young, 2003, p. 5).

The boundary zone is the border area; the place, both physical and symbolic, which realizes the dynamic inter action between systems; for example, between the school and external cultural and educational agencies. The meeting between the systems leads to a negotiate de-reconstruction of the object of intervention that involves a change in the operating elements of the two systems.

The structure given to educational institutions by the Italian school autonomy law'...has helped to redefine the identity of schools as determined by the quality and the nature of its relations with the outside world which eventually redefine, even on the domestic front, the characteristics of educational activities at school' (Ajello, Chiorrini&Ghione, 2005, p. 28).

## **Methodology and methods**

I would like to define the research design, in order to adapt and bend it to the events that happen in the field, using the guiding concepts that suggest the direction in which to move without defining a priori instructions on what to look for and to see. Following the indications of a qualitative research approach, I intend to proceed in the research as if I was on a journey in search of voices and significant stories, and to co-build with research stakeholders (teachers, pupils, managers, inspectors and other social actors).

My research is based on a case study. Yin defines a case study as '...an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident' (Yin, 2003, p. 13). A case study should, as its ultimate purpose, facilitate the analysis of something else; it is not so much the object of research, but the space where a phenomenon occurs. The choice of the case is therefore particularly important.

My research uses various qualitative techniques of data collection, in particular shadowing, narrative interviews and document analysis. 'Shadowing is a research technique that involves a researcher closely following a member of an organisation over an extended period of time' (McDonald, 2005, p. 45). Shadowing gives the perception of complexity and a multi-voice context allows us to capture the many voices and perspectives of lived experiences (Sclavi, 2005). A narrative interview consists of a thirty to ninety minute interview, and is organised around general guidelines that are specified during the interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. I prefer the definition that uses the expression 'interviews that generate storytelling' ('erzählgenerierende Interviews', Friebe & Häuser, 2012, p. 440), where the interviewer takes on the role of a listener, is cautious, reserved and is responsible for managing and regulating the flow of information, accompanying and supporting the speaker in the process of telling stories, providing examples and offering anecdotes. Interview data are tape-recorded and written notes are taken at the same time. Document analysis means the systematic and careful examination of documents such as curricula documents and guidelines, in order to identify patterns so as to provide a preliminary study for an interview, to create a shadowing or observation checklist, or to gain insight into an instructional approach (Merriam, 1998, Creswell, 2003).

Data collection and analysis are conducted simultaneously. Data were collected in the years 2012, 2013 and 2014. Analysis of the data is a rather complex process and requires a lot of structure. I have first organized the collected material by dividing it by typology. The first set of data consists of official documents: the guidelines about citizenship education as part of

the Italian global school reform (Law No. 249, 2004); the implementation of the reform in primary and lower secondary schools (Decree No. 59, 2004); the recommendations of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe on key competences for lifelong learning (Key Competences for Lifelong Learning- A European Reference Framework, 2006); the provincial guidelines for the new school curricula (2009) and the school educational programme (POF, 2012-2013). I also enriched the conducted interviews with observations taken during the recording. Finally, I ordered all the field observations that emerged from the shadowing process. The data collection and analysis was recursive, and analysis was an ongoing process that directed the phases of the data collection process. The last step was an intensive analysis as an attempt to come up with conclusions and generalizations.

For the document analysis, I used the approach to policy analysis developed by Bacchi (2009), which offers a different way of thinking about policy. It consists of six interrelated questions and highlights the productive role of government in shaping a particular understanding of problems.

The intensive analysis of the interview data was conducted through a general reading by three people: myself, a sociologist working in the area of education and a primary school teacher with teaching experience in multicultural and multilingual contexts. From a qualitative point of view, it is essential to look closely at the collected data and seek various interpretations and points of view. It is also important to '...put the facts together into new wholes, into new interpretations, into a new patch' (Stake, 2010, p. 134). For this reason, I think that peer examination of this kind increases validity.

Next, all the data are read several times. Whilst reading, we jot down notes, comments and observations. The notes are then developed into a primitive system of classification by which the data are sorted. Patterns are then transformed into categories which consist of concepts indicated by the data. Finally, I tried to develop a third level of analysis making inferences and moving to a more conceptual overview of the case study.

## **Initial findings**

A critical evaluation of the concepts of social and civic competences and a consideration of active participation within the whole collected body of documents highlights how the focus on citizenship competences appears to be rather vague when it comes to proposing participatory practices for enhancing the spread of democratic processes among people from different ethnicities and languages.

