Separation vs. Integration: Challenges of Bridging Cultural Contrasts

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Liisa Salo-Lee

The relationship between culture and communication is the core of Intercultural Communication research agenda. The concept of ‘culture’ varies, however, depending on the many approaches which this multidisciplinary field of investigation is made of. Increasing global and local multiculturalism, mobility, development of technology, among others, are challenging and changing our understanding of how cultural influences are manifested in communication, and what does it take to be interculturally competent today. We are moving from the essentialistic views of culture to more constructivistic approaches, questioning the earlier conceptual bases, metaphors and terminology. While looking for the new scientific paradigms, models and tools for practical applications, we are engaging, true to our academic traditions of the argument model of public discourse, in the polarizations of the same kind we are accusing our predecessors - those “essentialists” - for. The field of Intercultural Communication has reached the age of maturity as an academic field of its own. Would it not be time for us interculturalists now to move from the “argument culture” to a culture of dialogue? To walk the talk? To make Intercultural Communication truly to a field which would make an impact, also in practice?

Panel: Definition of Culture

Cultural change and Intercultural Communication

Jens Allwood

The paper has the following parts:
1. The paper starts with definitions of culture, intercultural communication and cultural change.
2. Based on these definitions, the following four dimensions of cultural change are suggested and exemplified
   (i) Changes in patterns of thinking
   (ii) Changes in patterns of behavior and action
   (iii) Changes in patterns of Artifact manufacture and use
   (iv) Changes in patterns of Social and natural environment
3. There is then a discussion of the interdependence of the four dimensions, i.e. how they might influence each other. This is followed by a discussion of how patterns of communication might change and of how such changes can be related to changes of culture.
Finally, changes of culture and changes in communication patterns are discussed in terms of the possible effects on intercultural communication.

Is Culture Something We Have or Something We Do?

Øyvind Dahl

From Descriptive to Dynamic Intercultural Communication. The descriptive understanding of culture is essentialist. One assumes that a group of people share values, codes and norms – that it is the “collective programming of the mind” (Hofstede) that separates one group from another. Culture is according to this understanding something people have. People belong to this or that culture, and once one has learned the cultural codes one may predict how people behave. People in the group have a common essence and it makes sense to talk about cultural differences and even cultural collisions.
In the global world this understanding of culture has become more problematic. Cultures are mixed and more or less shared across the globe. Pure cultures do not exist. Cultures have become hybrids where some elements are shared, others are not. Faced with this reality essentialist understanding of culture is a form for reductionism. How people behave cannot be predicted accurately, since people act according to complex, contradictive, mixed, and ambiguous cultural codes.
The dynamic understanding of culture is constructivist. People create culture in personal encounters with other people. People are positioned, and when they communicate they make certain cultural elements relevant while other elements are not played off. Culture is not something people have, but something they construct in specific human encounters where mutual relations and power is part of the context. Meanings are shared, interpreted and created when positioned people do something together i.e. when they communicate.
However, in the study of intercultural communication we need both descriptive and dynamic understandings of culture.
Parallel session 1
(a) Mediating culture in various contexts
(in Russian with NO interpreting into English)

The teacher's humanistic centration as the basis of students' effective cross-cultural communication
Natalia Belokrylova

Overcoming cross-ethnic disintegration and an effective system of cross-cultural communication are necessary preconditions for building a free civil society.

A solution of this problem can be creating a world-view based on the value of personality. The teacher’s humanistic orientation, focused on the humanistic centration, is one of the means to do it. Humanistic centration is a value position of a teacher which develops in the course of social communication, the result of which is a positive attitude towards people and oneself as well as personal growth seen as mastering the ability of communicative interaction (K.M. Levitan, A.B. Orlov, D. A. Beluhin). This allows the teacher and the students to perceive any person as one of a value and significance. Humanistic centration reflects the equality of the subjects’ positions, a positive attitude towards yourself and the Other, and helps to overcome fear of communication. This is the basis of interrelation developing between cultures, languages and traditions. Humanistic centration is regarded as an element of a teacher’s world view. It is based on spiritual-moral principles (Sh.A. Amonashvili, V.G. Nioradze, H.E. Schurkova, M.G. Janovskaya).

Humanistic centration presumes a person’s empathy, reflection, pedagogical tact, and communicative competence. Their development is achieved through humanistic principles. In society it is realized through forming and mastering such values as “kindness”, “justice”, “participation”, “mercy”, etc.

