



SPACE AUTUMN MEETING and CONFERENCE in KAVALA

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Track 1

Teaching Economics in Greece

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to briefly explore the university economic education in Greece in relation to new technologies. The Greek reality appears ready to accept a more substantial use of new technologies in the educational procedure both at schools and Universities. This is made clear by the positive attitude of teachers of economics towards ICT. However, many important problems come up, mainly as to teacher training and the familiarization of students with this new methodology.

Keywords

Education, Schools, Universities, Software, Computer Learning, Economics

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1 Introduction

Although the use of New Technologies in economic pedagogy has been growing, it has not received the corresponding attention in the economic education literature. Almost no studies to date have measured the impact of using technology on student learning and retention, perceptions of instructor effectiveness, and changes in attitudes towards economics.

We report the results from classroom experiments that tested the influence of computer use on economic education.

Using computer resources to enhance economic courses has two principal advantages for students. First, these resources offer a new medium of interaction that complements classroom instruction and facilitates learning. Second, they offer students the opportunity to learn and use technology and yield positive externalities for future academic and career paths.

2 Previous Literature and Research

In 1990 one of the most important books on the teaching of courses in Economics 'The Principles of Economics Course' has been published (Panetsos, 2001). Its three component parts refer to: the educational aims and objectives of the introductory course (Economics in the first semester at the universities), the teaching methods and evaluation of teaching.

In 1996 Agarwal and Day in their research, under the title "The Impact of the Internet on Economic Education", presented one of the first empirical analysis examining the educational effectiveness of teaching techniques supported by the internet (Bikos, 1995).

They tested the following null hypotheses against two-tailed alternatives:

1. Internet implementation in economics courses has no impact on student learning and retention.
2. Internet implementation in economics courses has no impact on student evaluations of instructor effectiveness.

3. Internet implementation in economics courses has no impact on student attitudes towards economics. The results of the analysis showed that the addition of Internet based activities and equipment to the education of economics offered very significant advantages in economic learning and the perception of students on the effectiveness of the teacher.

In 2008, the studies of E. Tsami (Tsami, 2008a and Tsami, 2009) on the teaching of economics at the University with the use of new technologies were published. The views of students on teaching through the use of computers were examined. The result of the first survey Tsami E., (Tsami, 2008a) is that students prefer teaching through the use of new technologies at 90% to traditional teaching.

The results of the second survey Tsami (Tsami, 2008b and Tsami, 2009) to the students involved is that: the use of new technologies in the teaching of macroeconomics in relation to the teaching of microeconomics in the traditional mode had a positive impact.

2.1 Economic Education in Greece and Software

Economic education in Greece like in most countries falls within in the field of social studies. In Greece it is the responsibility of each Department to determine the curriculum and the teaching hours of each module in higher education, whereas in secondary education this is regulated by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs.

With the 1977 reform economics was taught for the first time as an independent school subject in Technical and Vocational Education. In the early 80s, it was also introduced in general education (Whitehead and Makridou, 2000), whereas junior-high school students are not taught such a subject. The 1997 educational reform abolished General, Eniaia Polykladika and Technical Lykeia and two other types of Upper-High Schools were established: the Eniaia (Unified) Lykeia and the Technika Epaggelmatika Ekpaideftiria-TEE (Technical Vocational Educational Schools) which were reformed to Vocational Lykeia (EPA.L) in 2006.

During their first grade students of Eniaio Lykeio are taught “Principles of Economics” which is a core subject and during their third grade “Principles of Economic Theory” and “Principles of Accountancy” which are elective subjects and the subject “Principles of Business and Services Administration and Organization” is also taught in the technological branch of the study cycle “Informatics and Services”.

Economic subjects are taught in EPA.L to students who follow the orientation of “Economics and Administration”. Some of the taught subjects are: “Introduction to General Accountancy”, “Economic Subjects”, “Contemporary Economic Activities”, “Tax Accountancy”, “Finance”, “Accountancy Application”, “Accountancy of Companies”, “Principles of Economic Theory”, “International Economic and Commercial Relations”, “Marketing in Tourism”, “Principles of Business Administration and Management” and “Tourism Business Administration”.

The modules taught in Economic Universities (AEI) and in particular at the Department of Statistics and Insurance Science at the University of Piraeus are the following: “Theory of Microeconomics” (1st semester core module), “Theory of Macroeconomics” (2nd semester core module), “Finance Mathematics (3rd semester core module), “Introduction to Accountancy” (3rd semester core module), “Principles of Finance” (4th semester core module), “Securities and Financial Investments” (5th semester elective module), “Investment Analysis” (6th semester elective module), “Analysis of Businesses’ Financial Situation” (7th semester elective module) and “Derivative Finance Products” (7th semester elective module).