European documents and the recommendations of Italian and provincial guidelines for schools highlight the meaning of citizenship education as a means of promoting the sharing of common values, of developing a sense of belonging to a common social space and creating a culture that is open to solidarity and to the understanding of cultural and ethnic diversity. Citizen education focuses on aspects such as transversal competences; the European and global dimension, and community involvement; on learning environments and on participation in decision-making processes. However, it should be noticed that there is a lack of explicit reference to differentiated citizenship, of a politics of difference and of projects for the recognition of differences and the promotion of special rights with regard to different ethnic groups. There is an absence of references to development projects involving the social participation of minorities and proposals for social participation outside of a mono-cultural European vision, rather than for defined participation in a culturally sensitive way.

At the centre of the debate on education for democratic citizenship, rather than the content of the curriculum, attention should be paid to school practices related to the curriculum in terms of the language used, time scheduling, collaborative work and

partnerships involving the community, the assessment of competence and student and pupil participation in the identification of learning opportunities in and beyond the formal confines of the classroom.

From the triangulation of collected data from interviews and observations, it is possible to identify the following issues:

- Democratic participation is related to the ability to see recognized in the school the integration of ethnic groups and their cognition of spoken languages as vehicular languages for the various disciplines: 'Finally after so many years of injustice, we bilingual families are no longer forced to get 'in the cage' and accept a monolingual school' (Interview 2).
- The cooperation with local German, Italian and mixed agencies is mentioned as due recognition of a real life condition in South Tyrol beyond the logic of ethnic segregation: 'This school is like the real society we are living in, not the one invented by our politicians'(Interview 8), and as experience of multiple identities: 'During the tourist season every day I speak as many as four languages. I think that my children have to use at least two languages daily at school. The school has to reflect needs and social changes in our province' (Interview 12).
- It is possible for school leaders to involve teachers and let them act freely with the help of extracurricular activities and extramural activities (projects, visits, school exchanges) and to foster the informal learning at school. 'Our pupils in each class go once a month to the public library and use this resource as part of a close cooperation between librarians and teachers; we have student exchanges with nine other German language schools in the province. It means language reinforcement in mixed classes (I-D), but also intercultural exchange and intercultural exercise, and a significant reflection on teachers' methodological practices' (Interview 6).
- The choice of a transversal curriculum for citizenship education is the result of a shared resolution on the part of the teachers. It shows an attitude of collaboration and emphasizes the need to assess this competence collegially, and not just by a group of teachers: 'We are concerned about the need to pay great attention to our educational co-responsibility'(Interview 14).
- The pupils have a sense of community and are aware of the need to study the different disciplines indifferent languages. 'We know everything like other children, but in several different languages - in German, in Italian, in English - and I can speak Spanish with my mother' (Interview 7).
- The school promotes local experiences that allow the students to feel at home, to feel a sense of belonging and responsibility to their locality and to the world.
- The collaboration among a variety of professionals creates an opportunity for educational change and a move towards action-oriented teaching or experiential education, where significant learning is fostered by learning situations which are not abstract but are rooted in real-life settings: '...because what you learning school that is important is not written in the books' (Interview 5).
- Care for the environment and environmental education through practices involving reducing, reusing and recycling waste material.
- Knowledge of the concepts of democracy, justice, equality, citizenship and civil rights, including how they are expressed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and in national and international declarations (Italian Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) certificated through an informal certificate.
- Challenges of the perception of itself as a mosaic of identity: 'the motto of the politics in South Tyrol was 'The more distant we are, the more we will understand each other', now

we should affirm that the closer we become, the more we will take care of our world' (Interview 12).

In conclusion, we can say that in this case study, the competence of citizenship is the key educational concept based upon multiple and different identities, and thus includes the awareness of belonging to a world community (Tarozzi&Milana, 2013) which is plural and always different.

Social, civic and intercultural competences are not to be taken into account much in terms of theoretical definitions, but more as experiences of multiple identities at the cultural and linguistic level, and as a mode of participation and commitment on various levels, from the classroom, to the school, to the family and to the very complex community to which belong the children of the school in this case study.

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to present the first results of a research project about multilingual, multicultural identities and democratic participation in learning and communication networks between schools and the local community. I conducted my research at a primary school with a linguistically mixed environment. This school was chosen because it promotes the establishment of a school community. In addition, it has the primary aim of favouring the design and implementation of a vertically centred curriculum on skills and aims to promote positive interpersonal relationships, cultural coexistence, awareness of, respect for and protection of different ethnic identities. The institute also recognises close contact with the local environment as a further priority. The research methodology for this project was guided by the qualitative research paradigm. My research is based on a case study and uses different types of data collection for qualitative studies, which includes shadowing, narrative interviews and document analysis. The research is linked with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the studies of expansive learning developed by Y. Engeström.