Teaching students effective cross-cultural communication needs employing a dialogical, subject-subject interrelation system. Through polylogue and accepting the other as somebody valuable and significant the teacher creates pedagogical conditions to cultivate tolerance, generosity, benevolence which help to overcome the language barrier. As a result it encourages students’ understanding various points of view and leads to constructive cross-cultural communication and creating a civil multi-cultural society.

Image of the Hero in Modern Mass Culture as the Way of Translation of Actual Values in Cross Cultural Dialogue
Elena Aleksandrova

Mass culture, viewed as an element of modern Western culture and one of the "official languages" of cross-cultural communication, is a universal mechanism of the translation of actual cultural values. Mass culture acts on two levels – the conscious and the archetypes of collective subconscious- and it opens an opportunity for inquiry and finding answers. The necessity to encode a great deal of information and deal with a variegated audience leads to the creation of several schemes of translation that can be likened to a kind of radiation. The basic moving force is image sequence: comics and movies. Excellent examples of this "radiation" are images of the Hero in Marvel movies based on comics and one of the most popular in modern mass cinema is the image of Sherlock Holmes.

Working with the Hero image it is possible to extract the content of inquiry, i.e. features and actual values significant for modern culture. It is interesting that not only general cultural, but also private social problems are shown in “hero movies”.

Images of mass culture are schematic, its answers are simple and univocal. That is why mass culture as a cultural element is so popular and needed. Sometimes, when a cultural situation doesn’t give one other opportunities, mass culture is the only way to translate actual values and behavioral samples.

Professional basis for linguistic mediation in procedural acts
Karu Katrin and Romasz Erlend Romanišik

Although an explosive growth of interest in community interpreting has been noticed among translation researchers in the last few decades, pertinent research is still sporadic. The factors determining the interest in community interpreting are, on the one hand, globalisation, increasing attention to human rights, migration, the emergence of polyethnic communities, and, on the other hand, the need to understand the specific character of communication through an interpreter.

Although the status of community interpreting is still often unclear, many researchers consider it an independent type of interpreting and a separate profession (Mikkelson 1996). Although systems for training and accreditation of community interpreters exist in several countries nowadays (Niska 2002; God tolksed 2010), it is impossible to take over the experience of other countries directly, as community interpreting is closely connected with the social and legal policy (Ozolins 2000, 2010) and the established interpreting traditions of each concrete country.
In Estonia, community interpreting is regularly used by the Police and Border Guard Board, which employs full-time interpreters whose tasks include interpreting during procedural acts. In 2011, K. Karu conducted a study among the interpreters and conductors of proceedings at the Police and Border Guard Board. The current report is based on the analysis of its results. The report discusses the specific features of the work of the community interpreter during procedural acts. These specific features place special professional requirements not only on the interpreter but also on communication through an interpreter in general. The authors of the report share the viewpoint that theoretical interpretation of the existing experience is extremely topical for an elaboration of a basis for professional community interpreting that would meet the needs of the modern law-governed state.

References

Parallel session 1
(b) Migration, conflict management

The impact of the migration on psychosocial well-being: A study of Kurdish refugees in the resettlement country
Nabi Fatahi

Objective: To study Kurdish immigrant’s mental well-being in the resettlement country with respect to migration process (pre-migration, migration and post-migration). Method: Data was collected through group interviews with Kurdish refugees (n=17), eight women and nine men, aged 38-59 years. A qualitative content analysis method was used to analyses the interview texts. Results: Kurdish refugees reported a number of difficulties and dramatically experiences related to the migration process. Discrimination, fear and anxiety, uncertainty about future and powerlessness were some of the common factors reported by the participants. The process of the migration and post-migration period were characterized by a loss of social capital, a language barrier, cultural diversity, alienation, social and professional regression, as well as discrimination. Immigrants, who had succeeded in obtaining an occupation that was equal with or at a higher level than their previous job in the home country were satisfied with their lives and had better self-esteem and psychosocial well-being. Conclusion: The psychosocial well-being of Kurdish refugees in the resettlement country was associated with factors in pre-migration, migration as well as post-migration phases. Social and professional status in the resettlement country that matched the immigrants’ original status seemed to accompany higher psychosocial well-being. Social and professional regression was related to lower self-esteem and well-being.