The modules taught in Economic Technological Education Institutes (TEI) and in particular at the Department of Business Administration at the Technological Education Institute of Kavala are the following: “Microeconomics” (1st semester core module), “Business Administration” (1st semester core module), “Financial Accounting I” (1st semester core module), “Macroeconomics I” (2st semester core module), “Financial Accounting II” (2st semester core module), “Human Resource Management” (3st semester core module), “Macroeconomics II” (3st semester core module), “Managerial Accounting I” (3st semester core module), “Principles of Marketing” (3st semester core module), “Supply Chain Administration” (3st semester core module), “Tax Consulting” (4st semester core module), “Financial Administration” (4st semester core module), “Production Administration” (4st semester core module), “Managerial Accounting II” (4st semester core module), “Strategic Business Administration” (5st semester core module), “International Financial Relations” (5st semester core module), “Quality Control Management” (6st semester core module), “Financial Studies” (6st semester core module), “Administration of Leisure Ventures” (6st semester elective module), “Communication & Advertising” (6st semester elective module), “Touristic Marketing” (6st semester elective module), “Athletic Management” (6st semester elective module), and “Financial Modeling” (7st semester elective module)

At this point it is worth noting that students are admitted to Universities (AEI) and Technological Education Institutes (TEI) after taking the state entry examinations that include the subject of “Principles of Business and Services Administration and Organization” therefore they have already been taught same basic economic concepts.

2.2 Software – Online Services for Teachers

It is necessary for teachers of economics to have some technological skills in order to be able to teach with the implementation of technology. As to the software that a teacher should be able to know how to use in order to carry out a computer-based lesson, the following are available (Tourouvouzis and Bousiou, 2002).

1. **Subject software:** Interactive programmes in cd-rom or online that contain lessons, visual examples, historical data, static or moving diagrams and self-assessment tests.
2. **Software packs:** Professional packs used for recording and processing audit data e.g. Capital.
3. **Spreadsheets:** Programmes that facilitate financial calculations eg Excel.
4. **Economic data websites:** Webpages that provide data which can be used in order to make comparisons and solve exercises with real data.
5. **Diagram design tools:** The use of diagrams in economic subjects is considered critical as it assists the better understanding of some concepts.
6. **Simulations – virtual worlds:** Programmes that simulate real conditions and predictions can be made through the offered results.
7. **Software for the creation of Marketing programmes:** Software that assists the creation of a marketing programmes for a business by offering a pre-designed programme in which the user has to enter the data of a virtual or real business.
8. **Games:** Many times people learn better by playing as long as the game is effective in an educational and effective context.

The aim is that HE students acquire knowledge that will help them familiarize with the institutions, the factors, the operations and procedures of economic life. In order to carry out the computer-based lesson, educational software and some websites were used from where economic data were deduced.

Programmes	Description	Web address
EcoSim: An Interactive Simulation	A simulation where each student plays a role in the world of banking.	http://ecedweb.unomaha.edu/ecosim.htm

Think Economics	An application for macro-economic principles through the use of graphs.	http://www.whitenova.com/thinkEconomics/
WinEcon	A complete programme on the basic economic concepts. It includes theory, exercises, a dictionary and questions can be made.	http://www.winecon.com
WinEcon for Schools	It is part of WinEcon appropriate for school networks.	http://www.winecon.com/winecon_for_schools.html
Introduction to International Trade	Teaching tool – tutorial.	http://avp.100megs28.com/products/869964921.htm
Introduction to Macroeconomics	A programme that contains sections on macroeconomic concepts, questions and simulations.	http://avp.100megs28.com/products/869864263.htm
Introduction to Microeconomics	A programme that contains sections on microeconomic concepts, questions and simulations.	http://avp.100megs28.com/products/7302157.htm
Microeconomics CAL programs	A programme that contains nine sections on microeconomic concepts,.	http://www.res.otaru-uk.ac.jp/~uzawa/cal-economics/cal-ee.html
Track and Trade Pro	A simulation that includes diagrams, historical data and calculation tools.	http://www.trackntrade.net
University Management –	A game that concerns	http://www.virtual-u.org/

"Virtual U" (Management Education)	University Management.	
The Stock Market Game	A game where students are invited to invest (hypothetically) 100.000\$.	http://www.smgww.org/
Gazillionaire	Gazillionaire is a strategy game where the player tries to make the highest profit possible, by buying and selling space products to exotic planets.	http://www.lavamind.com/index.html
World Game of Economics	A game where each student undertakes the role of a country and tries to make the right decisions in order to improve its economic rates.	http://www.worldgameofeconomics.com/
Financial Accounting Tutor (FacT) 8.0 Software	A programme for teaching accountancy.	http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0471745804.html
AdCracker	A programme for creating a marketing plan.	http://www.adcracker.com