**Keywords:** multicultural and multilingual citizenship, democratic participation, school-community relations, qualitative research.

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Other abstracts  
(submitted prior to the conference)  
and poster session

## Integration in a multicultural context: The path of students from African Portuguese-speaking countries at the University of Aveiro (poster)

Susana Ambrósio, Lucília Santos, Henrique Fonseca, Ana Vitoria Baptista

A research project (PTDC/IVC-PEC/4886/2012) on Non-Traditional Students (NTS) in Higher Education (HE) is being carried out in two Portuguese HE institutions (University of Aveiro and University of Algarve). The pertinence of this project, which started in May 2013, comes from the absence of systematised research on NTS in HE in Portugal. Although the project is constituted by four interconnected research lines, which relate to four different groups of NTS, the authors intend here to focus on one line in particular: students from African Portuguese-speaking countries (PALOP). This research line will allow a detailed analysis on who these PALOP students are, what their difficulties are, how they deal with them and how they are integrated in the two participant universities. Also, it will allow a better understanding of the role of these universities' structures in the integration process and to draw some suggestions, at institutional level, in order to make these students' transitions more successful. At the University of Aveiro (UA), the Social Services Office and the Pedagogical Office have the main objective of supporting a diversity of students in matters related to their personal and/or academic issues. These two Offices carry out specific actions and offer some resources to support PALOP students, namely in their integration at the university. In other words, their support aims to minimise integration problems in academia and in the local community. These practices are implemented at the beginning of each school year and during the permanence of these students at the university. Thus, with this poster, the authors aim to disseminate practices that have been promoted by the Social Services Office and Pedagogical Office, in a systematised perspective, regarding social and academic support. Although these practices have considerable success, they may still be enhanced. In this sense, the poster presentation will be an opportunity to share what may be called 'good practices', and to have critical feedback to improve HE institutions' approaches to multiculturalism and namely to the integration of PALOP students.

# Conceptualizing international learning communities

Hana Cervinkova

In my paper, I will build on my approach to international learning communities that I introduced in my previous work (H. Cervinkova, International Learning Communities for Local and Global Citizenship, *European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults*, Vol.2, No.2, 2011, pp. 181-192; H. Cervinkova, The Kidnapping of Wrocław's Dwarves: The Symbolic Politics of Neoliberalism in Urban East-Central Europe, *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures*, 2013, Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 1 - 14). Using examples from different global educational projects, I will discuss the community-building role of adult education in a globalized context, focusing on specific methodologies that aim to create learning spaces focused on nurturing critical consciousness, a sense of agency, participation and social solidarity among internationally and culturally diverse young adult learners. Based on these concrete examples, I will work toward theoretical and conceptual framing for global educational work with adult learners as it relates to problems of democratic citizenship in a world defined in terms of cross-cultural and long-distance encounters in the formation of culture (A. Tsing, *Friction*, 2004, Princeton: Princeton University Press).

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## Negotiating linguistic identities: Ukrainian and Belarusian students in Poland

Alicja Fajfer

The subject of my PhD research is the influence of linguistic proximity on the integration of eastern Slavonic immigrants in Poland. The group is represented by such ethnicities as Ukrainians and Belarusians. So far, only Ukrainians have received some academic attention; mostly because they are the most populous group. Nevertheless, even in case of Ukrainians the issues of language and identity have been treated with neglect. My study investigates whether linguistic and cultural proximity can help overcome integration barrier. Similar cultures share certain norms and values, just like related languages share certain words and other elements. Therefore, it might be easier for eastern Slavs to find themselves in Poland. The questions which I am looking to answer are regarding shifts in the identities of Slavic migrants. Particularly, I am interested in the role of language in their lives. Does speaking Polish mean more to them than just a way of exchanging information? Sometimes multilingual speakers feel that, compared to their own, a foreign language conveys more (or less) accurate or powerful meanings. This paper investigates whether Polish has any symbolic values for Slavic immigrants.

# Multicultural social work practice

Engin Firat

Cultural diversity and social justice are key concepts in human services and social sciences. Especially in social work domain there is a great interest relating to issues associated with multiculturalism. The initiative of this paper is to express the social worker's role in the so-called multicultural society. This paper examines whether multicultural social work practice is possible or not. Finally in this paper, structural obstacles to multicultural social work practice will be analysed.