Interreligious Dialogues in the Shadow of Russia – As Ways of the Conflict Management by the Intercultural Communication
Sándor Földvári

Intercultural communication as a topic of research has evolved due to the activity of The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and its failures in communication with other nations or civilisations although with purposes to help them recover after World War II. In parallel with the unfolding of intercultural communication as a field of research, the church evolved its own theory and practice of intercultural communication, as represented in Ecclesiam Suam by Paul VI and Dives in Misericordia or the Redemptoris Missio by John Paul II, whose entire pontificate was an intercultural action that led to the culmination of the interfaith communication in his address to the Muslims in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, May 6. In the past decades, the city of Baku also joined the centres of Islam and played a significant role in interfaith dialogues. Its great mufti’s Allahshükür Hummat Pashazade played an important role in the Jewish-Muslim dialogues in the Caucasus, and on his initiative a three-side interreligious meetings was held in Baku, 2010, with the participation of Garegin II, the Armenian Catholics and Moscow Patriarch Kirill, head of the Russian Orthodox Church. At the same time, an international and interreligious meeting were held with participation of Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the chair-person of The Pontifical Council for the Interreligious Affairs in the Vatican, the most supreme organ of the Roman Catholic Church for dialogues with the other religions. He confirmed that Muslims in Azerbaijan are remarkable for their tolerance. The head of the Muslim community was “a very kind man, well related to the Catholics and believers in general, and especially to the Holy See. I think he is a model of harmony,” said Cardinal Tauran.
Dialogues between Christians and Muslims have been going on since early 2nd millennium, though their value has remained in the shadows because of terrible wars. Perspectives, opportunities, expectations and recent roles of other Near- and Middle-East Muslim countries in intercultural dialogues will be analysed in the paper; however, the presentation is focused on the Caucasian region as a special Post-Soviet area.

Interpreters caught between two communities

Karin Sibul

This paper discusses interpreting from and into Estonian and Russian, based on interviews with interpreters who operated in Estonia from 1944 to 1991 while Estonia was a Soviet republic. During that period the linguistic environment changed, and Russian was introduced as a “language of international communication”. The influx of non-Estonians leads to the question of whether interpreting was used. Nineteen semi-structured convergent interviews were conducted for this study: eleven with people who worked as interpreters and eight with people who recruited interpreters or worked with an interpreter during this period. Colleagues’ comments on two interpreters who passed away several years ago were also taken into account. In analysing the material gathered, this paper demonstrates that for the years reviewed interpreters were not professionals but rather ‘chance interpreters’ as defined by F. Pöchhacker. The form of interpreting practiced can be defined as conference interpretation, while parliamentary interpreting and theatre interpreting are two clearly defined subcategories of interpretation as it was practiced in post-World War II Estonia. Interpreters were indispensable in intercultural communication, although, with the exception of theatre interpreters, they were unaware of their role as cultural mediators. The findings of the study help to preserve the fast-disappearing heritage of the unwritten history of interpreting in Estonia. With the exception of recent work on liaison interpreting, the development of interpreting in Estonia has so far gone unstudied.

Russian Communication Etiquette in Cross-Cultural Context (plenary)

Maxim A. Krongauz

The talk deals with the Russian communication etiquette in its development and in cross-cultural context. A number of typical situations of oral communication are analyzed, as well as verbal behavior of Russians vs. "standard" Europeans (according to B.L. Whorf). Particular attention is paid to greeting and farewell, not only to their specific forms, but to the very fact of the corresponding speech acts being present or absent. Also in the spotlight are systemic changes in the field of forms of address that are most susceptible to external (social and cultural) influence.

Panel: Education in Intercultural Environment

Does knowledge have borders?

Hanne Tange

International education is often promoted through discourses of openness, cross-cultural relationship-building and global understanding. But how inclusive is the kind of knowledge offered in the so-called “global” learning environments? The paper explores possible limits to knowledge production and sharing in international study environments, suggesting that course contents and contexts might exclude rather than include non-native learners.

As a conceptual point of departure we take the idea of an academic field evoked by Pierre Bourdieu in Homo Academicus (1988). Bourdieu describes a knowledge system embedded in a specific national and institutional environment, and from this research follows that certain frames of reference, or contexts, are taken for granted by local staff and students. With internationalization, however, comes a change in the make-up of the student cohort, including an increasing number of non-native learners who may not recognise knowledge when this is set within very particular local or national contexts.

In a series of qualitative research interviews we have asked lecturers at three Danish international study programs to reflect on the contexts of knowledge presented and represented within their course and academic discipline. We will present in the paper the preliminary findings of our research, pointing to some of the visible and invisible borders that one finds within the field of global education.

