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Intercultura

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2012 Forum on Intercultural Learning and Exchange

Contribution
of Exchange
to Intercultural
Learning for
Educational
Institutions

Theoretical
and research
foundations
of the topic

Living in a world
of diversity

The impact
of mobility
on schools





La Fondazione Intercultura *Onlus*

La Fondazione Intercultura *Onlus* nasce il 12 maggio 2007 da una costola dell'Associazione che porta lo stesso nome e che da 55 anni accumula un patrimonio unico di esperienze educative internazionali, che la Fondazione intende utilizzare su più vasta scala, favorendo una cultura del dialogo e dello scambio interculturale tra i giovani e sviluppando ricerche, programmi e strutture che aiutino le nuove generazioni ad **aprirsi al mondo ed a vivere da cittadini consapevoli e preparati in una società multiculturale**. Vi hanno aderito il Ministero degli Affari Esteri e quello dell'Istruzione, Università e Ricerca. La Fondazione è presieduta dall'Ambasciatore Roberto Toscano; segretario generale è Roberto Ruffino; del consiglio e del comitato scientifico fanno parte eminenti rappresentanti del mondo della cultura, dell'economia e dell'università. Nei primi anni di attività ha promosso convegni internazionali sulla Identità italiana tra Europa e società multiculturale e sull'educazione alla cittadinanza mondiale, numerosi incontri con interculturalisti di vari Paesi, ricerche sulla percezione dell'alterità da parte dei giovani, un progetto pilota di scambi intra-europei con l'Unione Europea. Raccoglie contributi di enti locali, fondazioni ed aziende a beneficio dei programmi di Intercultura. Gestisce il sito www.scuoleinternazionali.org.

www.fondazioneintercultura.org



L'Associazione Intercultura *Onlus*

L'Associazione Intercultura *Onlus* (fondata nel 1955) è un ente morale riconosciuto con DPR n. 578/85, posto sotto la tutela del Ministero degli Affari Esteri. Dal 1 gennaio 1998 ha status di Organizzazione non lucrativa di utilità sociale, iscritta al registro delle associazioni di volontariato del Lazio: è infatti gestita e amministrata da migliaia di volontari, che hanno scelto di operare nel settore educativo e scolastico, per sensibilizzarlo alla dimensione internazionale. È presente in 142 città italiane ed in 65 Paesi di tutti i continenti, attraverso la sua affiliazione all'AFS ed all'EFIL. Ha statuto consultivo all'UNESCO e al Consiglio d'Europa e collabora ad alcuni progetti dell'Unione Europea. Ha rapporti con i nostri Ministeri degli Esteri e dell'Istruzione. A Intercultura sono stati assegnati il Premio della Cultura della Presidenza del Consiglio e il Premio della Solidarietà della Fondazione Italiana per il Volontariato per l'attività in favore della pace e della conoscenza fra i popoli.

L'Associazione promuove, organizza e finanzia scambi ed esperienze interculturali, inviando ogni anno oltre 1600 ragazzi delle scuole secondarie a vivere e studiare all'estero ed accogliendo nel nostro Paese altrettanti giovani di ogni nazione che scelgono di arricchirsi culturalmente trascorrendo un periodo di vita nelle nostre famiglie e nelle nostre scuole. Inoltre Intercultura organizza seminari, conferenze, corsi di formazione e di aggiornamento per Presidi, insegnanti, volontari della propria e di altre associazioni, sugli scambi culturali. Tutto questo per favorire l'incontro e il dialogo tra persone di tradizioni culturali diverse ed aiutarle a comprendersi e a collaborare in modo costruttivo.

www.intercultura.it

in questo numero

2012 Forum on Intercultural Learning and Exchange



A un anno dal Forum on Intercultural Learning and Exchange del 2011 la Fondazione Intercultura, insieme a IDRI (Intercultural Development Research Institute), all'AFS austriaca e alla Federazione Europea per l'Apprendimento Interculturale (EFIL), ha organizzato a Vienna, dal 4 al 6 ottobre 2012, un terzo incontro di studiosi ed attori di esperienze interculturali, focalizzato sull'apprendimento interculturale delle istituzioni scolastiche ed universitarie attraverso gli scambi di studenti. E' un tema ancora poco ricercato e su cui manca una valida letteratura di riferimento. Ma è un tema importante per Intercultura, che vuole coinvolgere a pari titolo nel suo progetto educativo studenti, famiglie e scuole.

L'incontro ha avuto carattere internazionale ed i lavori si sono svolti in lingua inglese. Per questo motivo anche gli Atti contenuti in questo numero sono pubblicati in lingua inglese.

La Fondazione Intercultura ringrazia gli studiosi che hanno contribuito alla sostanza delle discussioni ed in particolare Milton Bennett e l'istituto IDRI che ha co-patrocinato l'evento ed ha contribuito in modo determinante alla sua realizzazione, e l'associazione AFS austriaca che lo ha ospitato nelle sale dell'Hotel Regina a Vienna.

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Contribution of Exchange to Intercultural Learning for Educational Institutions

PROGRAMME

THURSDAY 4 OCTOBER

◆ 20:00

Opening dinner Hotel Regina – Vienna
Welcome by Johanna Nemeth, Secretary-General
AFS Austria
Guest speaker, Alvino Fantini

FRIDAY 5 OCTOBER

◆ 09:00 - 09:15

Welcome, logistics and announcements

◆ 09:15 - 10:00

Presentation by Milton Bennett (IDRIInstitute)
Beyond ABC in Intercultural Learning:
Creating the Context for Mutual Adaptation

◆ 10:00 - 10:45

Mini-interviews of Invited Experts
(listed below as facilitators)

◆ 11:00 - 13:00

DISCUSSION GROUPS

1. Implications for host students in intercultural learning interventions

Facilitated by Gabriele Weber Bosley and Kris Hemming Lou

2. Host student motivation for contact with international exchanges

Facilitated by Kenneth Cushner and Victor Savicky

3. Conflict & dialogue as contexts for host/exchange interaction

Facilitated by Liisa Salo-Lee and Gary Weaver

4. Interface of language acquisition and intercultural learning

Facilitated by Sabine Smith and Federica Santini

5. Intercultural learning in non-Western host institutions

Facilitated by Jerome B. Bookin-Weiner and James Ketterer

6. Intercultural learning in European host institutions

Facilitated by Ida Castiglioni and Peter Praxmeier

◆ 14:30 - 16:30

DISCUSSION GROUPS • Same groups as above

◆ 17:00 - 18:30

CLOSING SESSION

chaired by Milton Bennett
Reports by discussion group facilitators
Conclusions of the day

SATURDAY 6 OCTOBER

◆ 09:00 - 10:45

PANEL discussion: Intercultural Learning - Application and best practices chaired by Roberto Ruffino, Secretary-General Fondazione Intercultura

- Soren Kristensen, *Evaluator of the pilot phase of the EU Comenius Individual Pupil Mobility programme - Presenting his findings on the inter-cultural learning of pupils on mobility projects*
- Josef Huber, *Council of Europe - Guidelines for the development of intercultural competence in education (focusing on teachers' training)*
- Katerina Kapounova Bavorova, *Programme Manager, Comenius Individual Pupil Mobility, Comenius Unit, Directorate-General Education and Culture, European Commission*

◆ 11:00 - 13:00

DISCUSSION GROUPS

1. Implementing intercultural learning in school, a model project in Germany

Presented by Tom Kurz of Experiment Germany
Facilitated by Melissa Liles of AFS INT & AFS Educational Council

2. AFS and schools in Germany, a natural but troubled relationship

Presented by Uli Zeuschel of AFS Germany
Facilitated by Bruce La Brack of AFS Educational Council

3. Intercultural training for teachers in Austria

Presented by Hilda Fanta-Scheiner
Facilitated by Darla Deardorff of AFS Educational Council

4. The performance of foreign pupils in Italian schools

Presented by Sabrina Brunetti of Fondazione Intercultura

5. ESN Survey data on intercultural learning for university students on Erasmus exchanges

Presented by Veeli Oesalg, Erasmus Student Network
Facilitated by Kumiko Torikai of AFS Educational Council

◆ 14:30 - 16:30

DISCUSSION GROUPS • Same groups as above

◆ 17:00 - 18:30

CLOSING SESSION

chaired by Johanna Nemeth of AFS Austria
Reports by discussion group facilitators
Conclusions of the day

Report on theoretical and research foundations of the topic

The Forum for Intercultural Learning in Exchange (FILE) is an invitational conference that for two days explores a particular topic in international educational exchange that has not received much sustained focus. The initial topic of the FILE was “Narrating the Re-Entry Experience,” followed by “The Other Side of Exchange: Intercultural Learning through Hosting.” The topic for FILE III continues this kind of exploration through the theme “Contributions of Exchange to Intercultural Learning for Educational Institutions.” The first two editions of FILE were designed by Intercultural Development Research Institute (IDRIInstitute) and sponsored and hosted by Intercultura Foundation in Colle Val d’Elsa, Tuscany. FILE III was sponsored and hosted by AFS Austria in Vienna in conjunction with Intercultura Foundation. The first day of FILE III was designed by IDRIInstitute, and the second day was designed by EFIL (European Federation for Intercultural Learning).

IDRIInstitute is a nonprofit organized in the U.S. and Italy for the purpose of fostering constructivist theory, research, and practice in intercultural development. Part of its mission is to encourage “coherent conferencing” around intercultural topics. In a coherent conference, an effort is made to identify the epistemological and theoretical assumptions that underlie the particular research and practices reported at the conference. The FILE series has been designed to implement this vision, with a first day devoted to theory and research on the topic, and a second day devoted to programmatic implementation and practical applications clearly linked to the topical themes. Each day begins with a plenary address or panel, continues through two rounds of group discussion on specific topics facilitated by invited scholars, researchers, and practitioners, and ends with a synthetic summary session.

For FILE III, IDRIInstitute invited a group of experts to focus for the first day on the conceptual foundations of intercultural learning in both sending and hosting educational institutions. Specific topics for the groups were generated through a survey of the invited experts. The second day was largely organized by EFIL (European Federation of Intercultural Learning) with a different set of invitees, and the results of that day is reported in the latter part of this volume.