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## On the really existing multiculturalism: nations, ethnicities and structural asymmetries within academic world-system

Marcin Gołębniak, Marcin Starnawski

The objective of our paper is twofold. Firstly, we attempt to outline certain structural and ideological patterns that are inscribed in and construct modes of power and inequality within international academic spaces. Our exemplifications concern systems/rules of knowledge production and distribution, channels and directions of discourse transmission and legitimization, hierarchies of professional contacts and exchange etc. We perceive these issues as a matter of economy in a double sense: reproduction of inequalities in the context of global neoliberalism, as well as economy of “symbolic goods” in the context of academia and related social fields. Secondly, we pose a set of questions concerning multiculturalism within contemporary academia and related spaces in international settings. By the “really existing multiculturalism” we understand the actual condition of interethnic, intercultural, cross-country encounters governed by bureaucratic and capital-benefiting conventions rather than by horizontally defined and created modes of co-existence. Therefore, one of our aims is to pose a question whether and under what conditions relatively more democratic and more egalitarian “multiculturalism” is possible. We use an approach that we call *semi-auto-ethnography* (drawing on our personal experiences, observations and data accumulated by us as participants in international academic projects, events and networks). We refer to “world-systems analysis” as a conceptual framework, which enables to grasp logics and mechanisms of asymmetrical functioning of and within contemporary academia.

# An unresolved problem or an expected remedy?

## Debates on repatriation and ethnic migration in Poland

Marcin Gońda

As estimated, there are roughly 15 million people of Polish origin living outside Poland, making that diaspora one of the largest in the world (Chodubski 2003). In case of people of Polish descent living in Western Europe or Americas they are mainly labour migrants (or their children), whereas those in the post-Soviet republics are the next generation of Poles who remained outside their native land involuntarily. During the WWII the USSR annexed Poland's Eastern territories and resettled large groups of its citizens to Siberia, Kazakhstan and other parts of Stalin's empire. A number of Polish nationals also remained in what are now Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine. Although 1.75 million Poles returned then within post-war repatriation, Polish minority in the post-Soviet area still accounts for about 1.3 million (de Tinguy 2003).

The latter have a particular role in the Polish politics of memory, which reflects in the authorities' moral obligations towards the "brothers from the East" enduring discrimination based on descent in exile. The will to compensate the "errors of history" for the co-ethnics who had not been able in the past to benefit from repatriation programmes results in preferential, in contrast to non-Poles, reception and integration procedures (Stefańska 2010). The Constitution of 1997 and the Repatriation Act of 2000 impose upon the Polish state a duty to provide assistance to the "blood brothers" in maintaining linkages with the national culture as well as possibility of repatriation. Moreover, the Law on the Charter of the Poles of 2007 guarantees ethnic Poles in neighbouring Eastern states legal recognition of belonging to the Polish nation and a range of rights in Poland (Górny et al. 2007).

On the other hand, despite the offered amenities the Polish repatriation system remains inefficient. In practice prospective returnees must overcome complicated administrative procedures. Since it takes 7–10 years on average to be granted a repatriate's status, Polish minority members in the East who come from multinational families tend to make use of other departure possibilities and apply for, most likely, Russian or German citizenship. Moreover, local governing bodies in Poland are obliged to cover reception costs of a returnee and his/her family, but in fact they are hesitant to fulfil these duties. Consequently, between 1997 and 2008 merely 6,732 people have benefited from the repatriation programme (Wyszyński 2011).

The proposed paper will be an attempt, firstly, to critically reflect on existing Poland's repatriation policies. As estimated in the next decades Poland will need to open more widely its borders to immigrants. What is then the potential repatriates' role in the slowly developing Polish immigration policy? What are the main challenges in enhancing repatriates' arrivals? Secondly, the paper will investigate public and political debates on repatriation. How one can evaluate repatriates' presence in the politics of memory? What is their position in the increasing public interest in immigration? Furthermore, the paper will also discuss other means of return to the ancestral homeland (ethnic migration) (Hut 2011, King 2011), in particular in educational context. A special attention will be given to the arrivals of foreign students of Polish origins (Żołędowski 2010). Since other return possibilities are limited, educational migration is often the only possibility for young Poles to move westwards and thus it covers larger volume of migrants than regular repatriation operations.

## Multiculturalism and interculturalism revisited: paradoxical Spanish policies and experiences in this critical time

Estrella Gualda

Meanwhile in the US there is a hot debate discussing if immigrants are following a linear or segmented assimilation pattern, moving the multiculturalism/ interculturalism debates to the background, in others academic environments, as the Canadian or European ones, discussions concerning pluralist approaches seem to be more prevalent. These debates are normally focused on different issues concerning diversity management and integration policies and processes, what in societies recently described as not only ethnically plural and diverse but even super diverse is especially important. This work begins putting attention to the recent conceptualizations, discussions and policies in modern societies regarding multiculturalism and interculturalism issues, including theoretical convergences and divergences, and some difficult challenges to surpass in this critical economic time. After this we present the way in which Spain have been managing diversity and integration of immigrants in the last three decades in terms on policies and intervention programs. In order to produce an approach a bit more concrete in terms of regional and local realities of immigration, we also analyze how in the Andalusian region these policies and programs are being applied and how they are confronted to the national ones. We also place our discussion in the confluence of migration demographic trends, economic changes, evolution of attitudes toward migration and policies and practices regarding interculturalism in Spain. If integration of immigrants is a long run process, interruptions of policies and practices resulting of economic crisis result in new challenges to overcome in present and future times. At the same time new risks for living together and social cohesion are posed as consequence of the demolishing effects of the unexpected reduction of support to immigration and social policies.