Knowledge encounters and recognition in the international classroom

Tanja Wadsholt and Lisanne Wilken

With increasing internationalization of university education educators are faced with the challenges of accommodating an increasingly diverse student body and of facilitating meaningful knowledge exchange between local and international students.
This paper will explore how “culture” is perceived and employed by students in an international study environment. Contrary to much research on internationalisation where culture becomes a broad label used to explain possible differences between students, I will examine what students actually make out of the concept. I will do so with conceptual and methodological inspiration from especially anthropologist Frederik Barth, approaching the concept of culture as something relational (Barth 1995). Drawing on a series of qualitative interviews with students from Aarhus University in Denmark, this paper will start out by discussing ideas of cultural authenticity – that is, how international students often express a strong wish to engage with the local environment in order to gain a “real” Danish experience. Following this, I will discuss how this quest for Danish authenticity often collides with the students’ actual experience when being abroad, due to the fact that they often find it difficult to establish social ties beyond the group of international students. In such a context, where contact between international and local students is limited, I will investigate how ideas of (Danish) culture are generated and used. I will, for instance, discuss how some students imagine “closedness” to be a distinctive Danish cultural feature, since this is contrasted to perceptions of how an international student environment ought to be – namely characterized by a high degree of openness.

Perceptions of Culture in an International Study Environment
Mette Gunderskov Hansen

The Declaration of Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2001) opened a number of international initiatives to intensify activities which could help us to define and specify certain standards in the field of cultural diversity. As a result, there were the Round Table (2004) related to the issues of both cultural and biological diversities required for further steady development, the Francophonie Summit (2012), the Annual International Network on Cultural Policy conference, and specific UN Resolution announced May, 21 as a World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development (2001).

Due to current tendencies and perspectives we can observe various discussions devoted to the essence and meaning of multicultural education. Fred Dervin claims a harmful impact of the notion of “culture” on modern education: culture imposes stereotypes that do not correspond to the facts; the phenomenon of culture creates the “context of power” which is supposed to divide people into hierarchically structured social groups, etc. As far as education is concerned the notion of culture could be replaced by “humanism” and “commonality”.

The aim of our presentation is to specify the nature of polycultural education. We proceed from the premise that education could be interpreted as a process and results of expedient training and morality development for the sake of personal, social and national interests. The theoretical background of our research involves the concept of cultural and historical development of Lev Vygotsky. The concept interprets culture as a range of “cultural tools and signs” accumulated by humanity, as a regulator of interpersonal relations which become means of self-regulation of individual mental processes.

Education becomes polycultural when it provides opportunities to appropriate “cultural tools and signs” of other social groups as well as new tools emerging “here and now”. The given range of “cultural tools and signs” that are supposed to be appropriated through education could be regarded as “heterogeneous”.

One of the principles of the field under discussion is contained in the concept of integration of education developed by A. Danilyuk (2000). According to him polycultural education can emerge when a student appropriating a certain cultural tradition (presented as a text) is able to convert it into texts of other traditions, thus it basically makes the student the author of new texts. This kind of education allows a person to shape its ethnic, regional, and national identities. This theory underlies the school subject “Foundations of religious cultures and secular ethics” which has been introduced in all Russian schools since 2012.

One of the priorities in the further development of the Udmurt State University is to implement polycultural education. It is justified by the increasing academic mobility which requires that a person have a number of
competences that would allow him or her to interact and to respond to the challenges of multiculturalism as well as to realize that the aim of multiculturalism is connected with the defence and expansion of cultural freedom.

**Abstracts for poster presentations**

**Human Encounters. Introduction to Intercultural Communication**

*New textbook written in Norwegian*

*Øyvind Dahl*

The outline of this textbook was presented at the 19th NIC conference in Aarhus in 2012. The book was published in Norwegian in June 2013: *Øyvind Dahl: Møter mellom mennesker. Innføring i interkulturell kommunikasjon.* Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk forlag. 2013. 300p.

Contents: (A complete list will be presented during the Poster presentation)

- Chapter 1 UNDERSTANDING IN A GLOBAL WORLD
- Chapter 2 CULTURE - SOMETHING WE HAVE OR SOMETHING WE DO?
- Chapter 3 COMMUNICATION IS CREATING SOMETHING IN COMMON
- Chapter 4 PROCESS ANALYSIS – BUILDING BRIDGES
- Chapter 5 SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS – INTERPRETING SIGNS
- Chapter 6 HERMENEUTIC ANALYSIS – UNDERSTANDING
- Chapter 7 VERBAL COMMUNICATION – LANGUAGE
- Chapter 8 NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION – BODY LANGUAGE
- Chapter 9 IDENTITY – WHO AM I?
- Chapter 10 COMMUNICATION IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY
- Chapter 11 CONTEXT AND REALITY – WHY ARE THEY DOING THINGS LIKE THAT?
- Chapter 12 TO UNDERSTAND ONESELF AND OTHERS

References

Index

The author is interested in finding European publishers who will publish a European version into English, French, German and Russian.