MORNING PLENARY

Milton J. Bennett, Director of IDRIInstitute, opened the foundations day with a plenary address entitled “Beyond ABC in Intercultural Learning: Creating the Context for Mutual Adaptation.” He based the presentation on research he conducted for the chapter, “A Conceptual History of Intercultural Learning in Study Abroad” published in *History of U.S. Study Abroad, 1965-Present* edited by B. Hoffa & S.DePaul (The Forum for Study Abroad, 2010) and for the chapter “Paradigmatic Assumptions and a Developmental Approach to Intercultural Learning” in *Student Learning Abroad*, edited by M. Vanden Berg, M. Paige, and K. Lou (Stylus Press, 2012).

The presentation began by recalling the “great debate” in study abroad between traditional educators who hoped exchange students would benefit from simply being abroad in the physical environment referred to in lectures, vs. the experiential educators

who believed that exchange students could acquire important life experiences that would generate not only more critical awareness but also a more holistic and well-rounded education. These days, most exchange organizations that stress intercultural learning (including AFS, of course) are solidly in the experiential education camp, and many university study-abroad programs are continuing to move in that direction.

However, not all is well in experiential education. As it has moved more into the mainstream, experiential education underwent the same transformation as any other idea that becomes institutionalized – it became reified. The term “reification” refers to how a process is turned into a thing; in this case, how the process of including additional aspects of experience into education became the things of Affect, Behavior, and Cognition. ABC is also referred to as KAS – Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills. ABC or KAS began as a way to talk about a process – how students, curriculum, and teachers interact to generate education (John Dewey)

and how educators could approach testing (Bloom's taxonomy). But as the elements became reified, attention turned to actually teaching these elements as if they were real things that one could have more or less of – more or less knowledge, better or worse attitudes, greater or lesser skill. In this way, experiential education shifted from being a philosophy that could guide educational practice to a set of specific things that could be taught. Today the triad is a fixture of education, with virtually all educational objectives and competencies defined in the reified terms.

The reification of experiential education has some profound implications for intercultural learning, particularly for how exchange can contribute to educational institutions. The most troublesome is the implication that the benefits of experiential education exit within individuals. In the simple terms used by many educators, knowledge is something inside students' brains, attitude is something in their emotional/limbic systems, and behavioral skill is in their neuromuscular systems. So in the case of intercultural learning, knowledge of other cultures that is gained through exchange is in the exchange student's brain, the assumedly more cosmopolitan attitude developed through exchange is in his or her limbic system, and the skill in negotiating a different culture is encoded in the exchange student's personal repertoire of enactment. The focus on individual intercultural learning in program assessment and other research points to this "individuation" of experiential education. With this view, the only way for educational institutions to benefit from exchange is for the exchange student to directly transfer KAS from him or herself to other students. And in some cases, indeed, the primary value of an exchange student is seen as her willingness to tell about her native culture while abroad and her host culture when she returns home, or simply to be a model of well-behaved foreignness. But, in most cases, the exchange student is seen only as a recipient of education efforts by the sending and receiving educational institutions and not as a participant in an educational process that might also benefit those institutions.



Another effect of reifying experiential education is that teachers do not see a role for themselves beyond teaching the KAS elements themselves. So in the case of exchange, teachers do not think it is part of their educational duties to facilitate cross-cultural relationships (and, perhaps, intercultural understanding) among visiting and host students. Thus, teacher development programs that are aimed at general intercultural sensitivity and development – programs that might make teachers better facilitators – are often resisted as irrelevant. For the same reason, teachers may be more accepting of training on how to incorporate intercultural knowledge, attitudes, or skills into their lesson plans, but they may also resist this for logistic reasons.

While taking on the reification of experiential education in educational institutions is probably unrealistic, there is no reason why particular exchange programs at the secondary and tertiary levels ought not to define themselves in more truly experiential ways. In a processual view that is closer to the original idea of experiential education, the goal is to facilitate the development of people in all aspects of their lives, including, notably, developing relationships. A major part of this facilitation is modeling, which demands that teachers and students (along with parents and administrators) are all prepared to facilitate relationships within and across these constituencies.

By placing intercultural learning in a more relational context, the goal becomes one of "mutual intercultural adaptation." On the one hand, the exchange student is of course adapting to the host culture. But it should be stressed that the student is adapting, not assimilating. That means that the student is expected to maintain his or her native worldview while acquiring a working facsimile of the host worldview. Meanwhile, the host students should be equally expected to adapt to the exchange student; that is, they should be seeking at least some familiarity with the visitor's worldview. The result of this mutual adaptation is the creation of "virtual third cultures" – the relational spaces wherein intercultural learning occurs. Mutual adaptation among students should be

facilitated by teachers who themselves are competent at engaging the mutual adaptation process. And, harkening back to the topic of FILE II, host families should also be part of the process.

In these terms, the contribution of exchange to educational institutions is its ability to create educational third-culture spaces for all constituencies.

INVITED EXPERTS

The generation and use of these spaces could be pursued in various ways, including with the well-established Intercultural Communication Workshop curriculum. The key to deriving the value of intercultural learning for institutions lies distinctly outside the realm of individual knowledge, attitudes, and skills and solidly in the realm of shared adaptation to intercultural relationships.

The scholars and researchers invited by IDRInstitute were chosen for the particular expertise they could offer to the subject of FILE III. Their role was to be "knowledgeable facilitators" of the discussion groups in Day One and to be active participants in the overall conference.

.....
 ❖ **Jerry Bookin-Weiner**, Director of Education Abroad, AMIDEAST. Jerry has directed research on faculty best practices in utilizing international students for campus and community intercultural learning in the US and Australia, designed the interactive learning community for ScholarShip, and now focuses on the complex relationship of US exchange students in Jordanian and Egyptian educational institutions.

.....
 ❖ **Gabriel Bosley**, Professor of Foreign Languages, Bellarmine University, Kentucky USA. Gabriel and her colleague Kris Lou have conducted research on the effect of intervention into intercultural learning processes during exchange. Their findings, consistent with the Georgetown studies and other recent research, supports the idea that educational institutions play a vital role in intercultural learning, and that institutions can benefit from coordinating their efforts in this regard.

.....
 ❖ **Ida Castiglioni**, Assistant Professor of the Sociology of Cultural Processes in the Department of Sociology and Social Research, University of Milano Bicocca. Ida's research relevant to FILE III is on the

development of multicultural identity as part of intercultural learning, and the ways in which educational and other institutions can acknowledge and benefit from acknowledging new forms of identity.

.....
 ❖ **Ken Cushner**, Professor of Multicultural and Intercultural Teacher Education at Kent State University, Ohio USA. Ken is a founding fellow and past president of the International Academy of Intercultural Research and the author of many research publications in the area. He offers his expertise in faculty development as a necessary part of creating value from exchange for educational institutions.

.....
 ❖ **Jim Ketterer**, Country Director of AMIDEAST, Egypt. As Vice Chancellor for Policy and Planning for the State University of New York and Director of the SUNY Center for International Development, Jim was directly involved in creating value from international activities for the massive SUNY education system.

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 ❖ **Kris Lou**, Director of International Education and Associate Professor of International Studies at Willamette University, Oregon USA. Kris is a contributing co-editor of the new state of the art publication on exchange, *Student Learning Abroad*. The book details the paradigm shift from the "what" of traditional study abroad to the "how" and "why" of current, more experiential approaches to international exchange.

.....
 ❖ **Peter Praxmarer**, Coordinating Secretary of EMMICC (European Master in Intercultural Communication) at Univerità della Svizzera italiana (USI) in Lugano, Switzerland. This program has a very multicultural student enrollment, and Peter is particularly familiar with how this and other European Master's programs interact with their institutional hosts to support an international education environment.

.....
 ❖ **Liisa Salo-Lee**, Professor Emerita in the Intercultural Ph.D. program of University of Jyväskylä, Finland. In her various capacities that have included President of SIETAR Europa, head of the Goethe Institut in Campina Grande (Brazil), and Director of the Finnish Cultural Institute in

Madrid, Liisa has focused on how intercultural learning through a variety of educational institutions can be incorporated into host societies.

❖ **Federica Santini**, Associate Professor of Italian and coordinates the Italian Program for Kennesaw State University, Georgia USA. As Director of Kennesaw's Study Abroad Program in Siena, Italy, Federica is charged with creating value for the home campus from the maintenance of an overseas program.

❖ **Vic Savicki**, Professor of Psychology Emeritus from Western Oregon University, USA. Vic has taught in study abroad settings many times and has several publications addressing the interface between exchange student and host environment, including the books *Burnout Across Thirteen Cultures and Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation*.

❖ **Sabine Smith**, Professor of German at Kennesaw State University, Georgia USA. Sabine recently co-edited the volume "Bridging Cultures: International Women Transforming the US Academy" with her colleagues Sarah Robbins and Federica Santini. She offers her expertise in how language and culture-learning can stimulate development in educational institutions towards more international sophistication.

❖ **Gary Weaver**, Executive Director of the Intercultural Management Institute and a Professor of International Communication in the School of International Service at the American University in Washington, DC. USA. Gary is in the unusual position of providing direct benefits of intercultural learning to governmental and corporate constituencies, in addition to providing an international education dimension to American University.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Following are brief summaries of the six group discussions (two session each) that occurred during Day One of FILE III. The summaries, which are based on the presentations given by the group facilitators in the afternoon plenary, attempt to link ideas from the discussion to the theoretical foundations and research applications of the FILE topic, Contributions of Exchange to Intercultural Learning of Educational Institutions.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORT:

Implications for host students in intercultural learning interventions

Facilitator/Recorder: Gabriele Bosley and Kris Lou.

The discussion began with a distinction between "mobility" and "intervention," where the latter is the educational activity that should accompany the logistic accomplishment of relocating students. The type of intervention depends on the outcomes claimed and/or expected by the sending and receiving institutions, and it also should be geared to the level of experience of students. For instance, both exchange and host students could write diaries that link the experience to the observational categories of intercultural communication as well as to the educational goals of the institutions. Maintaining diaries can be particularly effective using social media and other internet resources. Having both exchange and host students involved in a reflection process serves the experiential education principle of intentional relationship-building and the intercultural principle of mutual adaptation.