# The migrant society and dimensions of (non-)participation in further education

Alisha M.B. Heinemann

In our globalized world, the importance placed on migrational issues is rising at all levels. Especially questions of social equality and inclusion challenge the fields of educational science and practice with an ever increasing urgency. The idea of providing equal access to education for everyone seems to be one of the main tasks which educational policies and educational institutions have to achieve.

Unlike in school settings, the field of adult education is confronted with the requirement of reaching their participants on a voluntary basis. Current statistics like the Adult Education survey, which involves data from 29 European countries, shows that participation among migrants is still low compared to native inhabitants (cf. Bilger 2013). And even though most of the institutes of adult education see themselves as basically open for everyone, socially marginalized groups are not reached by the offers and therefore social disparities are not reduced but widened by the system of adult education as it is presently structured.

In the following paper, research findings of a qualitative project addressing issues of participation in adult education will be presented. The project, which was completed in November 2013, focusses on the subjective reasons of German women with a so-called migration background living in Germany related to their active participation in the field of adult education. In Germany approx. 20 per cent of the population has a so-called migration background (cf. Statistisches Bundesamt 2012), but their participation in courses offered within adult education is far below the participation of those without such a background. Even though the findings of the project focus on the current situation in Germany, they can give important impulses for further thoughts for other European countries dealing with a high immigration quota.

The theoretical framework which was used for analyzing the interview data is based on two pillars. One is the social theory of Pierre Bourdieu who developed instruments to analyze power relations, disparities and social injustice, which make it possible to review the interview data within a higher social context. The second are concepts derived from postcolonial theories. Here it was especially the reception of the postcolonial theories by Paul Mecheril, professor of intercultural education in Oldenburg that was significant for the analysis. Most important were the concepts of "othering" in the form of the "natio-ethno-cultural" - other as well as the "global focus" and herein the still present impact of the colonial history on present migration issues.

On the basis of the Grounded Theory (Corbin/Strauss 2008) a qualitative research design was chosen, and in semi-structured in-depth interviews women were asked to give their personal reasons for participating. All of the women are part of the group defined by the Mikrozensus (the largest German demographic statistic) as the group with a migration background. But according to the idea of maximal variance in the sample given in the grounded theory, they differ from each other in aspects of age (25-50), formal education, profession, motherhood, nationality, residency status, participation in adult education, etc. Especially interview data gained from women living in Germany with an illegal status, which are for obvious reasons very difficult to reach for research, made the data basis wide and interesting.

During the evaluation process of the interviews, four dimensions of reasons could be marked as central, although all can be related to the key dimension of belongingness. This key

dimension includes one's own perception of belonging as well as attributed belongingness. Another central dimension is that of civic capital which comes with a certain scope of action. This includes civil, social and political rights not only stated in the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights of the United Nations (1966).

The third dimension relates to the role of German language proficiency, formal education and knowledge of the field of adult education. A good knowledge of the German language is the premise for most courses offered within further education. Formal educational and professional certificates have an impact depending on their official recognition in Germany. Only a recognized certificate has a positive impact. Those not accepted even have a negative effect on participation.

The last quite comprehensive dimension of the so-called migration-unspecific reasons named by the interviewees includes the following areas: Interest in the course subject, utilisability of course contents in personal and professional life as well as restrictions especially relevant to women as mothers when they have the main responsibility for child-care. All four dimensions which turned out to be relevant for the interviewees are closely intertwined and cannot be viewed as separate or independent areas if one wants to gain a thorough understanding of participation in adult education. The dimensions are located at the level of discourses which are powerful in society (belongingness): at a political level (civic capital), the level pertaining to infrastructure and development of services by the institutions of adult education (offers in multiple languages, further-training guidance, child care etc.) as well as at the personal level (interest in the subject, utilisability of course contents in personal and professional life etc.).