**What language do Russians in Estonia speak?**

*Jelizaveta Kostandi and Irina Külmoja*

29.5% of the population of Estonia uses Russian as their native language. In the post-Soviet period Russian in Estonia has become a foreign language that is used in the media, in the Internet, in daily informal communication, less in education, academia and in the official sphere. There are also sociolects (professional jargon, slang of young people, etc.). Dialects have survived mainly among Old Believers. In all the spheres mentioned, influence of Estonian on Russian can be traced. The poster will examine two types of influence:
1) explicit, i.e. those that manifest themselves on various linguistic levels and are easily traceable (code-switching, interference, etc.);
2) implicit, i.e. those that can only be traced via an analysis of a large amount of varied material and embrace not only language and speech, but also behaviour, perception, values and value judgements, etc.

**Teaching teachers to teach their subject in English**

*Ursula Erik and Ülle Sihver*

Necessity and possibilities of support to specialists in teaching their subject in English according to the requirements of increasingly internationalising tertiary education are presented, based on the pilot course for PhD students in Estonian University of Life Sciences. The course encourages doctoral students as lecturers in multicultural educational environment. The teaching process analysed in the course comprises two competences: ESP and didactics. The aim is to create a motivating environment for the learner, modify learning activities according to the needs and evolving skills of the participant, based on their linguistic and didactic preparation. Tutors respond to the needs of PhD students, bearing in mind improvement of the many-faceted competences. The leading principle of the course is: skills are acquired through practice.
Four language skills are developed with focus on spoken communication for teaching the subject, participants switch roles as a student and a lecturer; complying with the language skills, especially receptive skills the PhD students have for research.

In didactics the emphasis is on observing and noticing, analysis, non-judgemental communication of conclusions, friendly feedback, and practical application. Specific roles of a researcher and a teacher are interpreted.

*Kristiina Kuslapuu*

The poster will examine how relations between Estonians and Russians, both in the past and in the present, are used and abused in the Estonian press, particularly in the advancement of the neoliberal agenda.

**Parallel session 2**

(a) Intercultural communication (national level)

**Intercultural Communication in Chinese investment facilitation initiatives in the Baltic Sea Region**
*Santa Stopniece*

The Baltic Sea region has recently seen an upsurge of interest to attract Chinese investments. Joint efforts of national and local governments together with Chinese investors have at times resulted in new forms of cooperation, such as establishment of trade centres, investments in construction, innovation centres, and so forth. So far, such collaborative projects have mainly taken place in mainland China, but now investments start to flow in the opposite direction. The new initiatives with China are of increasing complexity, as more actors are involved, there are larger budgets and greater expectations. Thus, the ability to work in the context of large cultural differences is tested in a new way.

Oftentimes, key players for attraction of Chinese investments to the region are governmental agencies for investment facilitation. These organizations provide a fruitful setting for studying intercultural communication. Co-operation of this kind is still new in many ways, requiring negotiations and adjustments that have not been necessary in previous collaborations. There is not much previous experience of working with the Chinese in the Baltic Sea region, and there is also lack of research which would consider intercultural aspects in this context. Intercultural communication competence derived from studying these initiatives will be an invaluable asset for the future, as Chinese investments in the region are expected to increase.

Insights regarding intercultural communication challenges and adjustment efforts will be shared from recent interviews carried out in one governmental agency for Chinese investment facilitation in the Baltic Sea region.

**National ethos in national anthems. A rhetorical analysis of topoi in “Vårt land”, “Ja, vi elsker” and “The star-spangled banner”**
*Maria Isaksson*

National anthems provide perhaps the strongest statements about national identity. As textual compositions, they usually evoke the nation’s history, the quest for liberty, the struggles and hopes for national resurrection. This paper explores the national ethos in the lyrics of the national anthem of Finland, “Vårt land” (1848), of Norway, “Ja, vi elsker” (1859), and of the United States, “The star-spangled banner” (1814). A national ethos is here understood as the “particularistic values, traditions, identity and vision of the future” of a given nation (Etzioni 2009:100). Given that the differences of each nation’s history, socio-cultural diversity, and political fight for independence are greater than the similarities, it seems natural to assume different textual manifestations of a national ethos in national anthems. However, a rhetorical analysis of topoi shows interestingly similar national ethos rhetoric across the three national anthems. The paper attempts to explain the overlap and the common ground.