It is also important for teachers to be involved in making interventions, for three reasons: 1) the teachers are important educational resources that should be exploited in the process of intercultural learning; 2) teachers maintain important relationships with students that should have an intercultural dimension; and 3) teacher development programs should be part of the institutionalization of intercultural learning intervention.

The key concept emerging from the Group 1 discussions was that educational intervention is good for student intercultural learning, and it is also good for involving educational institutions in the learning process.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORT:

Host student motivation for contact with international exchange students

Facilitator/Recorder: Ken Cushner and Vic Savicky.

There are several factors affecting how likely host students are to interact with exchange students. One, of course, is having a common language. Also, receiving students who have themselves had study abroad



experience are more likely to seek out visiting exchange students. Prior contact via social media also seems to be a positive factor. On the negative side, teachers tend not to see the value of host/visitor contact and so they may not support interaction, such as setting up in-class cross-cultural discussions, etc. This points to the need for an ICW-type course where cross-cultural interaction is legitimated in an educational context and guided along known trajectories of development.

Both exchange and host students have different “thresholds” for intercultural experience. For some students, particularly those with prior international experience, the ambiguity of cross-cultural communication may be a desirable challenge, while for others the mere idea of confronting cultural difference may be debilitating. Therefore, interventions need to balance challenge and support in a way that both motivates students at various levels of experience and that also supports them sufficiently. Again, intervention is indicated as a necessary part of the process. Programs such as the Intercultural Communication Workshop are designed to increase challenge and support gradually to balance motivation and threat.

Parents are a neglected part of the study abroad process. In the end it is parents that need to agree (and pay for) exchange experiences. If parents themselves have had an exchange experience, they are more likely to support it for their kids. The disadvantage this creates for prospective first-generation sojourners can be addressed by getting

inexperienced parents together with more experienced peers for discussions of benefits and concerns. Overall, all stakeholders need to be involved in the process of intercultural learning, and the motivation to do so needs to be a concrete one for each constituency.

The key concept from the Group 2 discussions was that intervention needs to balance support and challenge for all learners.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORT:

Conflict and dialogue as contexts for host/exchange interaction

Facilitator/Recorder: Liisa Salo-Lee and Gary Weaver.

Conflict need not be rancorous; it may simply be a confrontation with cultural difference that creates some degree of discomfort. Being somewhat outside one’s comfort zone (but not overly challenged) can be a useful condition for intercultural learning to occur through dialogue. Following the relational principle of experiential education, dialogue needs to involve students, administrators, parents, and teachers. Ideally, intercultural competence development needs to be built into the curriculum, and teachers need not only to be trained but also to be provided their own experiences abroad.

To create the conditions for moderate cross-cultural conflict and dialogue, receiving institutions need to avoid exercising assimilationist pressures on visiting students. Institutions can sabotage efforts

towards intercultural learning by exercising a kind of cultural imperialism – “you have come to us because we are superior, so it is in your best interest to assimilate to us and it is not in our interest to adapt to you.” To counter this tendency, educational institutions need to have a clear motivation in terms of their mission to support intercultural learning. Also, external pressure such as certification and assessment demands can be motivational. Whatever the impetus, intercultural learning (not just “internationalism”) needs to be introduced into the DNA of the organization.

An approach to motivation in an educational context could rely on the creating more opportunity for developing critical thinking and dialogical learning. These ideas are consistent with intercultural learning and could form a “package” of outcomes from structured reflection and facilitated dialogue groups. It would be useful to encourage reflective dialogue among researchers, particularly those who are responsible for the assessment of international/ intercultural efforts of educational institutions. Since measurement categories often drive the form of change, careful attention to how measurement is pursued could be an important and intentional part of institutional development.

The key concept from the Group 3 discussions is that the natural tendency of educational organizations towards assimilation should be resisted, and that alternative adaptation strategies could be nurtured by conflict and dialogue that balance challenge and support for all constituencies.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORT:

Interface of language acquisition and intercultural learning

Facilitator/Recorder: Sabine Smith and Federica Santini.

The goal of language acquisition in the context of intercultural learning is similar to that discussed in other groups: critical thinking, appreciation of diversity, and awareness. When language is taken as a symbolic system, diversity is demonstrated in how alternative systems represent reality differently. Critical thinking is enhanced by recognizing that one is operating with one of many possible models of reality – an awareness that also counters ethnocentrism.

By coupling language acquisition with culture learning, the tendency to reify cultural knowledge is reduced. Language as a representation system implies interaction and reciprocity, generating a parallel to the reciprocity of mutual worldview adaptation. In other words, language acquisition is inherently experiential, and it therefore models an experiential approach to intercultural learning.

While cultural worldview differences do not necessarily involve fundamental language differences, it is nevertheless necessary to be aware of different symbolic systems associated with the different worldviews. This semiotic approach ensures that cultural differences are being apprehended as “processes of organization,” not as reified bits of affect, behavior, and cognition.

The key concept from the Group 4 discussions was that language should be treated as an extended symbol system, and when it is, it is a natural part of intercultural learning.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORT:

Intercultural learning in non-Western host institutions

Facilitator/Recorder: Jerry Bookin-Weiner and Jim Ketterer.

The facilitators commented that non-Western destinations for students from the US and Europe generally included locations in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. In the groups there was some discussion of Asian and Latin American destinations, but very little mention of Sub-Saharan Africa. This probably reflects the current interests of exchange programs and/or their participants. The facilitators themselves were most familiar with US students in the Middle East, specifically Egypt and Jordan.

Who are students who seek less familiar destinations? In some cases, they are looking for “career-building” experiences. For instance, some US or European students may want an experience in China or India as both an important learning experience and as a good entry on their résumés. In other cases, students may be looking for an exotic experience – their “Lawrence of Arabia” moment. In these latter cases, students may be looking for an “authentic” experience of the less-developed country,

which they may believe would involve encountering noble savages living happily in poverty. Of course, this is an extension of old-fashioned colonial beliefs, which survive to a surprising degree even in the face of historical deconstruction and modern images. It should be the particular responsibility of sending institutions to recognize when such expectations exist and counter them with more realistic ones.

In the case of students going from relatively economically developed countries to less developed countries, there is the potential for power relations to be a factor in intercultural relations. This is particularly true if there has been a history of colonialism and/or currently-perceived conditions of imperialism. It is common for students from the more privileged circumstance (and often their sending institutions) to disavow the power discrepancy, but it is nevertheless a very real perception of both receiving institutions and students in the less-developed context. There are two implications of this power difference, particularly if it is not acknowledged. First, as noted by many researchers (e.g. Allport, Pettigrew), cross-cultural contact in the context of a strong power differential is likely to exacerbate stereotypes. Both sending and receiving institutions need to be aware of this danger and take steps to counter it, typically in one or both of the following ways: 1) Acknowledge the power difference and make it a topic of respectful dialogue; and 2) seek to reduce the difference as much as possible by matching exchange students and hosts by socio-economic class and educational level.

A particularly challenging situation in the Middle East concerns “interfaith dialogues.” Discussions of religion with exchange students are actively pursued by many Middle Eastern students, but, depending on their experience, the visiting students may not realize the limitations of that kind of dialogue. While debating the exact form of God is permissible, it is often not equally possible to defend an atheist view. This can be a significant learning experience for the exchange students, but if they are unaware of the constraints they may position themselves as so blasphemous as to curtail any further discussion. The implications for both sending and receiving educational institutions is to try to create more contextual awareness on everyone’s part regarding these issues.

In the summary report of this group, the suggestion was made that “Western” and “non-Western” were vague terms that bifurcated the world in not very useful ways. The facilitators agreed, while noting that the terms were used routinely by people in the Middle East to refer to the historical and current power differences between more economically developed nations such as the US and members of the EU and less economically developed countries such as Egypt and Jordan.

The key concept from the Group 5 discussions was that it is a good idea to know how others construe the world, including how they construe us. Ideally, such awareness can fuel dialogues that deepen both peoples’ understanding of one another.

DISCUSSION GROUP REPORT:

Intercultural learning in European host institutions

Facilitator/Recorder: Ida Castiglioni and Peter Praxmeier.

Erasmus and Comenius are like low-cost airlines: they open opportunities for contact, but they don’t provide many frills. Insofar as intercultural learning is a “frill” attached to mobility, it is not being pursued very aggressively by EU exchange programs.

English as a lingua franca for EU exchange programs is both a strength and a limit of the programs. It is a strength because many students are attracted to the English-learning opportunities associated with exchanges, but the need for English also limits participation of educational institutions in some countries (such as Italy) where English is not used routinely as an instructional language. Nevertheless, the need for a lingua franca is clear, particularly in shorter programs where language acquisition is unlikely. And English is probably better than competing local languages.

A big problem in European programs is that host institutions define the educational goals of exchange in very different ways. In a growing number of cases, exchange is linked to employment opportunities, but in other institutions it is linked to humanistic concerns of European and global citizenship. Intercultural learning may or may not be associated with either of these goals. There is a lack of shared language and terminology for referring to intercultural learning, so it is difficult to compare what institutions are doing. Lacking a coherent and shared conceptual frame, European institutions associate intercultural learning with geopolitical knowledge, political activism, language acquisition, exposure to alternative business models, human rights, or citizenship. Exchange programs in Europe are seldom associated with personal development as it they are more commonly in US exchange at the college level, although secondary programs such as AFS and, to a lesser degree, Comenius do focus on such development.

The key concept from the Group 6 discussions was the need to create credibility for intercultural learning in European educational institutions – to make it a meme. ✨

Milton J. Bennett, Ph.D., Director, IDRInstitute

Intercultural competence for all: living in a world of diversity

INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe has been actively involved in intercultural matters from back in the 70ies, mutual understanding being a precondition for living together in a Europe without dividing lines and for the promotion of democracy and the respect for human rights and dignity. As a contribution to this panel debate I would like to touch upon the following seven points:

- The link between the vision of society and the reality of educational provisions.
- The multiple purposes of education.
- The central role of competences for democracy.
- The Pestalozzi Programme, its content focus and its pedagogy.
- Intercultural education and the resistances we meet
- Possible ways forward and opportunities.
- Charter for communication of the Pestalozzi Programme Community of Practice.