As could be shown in respect to praxis-related implications, the central moment of pedagogical professionalism seems to be to act on all of the above-mentioned levels with a critical-reflexive attitude which counteracts culturalisations in a way which makes racism disputable and at the same time identifies limitations. So in the future, more work has to be done in respect to the professionalisation of anti-racist work as well in respect to the empowerment of those who still retreat from the invisible social borders formed by racism, gender and class issues.

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# Non-formal learning in an International and ESL Community Coffee House: investigating its impact

Cynthia Hucks

The purpose of this empirical enquiry is to examine whether international newcomers, possibly overwhelmed while adapting to a new city and a new culture, are supported by involvement in non-formal learning. This research looks at opportunities for international students and international residents to enhance social and English conversation skills through involvement with community in a non-formal learning environment, a Coffee House (ITCH). This non-formal learning may provide needed support to language learners in the areas of language skill development as well as in cultural understanding. It also asks the question, “Are international newcomers isolated and motivated to seek community interaction?”

I used the case-study approach to this qualitative research because I was researching a bounded, non-formal learning program. To better envision and research one case, this non-formal learning program, and to look at it through lenses that see 360°, I chose this research design. Drawing on this approach, my research describes the holistic meaning of involvement at a Coffee House with community members by 3 men and 6 women, of a variety of ages.

I analyzed data from my records, including evaluations and photographs, reflecting both non-formal and informal activities, which clearly showed how and why the participants engaged in these. The interview data obtained was analyzed and categorized by themes. The four highlighted areas of: Learning Support for Studies, Friendship and Association, ESL learning, and Confidence were identified. Findings indicated that the category of friendship and association ranked highest in order of importance for attendance and participation in non-formal learning at the Coffee House. International learners experienced heightened social connectedness, had increased confidence levels, and sensed an improvement in their English-speaking performance as a result of involvement in this non-formal learning. Learning support took place in the areas of cultural awareness and familiarity with the community, and improved confidence when participating in the formal classroom. However, participants continually made associations between confidence, learning support, English-language learning and friendship with community members. It became apparent that the interaction between all aspects was dynamic, each having a bearing on the other, in a vibrant association.

The meaning that is revealed through the investigation of and analysis of this non-formal learning program will contribute to future curriculum planning for both formal and non-formal learning environments. The use of questions, every Friday evening at the Coffee House, aligns with methods used in the Highlander learning environment, where Myles Horton “posed a good question as the ultimate act of pedagogy” (Preskill and Brookfield, 2009, p. 132). This way of learning supports the same educational method valued in formal learning environments, during discussion in the classroom.

This research makes specific recommendations how non-formal learning can benefit international newcomers. However, more research is required on the benefits that international learners bring to the communities they visit or make their home.

# Cultural diversity and professional development of educators

Daniel Kober

Processes such as globalization, internationalization and mobility have an impact on the quantity and quality of cross-cultural situations. First, the probability of situations where people of different cultural backgrounds meet, is increasing. This can happen both in the context of worklife as well as private life. Second, cultural diversity may lead to synergetic effects, but also may confront people, organizations and societies with disorientation, misunderstandings or fear. It needs professionals in cultural diverse contexts, which are competent to enhance positive and limit challenging aspects. Therefore a professional development of educators is needed enabling them to plan, implement and evaluate learning settings in adult education. For this reason the paper focuses on the professional development of adult educators in Germany and presents results of a research, which analysed offers in higher education and on the training market. Based on a program analysis the two paths of professional development will be compared along a competence based modell. The results will offer possibilities to evaluate to what extend adult educators in Germany are professionalized for cultural diverse teaching-learning settings. Furthermore a new modell of intercultural professionalization in the field of adult and continuing education, trying to connect both paths, will be introduced being a basis for a continuing discourse and desiderata.

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## European educators, Asian participants – what does cross-cultural teaching need and challenge? A comparative case study

Daniel Kober

The dvv international and the German Institute for Adult Education developed the Curriculum globALE (Curriculum for Global Adult Learning and Education) together and started testing and implementing it in the region of Central Asia. The concerns of the partners is the qualification and awareness of people in the region that can later act as trainers and multipliers in the field of adult education. On the basis of the curriculum concept, the participants go through different modules and must pass an examination at the end, which leads them to the European Qualification Level 5 and in the long run should lead to an access to an academic study. The contribution of both the theoretical background and the conceptual framework as well as the first implementation experiences in Central Asian countries are presented. This creates the framework of the case study, that tries to describe challenges and needs of educators of European background teaching Asian participants from Kyrgistan, Tadjikistan and Usbekista developing fields of competences and skills that seem to be relevant for cross-cultural teaching.

Reference: DVV International (2013): Curriculum globALE. [http://www.dvv-international.de/index.php?article\\_id=1395&clang=0](http://www.dvv-international.de/index.php?article_id=1395&clang=0).