**The Greek Financial Crisis: Who Is Responsible?**
*Francis Haran*

In 1825, while the Greeks were still fiercely waging their War of Independence against the Ottoman Empire, the proceeds of a huge English loan were unexpectedly paid into the provisional Greek government coffers. William St Clair writes that corruption is not the word to describe what ensued but rather “financial anarchy” as anyone who could find a pretext found a way of getting themselves onto the government payroll. My paper argues that huge EU grants and loans that streamed into Greece after its entry into the common currency had the same effect, a catastrophic descent into financial anarchy that led inexorably to the Greek financial crisis of 2009. What were EU leaders thinking when they smilingly gave the go-ahead to Greek membership of the Eurozone?
Why did they ignore the warnings of history and of intercultural communication and how responsible are they for Greece’s present economic situation?

Parallel session 2
(b) Intercultural Language teaching

Legal Discourse as Essential Business Communication Component: British English vs. American English vs. Russian
Svetlana Vlasenko

Intercultural communication is more often than not a cross-linguistic communication, even if the language formally remains the same, as was the case with the Russian language in the former Soviet Union, or is currently the case with English and/or French in the European Union. Real problems in intercultural communication start manifesting themselves when two or more languages are used for conveying thoughts and ideas generated by expert communities on subject-specific matters using technical terms to deliver technical substance for reviewing state-of-the-art solutions or resolving problematic issues. It seems apparent that business communication presupposes an essential share of legal knowledge and, therefore, legal terminology. In fact, doing business usually implies knowing rules of and conditions for entrepreneurial activities envisaged within the relevant jurisdiction. Thus, legal discourse may be said to be embedded in business communication. Presently, one of the most cited problems in the business community is premeditated bankruptcy, or deliberate and intentional fraud for loosening creditworthiness by a business entity or an individual entrepreneur. The case of ‘insolvency’ and ‘bankruptcy’ concepts appears to be non-routine in the cross-linguistic and intercultural perspectives. This case illustrates the so called ‘international false homonyms’ in two major variants of English – British and American. Dissimilarities are marked when Russian is taken for cross-comparison. Given the status of English as the international business language, which English has been enjoying over the past decades, communicating business substance cross-linguistically necessitates a fully-fledged awareness of the legal discourse culture.

Exploring English as a Lingua Franca in Tallinn: speakers’ uses and perceptions of ELF as an intercultural resource
Josep Soler-Carbonell

In this presentation, I will discuss the question of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in Tallinn from the perspective of speakers’ uses and perceptions of it. The analysis builds on Laitin’s (1996) observations regarding the fact that English would become the country’s language of inter-group communication among Estonian and Russian-speakers. The paper is based on two different sources: (1) ethnographically collected data (in-depth interviews and focus group discussions) and (2) a questionnaire delivered to a qualitative sample of university students. This allows for a minimal triangulation of the data and to therefore provide more grounded conclusions. In that sense, while it appears that English has not become a lingua franca in Estonia, this possibility works in certain circumstances, even if just sporadically, in order to help solving possible communicative obstacles. It is therefore argued that ELF is actually an extra resource, a tool that speakers can make use of if needed. However, during the discussion section it will be highlighted that more research is necessary to find out whether ELF actually works as a group-boundary inhibitor or enhancer. There are reasons to believe that it can work both ways, one being more positive (allowing for inter-group contacts and communication) than the other (preventing such integration-leading effects). For that reason, language ethnographic studies have the potential to clarify such important questions for the development of Estonia as a multilingual and multicultural society.

National stereotypes as a challenge and a resource in language teaching: The case of German as a foreign language in Denmark
Klaus Geyer

At first sight, the stereotypes we are encountering in Danish-German intercultural communication seem to be very robust: being on time, the importance of orderliness, diligence, motorways without a speed limit and somehow Hitler can be referred to as examples for the German part, and, amongst others, the notion of happy people (even the world’s happiest, according to some surveys), informal conventions of addressing and interacting (first name, T-pronoun), irony and humour and very red sausages can be mentioned as far as Danes and Denmark are concerned. Interestingly enough, traditional stereotypes like these can be found in great numbers in textbooks and other teaching material for German and Danish as a foreign language, as a preliminary analysis has shown. The occurrence of stereotypes, though, is twofold here: rather rarely, there are learning
activities picking up stereotypes explicitly and inviting students to reflect on them; more often and in a vast range of texts and exercises, stereotype notions occur implicitly, tacitly reinforcing the traditional stereotypes.