1. VISION OF SOCIETY AND REALITY OF EDUCATION

Education shall be governed by the vision of society we want our children to live in says the Chilean sociologist Eugenio Tironi. And he is not the only one. However it raises two points: Which vision and why don't we follow this maxim? For the Council of Europe the vision of society is one where the chosen way of organising our living together is democracy, where the value basis, what tells us what is right and what is wrong, is based on lived human rights and where the rule of law provides a guarantee for the equal and transparent treatment of all. It is a society, which is sustainable, has more than one dimension: environmental, economical and societal.

In educational discourse over the past 30-40 years we have adopted a rather technocratic stance, where the main questions asked were about efficiency and not so much about the effectiveness of our education

systems and their practice. We have focused more on "Are we doing things right?" rather than on "Are we doing the right things?" We need to address, once again, the question of whether our education practice actually prepares individuals, learners, citizens for the vision of society, which we advocate (at least in political discourse and on paper). For this, a change of mind-set becomes necessary.

2. THE MULTIPLE PURPOSES OF EDUCATION

Education serves multiple purposes. The Council of Europe has identified four major purposes:

- Preparation for life as a democratic citizen.
- Preparation for the labour market.
- Personal development/ development of the personality
- Maintenance and advancement of a broad knowledge base.

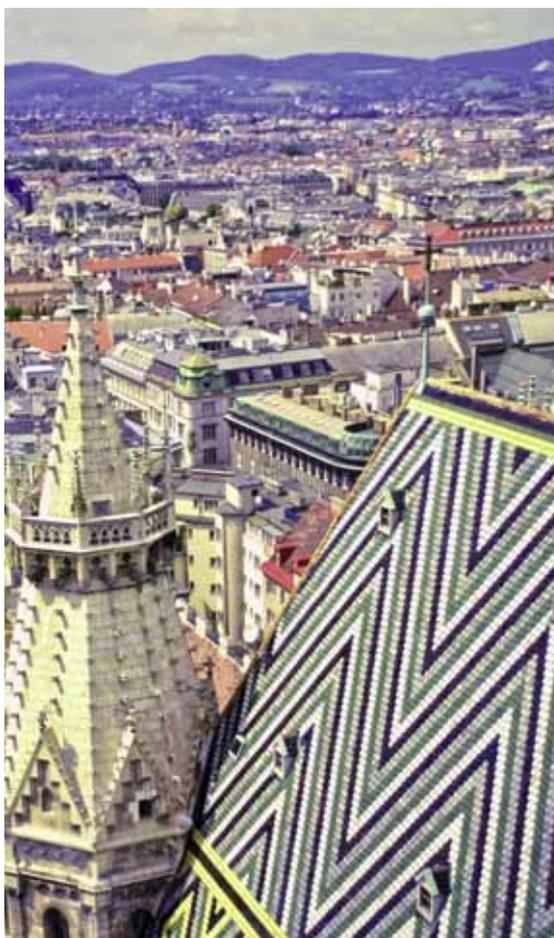
Out of these four it seems that only two are at the centre of current concerns of education policy: preparation for the labour market and, to a certain extent, the maintenance and advancement of the knowledge base. Preparation for life as a democratic citizen has been advocated for many years by the Council of Europe as a central element, but it has not yet reached sufficient consideration and the fourth dimension, personal development, is more or less left to the fringes of educational practice. It is however this fourth dimension, the development of the personality, the attitudes, the values, the behaviour, which is key to a society where democracy, mutual understanding and respect are central features.

3. THE CENTRAL ROLE OF COMPETENCES FOR DEMOCRACY

In today's education we deal to a very large extent with the development and acquisition of subject-specific competences: mathematics, geography, history, physics,

literature, etc. They are of course important and we need people to have a good amount of these competences. However, without the development of “transversal competences”, the subject-specific competences lead into a cul-de-sac. Most education laws do name and enumerate some of these transversal concerns, usually in the preamble. The purpose of education is to educate free, independent, critical citizens imbued with the values on which we found our democratic societies. The problem is, that in actual fact, in terms of education practice, curriculum time, progress over the years, these transversal concerns are more or less ignored. The following list names but the most central ones:

- The citizen.
- Observes critically and from different perspectives.
- Bases actions on human rights.
- Is able to act democratically and to cooperate.
- Is able to understand and live in diversity.
- Is able to understand the past and the present and project into the future.
- Is able to communicate successfully across all kinds of borders.
- Uses media environment, critically, profitably and responsibly.
- Continues the learning throughout her/ his life.



4. THE PESTALOZZI PROGRAMME, ITS CONTENT FOCUS AND ITS PEDAGOGY

The Pestalozzi Programme is the Council of Europe training programme for education professionals. The programme offers training activities for education professionals from 50 countries and it promotes and builds capacity around the transversal competences for democracy (see above) and an appropriate pedagogy. Appropriate in this context means a pedagogy, which reflects and models the values, attitudes, skills and knowledge it promotes and wished to develop. You cannot develop critical thinking in a learning space, which doesn't allow it; you cannot develop the willingness and ability to act democratically and to cooperate in a context of frontal teaching and isolated working processes and achievements. Learner-centeredness, learning-by-doing, collaborative, cooperative learning are at the centre of its approach to training. The art of teaching (Didactica, Comenius) needs to be complemented by the art of learning (Matetica, Comenius, S. Papert).

The training activities of the programme are as such always an intercultural experience since they gather participants from so many countries and mutual understanding beyond all borders (also those in the minds) is a central element of each training course. Apart from that, specific training for intercultural and diversity education, diverse worldviews and world knowledge, prevention of

discrimination, and similar themes are a regular part of the programme's offer.

Education practitioners as key actors for societal change: It is they who by their daily action make change happen, or not happen. As much by what they do and how they do it as by whom they are. Teachers and other education professionals are the profession with whom every individual spends more time than with any other. From the age of five, sometimes three, to at least 15 or 18, many even up to their twenties, everyday of the year, except for holidays. And later we return as parents and again we deal with education professionals.

When training courses are over, participants usually feel motivated and stimulated, and then they return to their daily professional lives and slowly this motivating experience of exchange and collaborative work with their peers fades into the background and even disappears. The Pestalozzi Programme uses a social networking platform to offer a continuation of the experience, of the possibility to continue exchanging, discussing and supporting each other in a growing Community of Practice.

5. INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AND THE RESISTANCES WE MEET

One of the biggest resistances resides in multiple misconceptions about culture, identity and the role of the individual as either recipient of a given culture or as an actor of cultural change. Culture is often seen as

a set of static elements forming a cultural, national identity as opposed to other national identities. Many metaphors have been used for diversity and they tend to reflect the thinking at the time.

“The fruit salad” as identifiable bits of difference put together in a bowl (with lots of sugar...) but remaining distinctly separated. “The pot of tea” as a tea bag giving flavour to the water in which it is thrown which conjures up a picture of assimilation rather than anything else and of a 1:1 relationship with a small teabag being the addition and a huge pot of water the receiver. I would rather opt for the image of the Orinoco where all the tiny little brooks, small rivers and tributaries create the Orinoco River (South America), something new, made up and continuously nourished by its smaller and larger tributaries.

Similarly the individual is seen as being either one or the other. Loyalty is demanded: “As an Austrian (British, German, French, Serbian, etc) you should, you cannot, you must, ...” Any mixture is suspicious or at least problematic. “You cannot belong to two, or more!”

There is the image of the individual as an empty, passive container, which is slowly filled by cultural items, which in the end make up the individual. Or the very widespread metaphor of the “patchwork” individual which accepts influences from different cultures but locates them in different parts of the person (in my heart I am Carinthian, my legs, my travels are English, my taste buds are French, my hands, my skills are in Russian, my cognition and critical thinking work in German, etc.)

Again I would rather opt for a different imagery, the one of personal growth, every influence met adding another layer to my personality, making it richer, fuller and more colourful.

Some people think that intercultural learning is something we do because of and for the others. However, the contrary is true. We ourselves have multi-faceted identities, belongings and loyalties. Intercultural competence and education helps us learn to manage these in a constructive way and thus become actors of cultural change.

There is also the obstacle and resistance provided by the smokescreen function of intercultural discourse. This can take the shape of an individual alibi “I would ... but my culture doesn't allow me” or intercultural differences can be used to mask the real issues behind a problem such as political, economic or social injustice.

And last but not least the often heard “Why me?” Who hasn't heard the following, or similar statements?

“Oh yes, very important, yes, someone should do it.”

“Totally agree, but ... I have so many things to do, and, it doesn't fit in my programme.”

“Of course we have to do this, and I would, but ... I do not have the ok from above (or, the others wouldn't understand...)”

6. POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD AND OPPORTUNITIES

The development of intercultural competence has to be fully integrated into mainstream curricula and education practice. It cannot be any longer relegated to a fringe existence of projects carried out by some motivated and concerned teachers and educators. All education professionals, teachers of all subjects need to make their contribution to the development of this competence. For this they need to a) develop it themselves and b) be trained to use their professional context to develop it in learners.

The current work of the Council of Europe on “Developing intercultural competence through education” intends to support this change. It shall propose a coherent picture of what intercultural competence is, why it is crucial to develop its elements through education and offer guidelines and support for how to go about it.

In the meantime, I propose to all those concerned with respectful and constructive communication across all borders to follow the example of the Pestalozzi Programme Community of Practice and adopt a Charter for Communication.

7. CHARTER FOR COMMUNICATION OF THE PESTALOZZI PROGRAMME COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

You agree to communicate in a respectful and constructive manner with the other members of the community, coming from a diversity of countries, from a diversity of socio-cultural and economic contexts in Europe and beyond. Mutual understanding is at the heart of our work, so we invite you to:

- a) Refrain from automatic assumptions, interpretations and judgements.
- b) Step outside your frame of reference.
- c) Be ready to explain the obvious.
- d) Listen and ask questions.
- e) Apply your skills of critical thinking.
- f) Exchange and discuss value judgements.
- g) Take accountability for your actions.
- h) Focus on solutions, not on problems.
- i) When in doubt, ask for guidance. ★

Josef Huber

Head of the Pestalozzi Programme, Council of Europe

Intercultural Learning – application and best practices in the EU programmes for schools

This article is a summary of information provided within my contribution to the panel discussion at the Third Forum on Intercultural Learning and Exchange organised in Vienna on 6 October 2012.