## „Besieged fortress”, „modernization and progress”, „functional passivity in disfunctional system” – on immigration discourses of Polish social services professionals working with migrants

Anna Linka

Following economical transformation Poland has faced cultural change towards values represented by neoliberal economy. Aspiring to become a member of „western world”, Poland tried to follow it’s patterns, among others, by fulfilling EU enlargement conditions. One of them was that, localized between cores and peripheries, semi – peripheral Poland, should undertake the role of buffer zone protecting the core from flow of immigrants from peripheries. Hereby Poland, though it was not itself an immigrant country, had adopted stricte and severe immigration policy. It resulted in anti-immigrant attitude in legal policy and institutional practices. Those tendencies were recently reinforced by echo of „anti – multicultural baklash” and voices expressing the „crisis of multiculturalism”.

Above described processes and policies are reproduced in praticies on institutional and proffesional level. it can be traced from discourses of social services proffesionals working with migrants. There are three main discourses emerging from their narratives:

- 1) Discourse of „ Besieged Fortress” combinig image of Poland as a buffer zone of centres and, reffering to the past, image of Poland as the „Bulwark of Christianity” and „Gates of Europe”.
- 2) Discourse of „Modernization, Civilization and Progress” in which coming from core, western migrants are seen as agents of progress and modernization and pheripheral easterners and southerners as backward and uncivilized.
- 3) Discourse of „Functional passivity in disfunctional system” according to which undemocratic habitus of Polish institutions makes any bottom-up, directed on improvement of foreigners situation, change, impossible. Undemocratic habitus is also expressed by high power distance between social services professionals and their charges.

Above mentioned discourses shed light on national, ethnic, cultural, gender, sexual and class and religious differences between social services professionals and their foreign charges. They also provide examples of “critical incidents” that could be used in process of educating and shaping intercultural competence of professionals. As such, they may be subjected to considerations and actions concerning adult education. Since I am using the wide definition of social services the range of respondents encompasses social workers, officials, clerks, teachers, lawyers, representatives of national and ethnic minorities, NGO workers, educational and psychological counselors, employment agents and clergy.

# An exploration of British cultural values and identity from the margins

Linda Morrice

Concerns about the extent and quality of cultural diversity in the UK have deepened and intensified in the last decade. Along with other countries in Europe, high profile debates have been taking place about integration, and multiculturalism has been called into question from both the political left and right. Fuelled by fears that minority groups are not only living 'parallel lives' (Cantle 2001), but also pose a threat to national identity, integration policies and practices across Europe have increasingly been concerned with ensuring that migrants adopt the language and cultural values of the host country. In the UK this shift has been accompanied by a change in language, with the concepts of 'multiculturalism' and 'integration' being replaced by 'community cohesion'. This more recent concept places its emphasis on new arrivals, Muslims and minority groups in general to learn about and to demonstrate 'common values'.

The use of compulsory integration measures aimed at the individual migrant have increased: language testing, classes in civic education and testing about the history and political system of the country have become a core part on integration policies in many countries across Europe. For example, the UK introduced a 'Life in the UK' test in 2004. Similar measures exist in other European countries: the Netherlands has the '*inburgeringsbeleid*', in 2003 Austria introduced an 'Integration Agreement', and France adopted the '*Contrat d'accueil et de l' integration*'. Perchinig (2012) suggests that this represents a re-framing of integration away from the rights-based conceptualisation which existed up until the 1990's, where the focus was on legal equality, security of residence and social and political participation. In this framework, the state was the main actor responsible for removing barriers and ensuring appropriate support was in place for migrants to have equal access to education, the labour market and society more generally. Since the 1990's integration policies were re-framed around a duty based concept which shifted responsibility to the individual migrant. Integration has become an identity issue with migrants having to prove their willingness to integrate and to commit to the values and cultural traits of the host country.

In these debates there is assumed to be a set of dominant and clearly defined British values (as articulated in Life in the UK). These are set in opposition to migrant values which are left unexplored, but generally depicted as of concern. But how is this expectation to adopt a British identity, and espouse British values, viewed and experienced from the perspective of the migrants themselves, and how is cultural hybridity, or conflict, managed or avoided? This paper will report on a participatory action research project with refugee women in the UK. Through a range of activities – photography, creative writing, collage and scrap books – the women were encouraged to become observers of their own cultural lives and identities. The paper explores how British cultural values are perceived, negotiated and performed by refugee women, and asks how formations of identity, including British identity, are understood.