To my mind, the situation as sketched above points in two directions for further consideration. The first one is to review whether the traditional stereotypes really are as prevalent today as they used to be, or whether new stereotypes have emerged during the last 15 years or so. Recall in this context e.g. the pictures of relaxed partying German people during the football world cup in 2006, as opposed to the partly xenophobic discussions about reintroducing passport controls at the Danish borders. The second issue to be examined is how stereotypes, be they traditional or of recent origin, can be used as a fruitful resource in language teaching under the perspective of intercultural communication, and what the language teaching material could or should look like to serve this purpose.

Both questions are essential issues of the on-going project SMiK “National Stereotypes and Marketing Strategies in Intercultural Communication German-Danish”, funded by the European Union within the INTERREG 4 A-programme and conducted by the University of Southern Denmark in Odense and the University of Kiel in Germany. The first question is tackled by mixed methods research (guided interviews, questionnaires, analyses of collocations in corpus data) for detecting recent stereotypes, which, in case they do exist, form part of the subject of the latter issue, i.e. developing language teaching material, here from a vocational or LSP-perspective, in order to facilitate people’s working perspectives and success across the German-Danish border by strengthening their intercultural awareness.

The aim of my presentation is to put up for discussion prospects regarding future teaching material for Danish learners of German, which addresses not only intercultural differences, but also similarities, which does not only focus on the differences, and which stimulates enquiry-based learning.

"Like buying a warm jacket”: the patterns of integration and separation of Estonian Russians (plenary)

Trin Vihalemm

Estonia, together with Latvia, has been a sort of social experiment in the integration of ethnic minorities in the European economic and political context that can be informative for academic scholars and policy-makers. Due to the large proportion, the relatively homogeneous primary socialization patterns and wide variation in education and social stratification characteristics of the Russian population in Estonia, the different patterns of their integration are well traceable. The presentation will introduce five different patterns of social-political and cultural involvement of Russian population into the Estonian society and discuss the role of ethnic and intercultural capitals in these processes. The analysis bases on the large survey called Integration Monitoring 2011 and qualitative studies.

Parallel session 3

(a) Intercultural meaning

Reciprocal Cultural Translation as a Means for Integration in Hiam and Stella’s Place

Anette Svensson

This paper takes a closer look at two pieces of Australian migration literature that narrate the story of living in exile. It aims to analyse the migration process from separation to integration as portrayed in Hiam by Eva Sallis and Stella’s Place by Jim Sakkas. It more specifically examines reciprocal cultural translation as a means to bridge cultural contrasts, complete the migration process, and achieve a sense of arrival.

Migration literature involves various levels of encounters that occur when the characters shift geographical regions; above all, the encounter with a “new” cultural environment, a target culture. The migration process is, in my view, a three-step process that parallels Arnold van Gennep’s rites of passage (developed by Victor Turner) which encompass separation, transition and incorporation. I see the migration process as a territorial rite of passage that consists of these three phases.

Cross-cultural analysis of Swedish and Russian users of the social network site Instagram

Pavel Rodin

The emerging growth of the Internet in general, and social networking sites (SNSs), in particular, raises the interest to explore the usage of those means of communication from a cultural perspective. In 2012 the amount of people who accessed different SNSs was estimated at 1.5 billion, and it may reach 2.5 billion users by 2017 (Statista, 2013). There is also a consisting trend in 2013 towards sharing images and videos, rather than text-based content, and the share of image-centric networks will keep growing in upcoming years (DeMers, 2013).

And it is in line with a significant increase in amount of users for one of the social networks for images – Instagram. In April 2012 Instagram had 22 million users, and the latest report in September 2013 shows that this number has increased to 150 million monthly active users (Rusli, 2013). Started in the United States, Instagram
has more than 60% of its users outside of the U.S. at this point. For instance, the monthly amount of Instagram users in Sweden is estimated as more than 1 million, which corresponds to approximately 12% of the population (ORVESCO Konsument, 2013).

The study aims to examine the content of the Instagram accounts of people from two countries, Sweden and the Russian Federation, and to analyze if there are culturally dependent differences among young adult (20-30 years) Instagram users in Sweden and Russia. The methodological framework includes a qualitative analysis of three dimensions: (1) visual features of images (color, hue, saturation), (2) Instagram-related features (filter, frame), and (3) content analysis of images (what is depicted? And how?). The examination of these dimensions can provide meaningful insights to the understanding to what extent users of Instagram are guided by their culture, and to what – by the conventions of software.