In my contribution, I focused on explaining the objectives and activities of the current European Union's Comenius programme (see part I), mainly Comenius Individual Pupil Mobility (see part II), and I provided some hints on the Commission proposal for the future programme in education (see part III).

I. COMENIUS PROGRAMME

Comenius is a sub-programme of the Lifelong Learning Programme. Its objectives have been set out in the Decision of the European Parliament and Council establishing the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013.

What are the aims of Comenius?

Specific objectives

- To develop knowledge and understanding among young people and educational staff of the diversity of European cultures and languages and its values.
- To help young people acquire the basic life-skills and competences necessary for their personal development, for future employment and for active European citizenship.

Operational objectives

- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of mobility involving pupils and educational staff in different Member States.
- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of partnerships between schools in different Member States, so as to involve at least 3 million pupils in joint educational activities during the period of the programme.



- To encourage the learning of modern foreign languages.
- To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice in lifelong learning.
- To enhance the quality and European dimension of teacher training.
- To support improvements in pedagogical approaches and school management.

Comenius supports the following activities:

- **Mobility of individuals to another European country**, which may include:
 - exchanges of pupils and staff within the context of a project or partnership,
 - participation in training activities for teachers and other educational staff,
 - preparatory visits for School Partnerships, Networks and Multilateral Projects and
 - assistantships for future teachers.

- **School Partnerships** between schools from different European countries, with a view to developing joint learning projects for pupils and teachers.
- **Comenius Regio Partnerships** between local and regional authorities with a role in school education. Their aim is to enrich the educational offer for school-aged young people by supporting the cooperation between school education authorities, schools and other educational providers in different European regions.
- The **eTwinning** initiative takes advantage of the possibilities offered by the Internet and digital media to promote European school cooperation, collaborative learning and project based pedagogy.
- Multilateral projects aim to develop, promote and disseminate new curricula, new teacher training courses or materials and new teaching methodologies, and to provide a framework for the organisation of mobility activities for student teachers.
- **Multilateral Networks** aim to promote European cooperation and innovation in specific thematic areas of particular importance to school education in a European context.
- **Accompanying measures** aim to support various activities which will clearly contribute to achieving the Comenius Programme objectives.

More information on the individual activities of the Comenius programme as well as school policies coordinated at EU level can be found on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/comenius_en.htm.

II. COMENIUS INDIVIDUAL PUPIL MOBILITY ACTION

Objectives of the action:

- to allow pupils to spend time at a partner school abroad, based on learning agreements, to contribute to their personal development;
- to enrich the teaching of the home and host schools.

Duration:

3 – 10 months (average 4,4 months).

Innovation for schools:

- develop common learning agreements with Comenius partner schools in Europe as a basis for the recognition of a study period abroad. This follows the developments of Erasmus, which first aimed at informal agreements and recognition by institutions involved;
- each Comenius school can apply for one or several pupils to go abroad through a pool procedure (i.e.

request for a number of pupil mobilities, without previous identification of pupils).

Impact:

- individuals: increased language, intercultural and transversal competencies;
- schools: enhanced school cooperation, improved teachers' knowledge of other education systems, better image in the local community;
- parents: increased interest and involvement in school activities;
- media: big interest of media (mainly local press) in the Comenius action - often described as "Junior Erasmus".

III. COMMISSION PROPOSAL "ERASMUS FOR ALL"

More information can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/education/comenius/individual_en.htm.

The Erasmus for All programme (2014-2020) is designed to be a flexible instrument meeting the needs of the full range of stakeholders involved in education, training, youth and sport across the EU. It will be open to participants to propose projects and mobility activities addressing particular needs within this broad framework.

Under Erasmus for All, the Commission proposes to reinforce the role of the school as an institution, with the aim of reinforcing the quality, impact and sustainability of the actions funded by the programme, as well as reducing the administrative workload.

Schools will develop a strategic approach through a European School Development Plan identifying their needs and objectives and request for funding of foreseen activities therein. The planned activities will be in line with the school needs identified in the Plan. This will contribute to a higher systemic impact, in particular in the growing number of countries that are developing strategic plans for the internationalization of schools.

Furthermore, the Plan should also provide information on the impact expected on individuals (pupils, teachers and other staff); on the institution and on how the school will integrate the competences and experiences acquired into the school curriculum and/or the school development plan. This approach should help the schools to tackle the individual needs of the institution, its teachers as well as the pupils.

For more information on Erasmus for All, please refer to <http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-for-all/> ✨

Kateřina Kapounov
European Commission, Directorate-General for
Education and Culture

The impact of mobility on schools

The impact of a long-term stay abroad on a young person – in terms of intercultural understanding, improved skills and competences and personal development – is well documented. But how does it influence both the hosting and sending institution as educational establishments? Does it lead to increased focus on mobility and international activities, or are other factors at play here?

In 2008, I was the external evaluator of the Comenius individual pupil mobility pilot project, which was carried out by EFIL and YFU for the European Commission in order to prepare for the introduction of a new strand of the Comenius programme, offering grant aid for long-term, individual stays abroad for young Europeans in secondary education. In order to gather data for the evaluation, I sent questionnaires to all the participating schools (both hosting and sending) and also visited a number of these in various European Member States, asking questions about their involvement in the project and the experiences they had harvested from this. Since only schools within existing Comenius school partnerships had been eligible for participation, my initial assumption was that international activities would play an important strategic role at organizational level and have adequate resources attached, but this was not the case for many schools. It turned out from the comments I got that the international activities in these – including mobility activities – were mainly initiated and implemented by individuals, and not as the result of any organisational strategy or policy. The driving force behind the activities was these individuals' personal conviction and dedication, and they did the job with very limited – and in some cases no – resources placed at their disposal by the school. Their motivation for doing this was often that they themselves had had a transnational experience at a formative time in their life – in fact, quite a few were former AFS- or YFU exchange students. But my impression was that the organisational impact of their efforts in many cases was negligible.

Committed individuals are essential for mobility schemes to succeed, and youth exchange organisations have indeed achieved remarkable results on the basis of the voluntary work provided by people who share a belief in the benefits of so called “learning mobility”.



But when mobility becomes part of an official policy in education and training and is to become a realistic opportunity for all young people, it is not a tenable proposition to rely on voluntary efforts to achieve this. I have in the course of my work both in this and other contexts observed the negative effects that such an approach may have in an institutional context. Firstly, the fact that the international activities are dependent on the initiative of individuals and not embedded in a strategy means that they often point in different directions and synergies are hard to exploit. Secondly, these individuals often become bottlenecks because there are not that many of them and there are limits to how much they can overcome. Thirdly, and perhaps most seriously, the fact that know-how and networks etc. are embedded in individuals rather than in the organisation means that the latter are exceedingly vulnerable in the event of a job-change, retirement or burn-out. One very pertinent remark I heard concerning this last point was that the loss of such a person to an organisation was equivalent to the “burning of the library” – all knowledge is erased, and has to be built up again from afresh. It is therefore evident to me that if we want to achieve the ambitions with learning mobility, it must necessarily be an integral part of a dedicated internationalisation strategy of educational establishments. This conclusion is also supported by evidence from other studies. One such that I would like to go into some depth with here concerns a recent study of the international activities of Danish vocational schools¹.

¹ “Erhvervsskolernes internationale aktiviteter”, Styrelsen for Universiteter og Internationalisering, Copenhagen 2011.
<http://www.iu.dk/publikationer/2012/erhvervsskolernes-internationale-aktiviteter>

The study was carried out in 2011 and was an attempt to follow up on a change in national legislation on vocational education and training from 2008, which stipulated that vocational schools must henceforth incorporate an international dimension in their programmes, and that students must acquire competences that enable them to get by in a globalised society. In connection with this legislation, a national “Council for the Internationalisation of Education and Training” was set up, and one of their first tasks was to formulate concrete recommendations as to how schools could achieve this. A key recommendation was that schools should formulate a strategy and an action plan for internationalisation, which should be concrete and measurable, anchored in the overall mission statement of the institution, and provided with the necessary means and managerial support for its implementation. The 2011-study was carried out to see to what extent this had happened, and how the nature and scope of their international activities were affected by this in the two years since the change in legislation was implemented.

The general conclusion was that international projects and mobility now occupy a prominent position on the agenda of Danish vocational schools. Nearly all (in fact, 86%) of the schools now had an international strategy; either as a component of the overall school strategy or as a stand-alone strategy exclusively concerned with internationalisation. The term “strategy” is, of course, somewhat elastic, and the study did not investigate and analyse individual strategies to try and judge the extent to which these were merely “balcony declarations” of intent rather than detailed and measurable strategies. However, it is significant that over half (55%) of the schools indicated that they, in addition to the strategy, also formulated annual or multiannual action plans with concrete steps and allocations of resources concerning how to convert the aims of the strategy into reality.

Mobility – in the shape of school stays and placements in public and private enterprises – was by far the most popular international activity, and practically all schools (97%) sent students abroad regularly. Only 59% had received students from



abroad, however. Also teachers were mobile – the corresponding figures are 82 and 30% respectively. In absolute figures, these percentages are somewhat less impressive, and only few schools sent more than 50 students abroad annually. For teachers, numbers are much lower – the majority of schools reported that their quota of outgoing teachers was between 1-5 annually. What is really interesting, however, is the development of these activities in the two years since the legislation came into force: 82% of the schools report that they had increased the number of students going abroad within that period, 39% had received more students from abroad, 47% had sent more teachers abroad, and 54% report that they now had a significantly stronger international focus in their programmes than before. Equally interesting, perhaps, is their motivation for engaging in international projects and mobility: 77% report as the most important outcome is learning and competence development in students, but almost just as many (69%) see international activities as a necessary prerequisite for the overall development of the school. They explicitly recognise, in other words, that contact with other countries and cultures is an important factor in developing and shaping their organisational profile.