## Attending to and creating difference: migrant voices in diverse classrooms

Johanna F. Schwarz

Take two Austrian students: Ten-year-old Türkan, daughter of foreign-born parents, and ten-year-old Tanja, daughter of mainstream background. How (differently) do they experience schooling? How (differently) do they experience learning at this institution? How differently do they respond to what is expected of them? Students are attributed with different characteristics for many reasons. As students they are viewed as being good, bad, average, intelligent, engaged, interested, bored, etc. This not only determines how they are recognized but also the kind of attention they get at school. Teachers and students are closely entangled with each other and act in the presence of others, as Ricken argues (2009, 129). The others who are present become potential allies, competitors, scapegoats, spectators or referees and it is their presence that creates issues such as neglect, injustice or discrimination in the first place. By examining how one attributes something to something, ascribes something to someone and recognizes someone as something, specific social phenomena in heterogeneous classrooms can be revealed. Recognition of the Other is regarded a particular challenge in educational processes (*Bildungsprozesse*) (Micus-Loos 2012; Ricken 2009), calling for research into phenomena such as recognition, ascription or equality and social justice in education. This paper explores these phenomena of the learning experience at school from three main theoretical foundations: (1) phenomenology (lifeworldly and embodiment concepts in particular; Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Waldenfels, Meyer-Drawe), (2) experiential dimensions of learning and Theories of the Third (Bedorf, 2010, 2011; Butler 2006; 2012; Mecheril 2010; Plöber & Mecheril 2012). With regard to learning theory this paper focuses on recent theoretical work in the phenomenology of learning (Meyer-Drawe 2008; 2010) which defines learning as experience from a pedagogical perspective which is widely neglected by mainstream perspectives on results as well as neuro-scientific and cognitive views of learning. The phenomenologically grounded approach seeks to explore students' lived experiences at school and contribute to the understanding of experiential facets of their learning. Based on vignettes from a grant funded project carried out in middle schools across Austria, this paper intends to explore how differently different (Arens/Mecheril, 2010) students are and which implications this may have for research, learning theory and teaching.

# Experiences of otherness and its biographical consequences

Katarzyna Waniek

The findings to be presented in this paper are based on an in-depth analysis of autobiographical narrative interviews (Schütze 1981, 1983, 1984; 2012) with people (coming from different European countries) who for different reasons and because of different motives (looking for work, education, foreign spouse, escaping from predicament or suffocating milieu) have temporarily or permanently resided in another European country. An attempt will be made to consider how and to what extent being exposed to non-native (in the sense of national, or – generally – culturally specific) forms of life is likely to be a vehicle of Europeanization understood in terms of a process through which a European mental space may emerge.

The collected autobiographical interviews strongly suggest that one's encounter with Europe (which is a semantically wider expression that refers to any country the narrators reside at least for some time), its different cultural patterns, life styles, system of relevances and values results in very intensive biographical work i.e., re-evaluating, revising, reseeing, and rejudging (cf. Strauss, 1969: 100) one's past and future in order to yield a sense of seamless continuity of identity (Strauss, 1993: 99). It is remarkable, however, that biographical work not only involves cognitive processes, but also initiates basic changes in one's attitude towards everyday life and certain actions which are to transform one's life situation (Strass et.al., 1985, Kaźmierska 2008). It usually starts with questioning and even disallowing ones cultural background that entails permanent comparison (manifesting itself in a number of contrast sets narrators are introducing while telling their life history) of their country of origin, their families and local milieu and their observations abroad. This, in turn, quite often leads to a very significant biographical change: ones hitherto contemptuous and disrespected attitude toward one's country of origin takes on a different (usually positive) relevance. Ordinary, a person living in two (or more) cultures becomes aware of conflicts and differences between them and consequently becomes painfully self-conscious (Cf. Stonequist, 1961). At the same time he or she is able to develop a sense of belonging to certain "we"-communities that is based on more intelligent, more critical and more objective worldview (Park, 1961: xvii-xviii). The focus will be on these cases in which the process of comparing two cultures is associated with (re)patriotization (when a feeling of belonging to one's country of origin – previously trivial, considered unimportant or associated with being much tired of all limitations, shortcomings, nuisances of living in the country – takes on a new meaning) and / or adopting a place of life abroad as one's second home and the process may follow (Kaźmierska et.al., 2011).

# Poster session

Multicultural diversity in Poland:  
foreigners' experience of social adaptation

Marius Mirbach, Fernando Lara, Muhammet Moroglu

Multicultural content and contexts in Spanish and Polish early  
childhood education handbooks: a comparative study

Ana Sánchez Vicente, Esther Maria Ruiz Benitez

European educators, Asian participants: what does cross-cultural  
teaching need and challenge? A comparative case study

Daniel Kober

Lampedusa and African Xenophobia

Nerida Mackey

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