Parallel session 3
(b) Intercultural politics

Building a Bridge between Cultural and Cognitive Studies in the Baltics
Kristīne Užule

At some levels, cultural coexistence might lead to group conflicts due to existing differences between the groups. These differences are rooted in a variety of aspects, including differences in shared attitudes, shared norms of behaviour, shared perceptions, in other words, in a cultural mindset, which consistently with Oyserman (2011) comprises culture-individualistic, culture-collectivist and context-situated features. According to Payne et al. (2010), who studied the effects that voters’ cultural mindsets had on American presidential elections of 2008, the most comprehensive account that can explain differences in the behaviour of cultural groups (based on differences in cultural mindsets) can be obtained through the analysis of data obtained on both explicit and implicit representations shared by these groups. Whereas explicit representations could be accessed in a somewhat straightforward manner, for example, through surveys or by application of discourse analysis methodology, the study of implicit representations often require the employment of cognitive science techniques, such as priming, in particular, cognitive priming (Payne et al, 2010) and cultural mindset priming (Oyserman, 2011). For example, in one such study, Payne (2001) demonstrated that weapons’ misrepresentation was rooted in concealed/covert/implicit representations of another cultural (racial) group associated with existing cultural stereotypes (Payne, 2001), and often even awareness of misperception of another group might not stop automatic processes underlying the anti-group behaviour (Payne et al., 2005).

In this light, the talk will address the need for cultural studies’ students in the Baltics to develop awareness about the existing cognitive science models and techniques that can expand understanding of the effects of cultural mindsets on behaviour, attitudes and perceptions.

Teaching English as a foreign language in an academic environment: heterogeneous, international and multicultural challenges
Ursula Erik and Ülle Sihver

Expectations on educational qualifications in modern society for EU citizens indicate the trend of rising demands on excellent English skills for personal development of both adults and children. In an academic environment the individual’s readiness and willingness to be proficient in English is influenced by personal social preparation and background, due to an intensive impact of the current and previous socio-linguistic environment. Remarkable diversity in the ability to practice the English for proficiency among students and lecturers will be presented.

According to the variety of learners’ comprehension – based on their international and multicultural background, varied English skills, specialities and particular social needs – the teaching method focuses on aspects described in Backward Design by Dee L. Fink, identifying situational factors, learning goals, educative assessment as a learning opportunity and a holistic view of active learning.

Based on a pilot course (2012–2013) designed to help university lecturers who are going to teach their courses in English, it was concluded that the learning process has to be adjusted to the needs of the learner: including the specific preparation and teaching experience of the participants, taking advantage of disadvantages, participating in hands-on practice.

As the result of the techniques the English learners realised the positive and supportive impact of social factors during the learning process, such as enriching group diversity and integration, group synergy and the synergy of joint teaching.
Discursive definition of the U.S.-Russian ‘reset’ in the messages of Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev in 2008-12
Oksana Zueva

The U.S.-Russian ‘reset’ as basically all possible improvements in the U.S.-Russian relations in all spheres is obviously an empty signifier which is filled with different content in different discourses. For the Russian audience and President Medvedev (especially in 2009) Obama constructs ‘reset’ as a potentially lasting, gradual process which consists of numerous important steps in different areas of concern; domestically Obama constructs ‘reset’ as necessary for security purposes; internationally, Obama constructs ‘reset’ mostly as a commitment that is undoubtedly inferior to the U.S. commitment to NATO members. After the New START is ratified Obama tends to refer to ‘reset’ as an achieved mission, as a fundament upon which other strategies and projects can be built. Even though Obama reiterates the argument that ‘reset’ is not only about security, it turns out that largely it is.

When talking about ‘reset’, Obama tends to stress his personal effort and strong commitment, whereas Medvedev tends to alienate himself from the term ‘reset’, stressing its ‘very relative’ nature, overuse in political commentaries and hope that expected improvements can really take place. In 2009, Medvedev signals that ‘reset’ implies a ‘certain direction’, ‘breaking of stereotypes’ and general ‘discharge’ in the U.S.-Russian relations – something Medvedev ‘hopes for’ and ‘counts upon’. Beginning from October 2010 Medvedev starts talking about ‘the success of ‘reset’” as an achieved goal, mainly because of good rapport with Barack Obama. Still, in many articulations Medvedev doubts in ‘reset’, refers to it as ‘overload’ or ‘something else’, blaming the U.S. administration for Cold War-style rhetoric. Therefore, ‘reset’ for Medvedev is largely about respectful attitude, ‘sympathy’ and ‘tact’. 