My conclusion from this is, as stated above, that individual mobility and the efforts of dedicated individuals in itself does not lead to organisational change in educational establishments. It has to be backed up by strategic interventions. If we want to boost mobility and make it an opportunity for all, this is the point where pressure (either in the shape of sticks or carrots) has to be applied. This view may not be shared by all. Funding is thus often highlighted as the major obstacle for a further expansion of mobility, but I'm not convinced of this. Funds in the European action programmes – the LifeLong Learning programme and Youth in Action – are at a higher level than ever, and a recent European-level study has identified nearly 1000 national or bi-national schemes dedicated to mobility² which can co-finance

or in other ways complement these. Of course, it can be argued that it never is enough, and there are admittedly significant differences between the situations in individual European countries – but in my opinion funding is, on the whole, not a burning issue. In recent years, significant headway has furthermore been made concerning the abolition of other legal and administrative barriers to mobility – e.g. in the field of recognition.

Finally, by way of conclusion, a further question to add to the ones that I asked at the beginning of this text: What is the role, then, of the voluntary youth exchange organisations, when the task of boosting mobility is shifted to the strategic level in schools and training centres? I believe there are two important functions that the voluntary organisations can fulfil:

Firstly, it is within the framework of the voluntary organisations that many of the “committed individuals” are born and bred, which will always be necessary when it comes to transposing strategy to reality within educational establishments.

Secondly, the youth exchange organisations are vital repositories of knowledge and know-how about mobility as a pedagogical tool, which newer actors and stakeholders in the field can tap into and benefit from. Youth exchange organisations know – in many cases from painful experience – that learning mobility is not just a matter of sending young people out and getting them back alive. In order to release the learning potential, careful interventions before, during and after the stay abroad are required in terms of preparation, accompaniment and debriefing. Despite the presence of this knowledge and experience, many educational establishments are now coming on to the field and are spending their resources reinventing the wheel in this respect, unaware of the expertise that has already been built up - unless, of course, they happen to have a former exchange student or someone engaged in voluntary youth exchange work in their staff. ✨

Søren Kristensen, PhD

² “Study on mobility developments in school education, vocational education and training, adult education and youth exchanges”.
http://ec.europa.eu/education/more-information/reports-and-studies_en.htm

Discussion Group Report: Intercultural Training for Teachers

Presenter: Hilda Fanta Scheiner

Facilitator/Recorder: Darla K. Deardorff



- Establish trust within schools.
- Find channels of promoting international within and beyond school (ie find AFSers within schools, promote schools in local media).
- Provide concrete tools to teachers.
- Base tools and training on theoretical work/research.
- Broaden our concept of intercultural assessment.
- Link with social and global contexts (to show relevance of intercultural learning).
- Approach intercultural learning as being collegial, cooperative effort (not just an individual effort).
- Utilize technology in intercultural learning (ie in connecting classrooms on different continents).
- Consider evidence of intercultural learning.
- Focus on next generation of teachers and new projects being developed.
- Recognize students' self worth- demonstrate respect for their cultures in the classroom.
- Address intercultural learning daily in the classroom.
- Don't be afraid to experiment in the classroom.
- Define one's role as teacher more broadly – ie beyond transmitting subject knowledge.
- Utilize subject teachers to help train teachers in intercultural.
- Recognize importance of taking teachers out of their comfort zone so they experience what students experience.
- Utilize diversity in the community – in the classroom and for teacher training.
- Focus on student teacher training/education (pre-service).
- Immerse selves in what we want students to do.
- Suggestion for the future: Require international time abroad for all pre-service teachers.
- Focus on ease of transition into schools (ie connect AFS students to host students in advance).
- Link to immigrant students.
- Consider importance of teacher preparation in regard to intercultural learning.
- Designate official AFS partner schools.
- Have local student mentors for exchange students. ✨

Discussion Group Report: AFS and Schools in Germany: Observations on and Interventions for a Natural but Troubled Relationship

Presenters: Uli Zeuschel and Leoni Rettig
Facilitator/Recorder: Bruce La Brack

This session was focused upon how AFS Germany currently works with the German secondary school system as a supportive partner to enhance the experience of AFS students, as well as contributes to general internationalization efforts including specifically promoting intercultural communication in the classroom. The overall process is currently guided by *AFS Germany Strategy 2015*. It seeks to position AFS as a preferred partner in the field of intercultural training through providing schools with models and modules that will benefit not only the AFS exchange student participants, but extend the benefits into individual classrooms throughout the country's secondary educational institutions.

The presenters reviewed the current resources devoted to this effort by AFS Germany, which are substantial, including: a School Relations Staff with a National Coordinator and nine Regional School Coordinators; a network of 109 local committees; young volunteer AFS 'peer' instructors; train-the-trainer workshops; and toolboxes and mechanisms to engage teachers throughout the school year. Ongoing formal collaboration opportunities already exist with AFS Partner Schools through such activities as in-service teacher training, classroom presentations by hosted students, and making intercultural information and training available more broadly. AFS Germany also participates in a nationwide pilot program on collaboration of schools and youth organizations on fostering intercultural learning in schools, as well as in concept development projects

coordinated by the Researcher-Practitioner-Dialogue on International Youth Work.

The potential corresponding benefits of such activities for both AFS and the secondary schools are considerable. For AFS, they are likely to result in: increasing its educational legitimacy and visibility; the ability to reach new target groups; recruiting host families and new volunteers (from among teachers and parents); and strengthening and embedding the exchange experience as part of a broader concerns related to citizenship and intercultural issues faced by increasingly diverse societies. For secondary schools collaborating with AFS could help by: raising school profiles as 'internationally-oriented'; fulfilling content requirements for intercultural school education; providing interesting non-formal programming for both AFS students and their classmates; and providing methodological tools and materials that can be integrated into the curriculum.

However, there are some significant structural and logistical barriers to carrying out these tasks. As the presenters pointed out, the relatively intense, unique kind of internal training AFS normally provides for incoming and outgoing exchange students cannot be directly replicated or transferred. Rather, it must be thoughtfully adapted in timing, content, length, and sequencing to a public secondary school classroom context. For example, AFS trainings are often highly focused, concentrated events that are comprised largely of *voluntary* participants. In addition, AFS believes in treating students and young



adults as both experts and learners. In contrast, school students are *required* to be there, and their primary role is acquiring and mastering content as a learner. Hence, the basic instructional paradigms can sometimes conflict. In the end, we considered that the characterization of the relationship as ‘troubled’ could actually be more neutrally described as ‘problematical’, stressing that whatever difficulties remain are amenable to gradual adaptation and incremental improvement.

There is a great deal of valuable, informal, and lasting interaction experienced by AFS program participants within their year-long cross-cultural exchange. This is difficult to ‘plan’. Schools are largely required to follow formal, detailed, programmatic guidelines. Therefore, integrating the essence of AFS intercultural training and insights into such classroom settings requires well-motivated teachers—ones who both understand the educational value of a cultural approach to difference, and who also have the creativity to adapt such materials into their lesson plans and classroom activities. While this has been accomplished in many instances, embedding it into a significant number of schools throughout the country remains a challenge.

There were excellent discussions around a wide range of topics. While many applauded the ambitious

scope of the current activities and efforts, there were a few cautions expressed that it might be straying too far from the scope and goals of the original vision of AFS. Of particular concern was the formation of the organization’s consulting unit, *InterCultur* (gGmbH), which some felt might blur the public perception of AFS-Germany as a volunteer-driven organization with that of a more professional agency. Nevertheless, there was a general consensus that ‘going beyond just being a student exchange organization’ was an idea worth exploring, as long as the core activities of AFS are maintained.

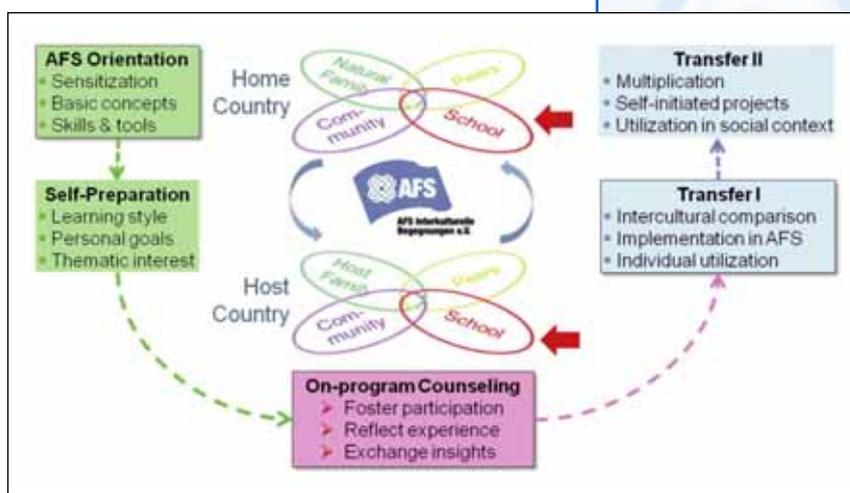
Moreover, the general audience reactions reflected an appreciation for the detail, clarity, complexity, consistency, philosophic and administrative coherence of AFS-Germany’s approach to engaging the secondary school system—both in support of AFS-hosted exchange participants and their classmates. Everyone agreed that the key to future success is persistence in seeking expanded opportunities for collaborative partnerships between AFS and German secondary school teachers and principals for everyone’s mutual benefit. After all, as the presenters noted at the beginning of the session, schools are indeed a natural partner of AFS, and a critical component of every AFS exchange student’s cross-cultural experience – during the sojourn and beyond.

Discussion Group Report: The Impact of Exchange Programs on Schools

A central thesis of the workshop “AFS and Schools in Germany” was the considerable potential that lies in the collaboration of formal and non-formal education in the context of exchange programs. The following diagram outlines that potential from the perspective of the exchange organization: Schools in the host country as well as in the home country constitute one of four major fields of orientation, experience, and transfer – other fields being the host and natural families, peers, and the civic community.

The term “student exchange” certainly implies that school plays an important part in the pro-gram cycle from pre-departure orientation, on-program counseling to the immediate transfer upon return. That direct and individual “Transfer I” is fostered by AFS debriefing workshops for returnees, and finds ample opportunity in volunteer activities with local AFS committees. The experience in Germany shows, however, that the influence of “fresh returnees” on their home school environment is limited primarily to subject-related matters and to taking care of hosted foreign students – in both cases individual initiatives that require receptive and interested teachers to generate educational impact, e.g. by integrating personal experiences, geographic or language expertise into classes. The same holds true for impacts on hosting schools during the sojourn: exchange students are regarded as a more or less exotic individual resource in classroom discussions or in the occasional information event on exchange opportunities.

A more profound and sustained impact of educational exchanges at the organizational level of schools, however, requires an infrastructure for intercultural learning at the schools as institutions. That kind of infrastructure should not only provide educational content (i.e. the “what” of education) but also infuse the ways of learning, the social interaction, perhaps even the architecture of schools (i.e. the “how” of education). International schools, so-called “*Europa-*



Schulen”, and schools with a decidedly international/intercultural profile are examples, where not only personally committed individuals, temporary projects, or specific branches (such as bilingual classes) practice intercultural learning in formal and non-formal ways.

Recent demands on the German school system to open up to the surrounding communities, to integrate non-formal and informal aspects of learning, and to be more inclusive for students with special needs provide a realm of opportunities for collaboration with educational exchange organizations: AFS Germany as a national not-for-profit organization with local representation in well over 100 committees, with a network of some 3,500 volunteers of all ages, and with a newly created staff of regional school coordinators seems to be in a particularly favorable position to collaborate with schools as institutions to develop intercultural learning infrastructures. First steps have already been taken, such as offering in-service teacher training through *InterCulture* (the intercultural consulting unit of AFS Germany), organizing information events at schools through school coordinators and volunteers from local AFS committees, and participating in a nationwide pilot program (*IKUS – Interkulturelles Lernen und Schule*) on col-



laboration of schools and international youth organizations. More efforts will be required, however, to align the different educational logics of German schools, firmly rooted in the paradigm of formal learning, and of non-formal educational organizations such as AFS, subscribing to principles of voluntary participation, empowerment of learners for self-organization, and life-long learning. Bridging these different logics in specific cooperation projects represents an “intercultural encounter” in itself, but could result in a co-developmental process: it would provide schools with some urgently needed ways to deal with cultural diversity constructively, and it would help to implement AFS Germany’s strategic aim to foster the application of intercultural learning in citizenship and civic education.

Let me conclude with some concrete perspectives to work towards these lofty goals at different levels:

- Nation-wide lobbying efforts by AJA (*Arbeitskreis gemeinnütziger Jugendaustauschorganisationen*),

the National Association of not-for-profit Exchange Organizations, to emphasize the importance of international student exchanges even in times of reducing the duration of secondary schooling at the *Gymnasium* level.

- Organizational consulting for schools by *InterCulture* to develop intercultural resources and infrastructure according to specific needs of each school, combined with “Transfer II” efforts of experienced AFS returnees as committed parents, teachers, or local actors.
- Learning contracts between teachers and program participants to pursue specified topics during their exchange sojourn and to apply them in their home school upon return; these learning contracts could be prepared, monitored, and evaluated by AFS as part of pre-departure orientations, on-program counseling, and debriefing workshops upon return. ✨

Discussion Group Report:

The performance of foreign pupils in Italian schools

Presenter: Sabrina Brunetti

Facilitator/Recorder: Ingeborg Suppin-Fabisch

Summary of content:

Sabrina Brunetti gave a very interesting presentation on the study that was conducted in Italian schools to measure the success of hosted participants in schools.

Reason for this study:

Exchange students are perceived as a problem/extra burden and it was hoped that through the research following opportunities could develop:

- to determine “what is success” in schools
- learn about the problems exchange students have in the beginning
- what helps the integration process?

The **outcome** of the study has shown clearly that the following steps should be undertaken in order to ensure a smooth integration and successful exchange school year.

1. Students have to learn the basics of the language before the program starts. This helps all parties involved to integrate the exchange student effectively.
2. First month in school is crucial for all exchange students – provide them with a nice welcome and clear guidelines.
3. Re-think the first days in school: make sure that students are “seen”, “heard” and “welcomed” by classmates and teachers: create a link between AFS – teachers – student by using the first days for orientation on the local level with volunteers and returnees.
4. Ask returnees and hosted students who has helped them most during their exchange year/preparation

thereof to contact the “right” teachers in the first place.

5. Raise awareness in schools by giving/offering training to teachers:
 - exercises for classrooms with exchange students;
 - biggest problem is the lack of knowledge among teachers and not necessarily “ignorance”;
 - the more teachers know how to cope with exchange students and their challenges the more everyone becomes motivated → and motivation is one of the key factors of success according to the Italian study.
6. Create a positive attitude towards exchange students among teachers by finding interested and positive teachers. This way teachers become motivated and the focus doesn't concentrate on recognition/credits but makes them realize that a successful integration of students is extremely rewarding and asset to everyone involved.

Additional recommendations were also given by the researchers of the study, such as finding most appropriate schools, providing easy learning tools and appointing an AFS tutors in each school or at least each school district. These are not fully applicable for every AFS Partner but sure worthwhile giving some of the additional recommendations a serious thought. On the other hand the six steps mentioned above should be implemented in every AFS organization in order to establish well working school relations and as a consequence guarantee exchange students and schools a successful school year. ✨



Discussion Group Report: ESN survey data on intercultural learning for university students on Erasmus Exchanges

**Presenter: Veeli Oeslg, Erasmus Student Network
Facilitator/Recorder: Kumiko Torikai**

In the first part of the presentation, the activities by student volunteers of ESN (Erasmus Student Network), a non-profit organization to help with Erasmus Exchanges, were introduced, and in the second part, results of a survey conducted by ENS were explained.

ENS activities are mainly categorized in three kinds : 1) social Erasmus aims at offering Erasmus students opportunities to come in contact with local communities ; 2) Erasmus in schools aims at sending Erasmus students to secondary school classrooms where they teach their languages and socio-cultural background of their own countries, thus connecting them with secondary school students in the community; 3) Offering contacts with local students by way of tandem(reciprocal teaching of the language of an Erasmus student and the local language) as well as mentoring by local students.

Survey conducted with Erasmus students showed positive outcome of their stay in a different country. For example, 82% of the respondents answered that they felt at ease in working in different cultural backgrounds, 60% replied that they learned to work in a team, 92% found they were able to adapt to new situations more easily, and 93% responded that they felt comfortable in communication with people from different countries.

In spite of such positive results, there are some problems to be solved. One is to get more faculty members involved within a host university. Another is accommodation. In some countries, students live separated from local students, which can be

problematic. Erasmus students clearly benefit from having contacts with local students. The survey results show that the more contact students have with a local community, their proficiency in a local language increases, leading to better understanding of people in the community. As such, the program will be further strengthened if students are placed near local students.

As for surveys, the task now seems to be twofold. Firstly, it is absolutely necessary to ensure reliability and validity in surveys with adequate support from experts in academia. Secondly, so far the success of Erasmus Exchanges seems to have been measured only by the number of participants, and what is needed is the evaluation of the content of the program to identify what the benefits are and what should be improved. For this purpose, longitudinal, qualitative research can be employed, such as interviews with content analysis and/or analysis of journals by students. And here, research and practice could join hands to enable reflection of this promising program on a wide scale.

It was reported that a major motivation for students to participate in Erasmus Exchanges is employment. Notwithstanding, the ultimate goal for the program is enhanced intercultural learning by mobility, which will surely form a solid foundation for peace and democracy. It is hoped that the Erasmus Exchanges will set an example for other exchange programs in other parts of the world as well in order to make the global community truly sustainable. *

Coordinating team

Milton J. Bennett, Ph.D. founded and directs the Intercultural Development Research Institute located in Portland, Oregon and Milano, Italy (<http://www.idrinstitute.org>). He is also an adjunct professor of intercultural communication at the University of Milano-Bicocca and a consultant on the topic to corporations, universities, and exchange organizations in Europe, Asia, and the US. Dr. Bennett originated the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, which has been used to guide training and research in the field since 1986. A completely revised version of his textbook, *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication*, was published this year in Chinese by Peking University Press and is pending in English from Intercultural Press.

Paul Claes, born in Belgium, holds a Master degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Leuven, Belgium. In 2006, after 20 years of working in the field of international development co-operation (13 of which were spent in Zimbabwe), he became Secretary-General of EFIL, the Europe-an Federation for Intercultural

Learning, with seat in Brussels. He's active as an AFS volunteer in his local chapter, a sending parent of two (2007 and 2012), and hosted a student from Thailand (2007).

Johanna Nemeth, born in Vienna, Exchange Student in Palo Alto/California with ICYE, PhD in History. Department Chief in the "Österreichischer Kultur-Service" (Association founded by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education). Secretary General of AFS Austria since 1991 and serving on multifold international and European committees.

Roberto Ruffino, is the Secretary General of Intercultura and the honorary Chairman of EFIL, the European Federation for Intercultural Learning. In 2007 he was one of the founders of the Intercultura Foundation. In assigning him an honorary doctor degree in education sciences, the University of Padua defined him "an entrepreneurial leader in the field of intercultural education, that he has contributed to introduce into the schools of Italy".

Panelists, group facilitators and guest speakers

Jerome B. Bookin-Weiner earned his PhD in modern Middle East/North African history at Columbia University. He has worked in international education at Old Dominion University, Bentley University, Colorado State University, and The Scholar Ship. Since 2007 he serves as Director of Education Abroad at AMIDEAST, organizing experiences in the Arab world for American high school and undergraduate students.

Sabrina Brunetti, has been working for Intercultura since 1991 as the assistant to the Secretary General. She is currently in charge of supervising the projects of the Intercultura Foundation and of keeping in touch with the institutions that cooperate with the Foundation.

Ida Castiglioni is a professor of intercultural communication in the graduate program of intercultural relations in the Department of Sociology, University of Milano-Bicocca, where she is a member of the Erasmus Exchange Commission. She is also a psychotherapist and an adjunct faculty member of the Institute of Somatic Psychology in Milano, and she regularly consults with corporations and public institutions in Europe, Africa, and the Russian Federation. Dott. Castiglioni's current books (in Italian) are *Intercultural Communication: Competence and Practice* (Carocci Editore, Roma) and *There is a Difference: The Management of Diversity in the Organization of Social Services and Healthcare* (Franco Angeli Press).

Kenneth Cushner, Ph.D. is Professor of Multicultural and International Teacher Education at Kent State University, Ohio, USA. He is author of *Human Diversity in Education: An Intercultural Approach* (McGraw-Hill, 7th ed. 2012) and *Intercultural Interactions: A Practical Guide*, 2nd edition (with Richard Brislin, Sage Publications, 1996). A former East-West Center scholar, Dr. Cushner is a Founding Fellow and past-president of the International Academy for Intercultural Research; was a Fulbright Scholar to Sweden in 2008; coordinated the Teachers at Sea program for Semester at Sea (summers of 2010 and 2011); and currently serves as director of COST – the Consortium for Overseas Student Teaching.

Darla Daerdorff is currently Executive Director of the Association of International Education Administrators, a national professional organisation based at Duke University, where she is a Re-search Scholar in Education. In addition, she is Visiting Professor at Leeds-Metropolitan University (UK), and is on faculty of the Summer Institute of Intercultural Communication in Portland, Ore-gon. She receives numerous invitations from around the world to speak and consult on her research on intercultural competence and assessment, as well as on global leadership and internationalisation issues and is a noted expert on these topics. Dr Deardorff has published widely on topics in international education and intercultural learning/assessment, including editor of 'The SAGE Hand-book of Intercultural Competence,' co-editor of 'The SAGE Handbook of International Education', 'Building Cultural Competence' and author of 'Beneath the Tip of the Iceberg.'

Hilda Fanta-Scheiner is Professor and Teacher Trainer at University College of Teacher Education -UCTE Carinthia, Viktor Frankl UC for English, Leadership and Neuro-Pedagogy, Emotional, Social & Cognitive Intelligent Teaching/Thinking. Adj. Prof. at Carinthia University of Applied Science ? CUAS for Social and Communicative Competence and Rhetoric. Lecturer at Alps-Adriatic University for Writing in English. Active Volunteer for AFS for the last 30 years.

Alvino E. Fantini, Ph.D., holds degrees in anthropology and applied linguistics and has been involved in intercultural communication and language education for over 45 years. A Professor Emeritus of the SIT Graduate Institute, he has conducted significant research, published widely, and is past president of SIETAR International and recipient of its highest award. He currently serves as an international consultant.

Josef Huber works in the Education Department of the Council of Europe, where he is currently responsible for activities in the field of intercultural education and for the Pestalozzi Programme, the Council of Europe programme for the training of education professionals. Up until July 2006 he was involved in the Council's Higher Education and Research Division and was responsible for the organisation of two Higher Education fora on higher education governance (2005) and on the responsibility of higher education for a democratic culture (2006) and was co-editor of the ensuing publications. From 1998 to 2004, as Head of Programmes and Deputy Executive Director of the European Centre for Modern Languages he was responsible for the centre's programme of activities and research and development projects and its publications series on language learning and teaching, intercultural communication and language education policy. He was involved in language education policy development by the Austrian Ministry of Education between 1992 and 1998 and was a language teacher in schools and at universities in Austria and abroad before that.

Kateřina Kapounov Bavorova. After working as a teacher of foreign languages for almost ten years in secondary schools in the Czech Republic and UK, she joined the Brussels-based organisation European Schoolnet as a pedagogical advisor for on-line cooperation among European schools. For three years, she worked on various EU projects, such as eTwinning, Spring Day in Europe and myEurope. In 2007, she joined the European Commission, where she has managed the Co-menius mobility actions for pupils, future teachers and teachers.

James Ketterer is based in Cairo and serves as Country Director of AMIDEAST Egypt, an American non-profit organization engaged in international education, training and development activities in the Middle East and North Africa. He previously served as Vice Chancellor for Policy and Planning of the State University of New York (SUNY) and the director of the SUNY Center for International Development. He also worked on development projects in Africa and the Middle East and served in government in Washington and New York.

Søren Kristensen is a Danish free-lance researcher, who has worked extensively with learning mobility in a context of education, training and youth. He is a former director of the Danish National Centre for the Development of Vocational Education and Training, and has also worked as a project manager for Cedefop in Thessaloniki, Greece. In 2004, he published the study "Learning by leaving" on mobility in vocational education and training, which is also the title of his PhD-thesis. In 2008, he conducted the external evaluation of the Comenius pilot project on individual pupil mobility.

Tom Kurz is deputy executive director of Experiment Germany. He focuses on training for volunteers, new aspects of intercultural learning and their implementation, new program and project development as well as intercultural youth work in Germany. During his education in North American Cultural Studies at the University of Bonn and the University of Washington in Seattle he has also been active as a volunteer for Experiment Germany.

Bruce La Brack, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and International Studies at the School of International Studies, University of the Pacific, Stockton, CA, USA, where he developed their integrated orientation and reentry programs for study abroad. He has been researching, publishing about, and providing training related to international transitions issues for over thirty years in South Asia, North America, and East Asia. He is the primary writer and editor of the popular "What's Up with Culture?" web site, an on-line

cultural training resource for US-American study abroad students and was the 2012 recipient of the Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship Award for Innovative Research & Scholarship in Internationalization from NAFSA.

Melissa Liles, Chief Education Officer. Ms. Liles, who is based in New York, oversees AFS's education efforts worldwide. She directs AFS's global intercultural learning initiatives and outreach, working with expert academics and practitioners as well as AFS leaders in over 50 countries.

Kris Hemming Lou, Ph.D. has been director of international education and associate professor of international studies at Willamette University since 2003. He presents frequently on issues of intercultural learning abroad and has taught in the United States, Austria, and Japan. Kris is CEO of Hemming & Weber Consulting, LLC, which provides intercultural consulting services to educational institutions.

Veeli Oeselg was the Vice President of Erasmus Student Network (ESN) in 2009/2010 and is still involved in the organisation. Nowadays she is the member of the Alumni Board and Liaison Officer for ESN at the European Civil Society of Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL). Thanks to her involvement in ESN, she has a broad knowledge and expertise on learning mobility and intercultural learning, and has been presenting on these topics at various conference on behalf of ESN. E.g. Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM), Erasmus Coordinators Conference (ERACON).

Peter Praxmeier (lic. oec. publ., University of Zurich; Docteur ès sciences politiques, University of Geneva) is Coordinating Secretary of EMMICC (European Master in Intercultural Communication) at Università della Svizzera italiana (USI) in Lugano, Switzerland. His research focus is Intercultural Communication for Conflict Transformation, on which he teaches at USI and at other universities in Europe. He also gives courses and seminars, for a variety of publics (tourism operators, health practitioners, public officials), in the field of professional and intercultural communication.

Liisa Salo-Lee, Ph.D., Prof.emer. (University of Jyväskylä, Finland) has a wide international and multicultural work and life experience in different countries and continents. She is Dr.h.c. of Universidade Aberta (Lisbon) and Associate Professor of NIAS (Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Copenhagen). She has been President of SIETAR Europa, head of the German Cultural Institute (Goethe Institut) in Campina Grande (Brazil) and Director of the Finnish Cultural Institute in Madrid. Her current research interests include intercultural competence in professional contexts, intercultural dialogic learning, multicultural leadership and teamwork.

Federica Santini, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of Italian, coordinates the Italian Program, and is affiliated to the GWST Program. She teaches courses in Italian language, culture, and literature at all levels as well as in gender and women's studies, and directs the Study Abroad Program in Siena, Italy. Her articles and translations have appeared in numerous publications in the United States and Italy, including journals as *L'anello che non tiene*, *Italian Culture*, and *L'Illuminista*. Among her works are published articles on Giacomo Leopardi, Amelia Rosselli, and Andrea Zanzotto.

Victor Savicki is Professor of Psychology Emeritus from Western Oregon University. His expertise spans clinical, industrial/organizational, and cross-cultural psychology. He has taught in study abroad settings many times and has several publications addressing intercultural adjustment, and stress and coping in cross-cultural contexts, including the books *Burnout Across Thirteen Cultures*, (2002), and *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation* (2008).

Sabine Smith earned her M.A. in American, German, and Latin American Studies at Mainz University, and her Ph.D. in German and Gender Studies at the University of California at Davis. She is Professor of German Studies at Kennesaw State University on the outskirts of Atlanta, GA. Her research focuses on experiential learning in the development of foreign language proficiency

and intercultural competence. She recently co-edited the volume "Bridging Cultures: International Women Transforming the US Academy" w/ her colleagues Sarah Robbins and Federica Santini.

Ingeborg Suppin-Fabisch, works for AFS Austria since 1996. She started out as a sending co-ordinator and then continued for 15 years as the program director focusing on school relations. Since 2011 she changed position from the operational field to the more strategic field focusing on implementation of "intercultural learning" components throughout the AFS program, marketing and communication. Ingeborg is married and has two daughters aged 12 and 8 years old.

Kumiko Torikai, Ph.D. Professor and the founding dean of the Graduate School of Intercultural Communication, Rikkyo University, Japan. Visiting professor, National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics. Member of the Science Council of Japan. Member of AFS Educational Council.

Gary Weaver is the Executive Director of the Intercultural Management Institute and a Professor of International Communication in the School of International Service at the American University in Washington, DC. He is author of *Culture, Communication and Conflict* and co-author of *America's Midlife Crisis: The Future of a Troubled Superpower* and the publisher of the *Intercultural Management Quarterly*.

Gabriele Weber Bosley is Director of International Programs and Professor of Global Languages and Cultures at Bellarmine University, has led a variety of campus-wide curricular initiatives, including the current SACS/QEP internationalization campaign. She designed Bellarmine's trans-curricular International Studies degree, a minor in International Studies, and is the founding chair of the Global Languages and Cultures Department which she chaired from 1998 to 2008, as well as the founding Director of BU's International Programs Office, and has served in that capacity since 1995.



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