Table 1: Software on economics that can be found abroad

Programmes	Description	Web address
Key – book Microeconomics	CD-ROM with theory, questions, exercises on concepts of	http://www.keystone.gr/

	microeconomics.	
Key – book Macroeconomics	CD-ROM with theory, questions, exercises on concepts of macroeconomics.	http://www.keystone.gr/
Unigate Political Economy	CD-ROM that provides additional support to students who are preparing for the final entry state examination – with sound, image, video.	http://www.keystone.gr/
Hangman on economics	A programme with which someone can play with economic terms.	http://www.edunuke.net/modules.php?op=modload&name=Hangman&file=index
Ds Graph Plan	A programme for quick and easy calculation of statistical data and for the design of detailed graphs.	http://www.dsi.gr/ds2/default_page.htm
Marketing Plan	Software that provides a full professional tool for designing detailed marketing strategies.	http://www.cdmedia.gr/products-show.asp?mprid=683&plid=1&catid=30&typid=2
CAPITAL	Computerization Programme.	http://www.altec.gr
Eurofasma	Computerization Programme.	http://www.singularsoftware.gr/index.asp
CFA for Windows	Programme of accurate management and analysis of money-flow.	http://www.specisoft.gr
Alliance	A simulation game for subjects of economics in upper-high school.	http://www.pi-schools.gr/material/software.htm

Mercury	Exploratory software for the combined study of human economic and social activities.	http://www.pi-schools.gr/material/software.htm
LATTICE	Networked learning through the method of developing scenarios in which users manage virtual resources by playing the role of particular characters.	http://www.pi-schools.gr/material/software.htm
Working environments.	Application that aims at the integral presentation of the working environment of four TEE fields through information, weblinks, appropriate photo material, interviews with professionals etc.	http://www.pi-schools.gr/material/software.htm

Table 2: Software on economics that can be found in Greece

The above tables present some computer programmes that exist and can be used for teaching economic concepts. Table 1 shows some of the programmes that can be found abroad and table 2 some programmes used in Greece. National software production is rather restricted, (Tourouvouzis and Bousiou, 2002).

2.3 Teacher Attitude towards the Introduction of Technology in the Teaching Process

Teaching in Greek schools and higher education institutions is mainly teacher-centered and as a result many teachers face the introduction of technology as a means of enriching traditional “teaching from the desk” and not as a means of active teaching. Computers and technology in general promote active learning (student-centered teaching) and by taking full advantage of them they can become a very useful tool, with the help of which, students in both secondary and higher education acquire and construct knowledge. Thus, teachers have to become the crucial factor of change for the educational system from teacher-centered to student-centered. In order to turn this prospect into reality it is necessary for teachers to use all their knowledge and experience that will be vital for the successful implementation of technology in the classroom.

The key factor for the use of computers in education is teachers themselves, their beliefs and their attitude towards technology. It is very important for teachers to have computer knowledge and skills because lack of training can often explain the low level of trust towards the new technology and therefore teachers' nervousness about applying it in the classroom. High level of anxiety can lead to a negative attitude towards the implementation of computers in teaching and can have negative results for the learning process in the end. It is important to point out that the way teachers view technology can easily influence the way that students in both secondary and higher education face technology (Panetsos, 2001).

We should point out that teachers need skills and time to get accustomed with the use of computers and most of all they should be open to training.

Initially they also have to comprehend the aims of technology in teaching so that its implementation in the learning process can take place through the quickest and most efficient means possible. The general picture created is that teachers consider the use of technology desirable and necessary and are open to begin making the necessary changes that will bring about real innovations. The conclusions of research carried out by Greek and foreign researchers such as Bikos (1995), Tzimogiannis and Komis (2004) and Czerniak, Lumpe, Haney and Beck (1999), as mentioned below, reveal this picture.

After clarifying the aims of applying new technologies in teaching, the next step is the effective training of teachers that requires their cooperation more than anything. In their book Raptis and Rapti (2006) describe an indicative model of teacher training of at least 240 hours, which he suggests to apply as an integrated system of informing, educating, training and constantly supporting teachers (Raptis and Rapti, 2006).

What is considered functional and advisable is that university pedagogic departments cooperating with computer science departments take the scientific responsibility of training programmes and implement programmes of integrated teacher training in the use of ICT for educational purposes (Panetsos, 2001). These teacher training programmes should have traits of constructive adult education, combining theory and practice.

The fact is that there is great need for teacher training and that teachers themselves seek it but most of the times this does not happen in the end. This means that even good teachers cannot keep up with their students as to the use of technology.

The solution is to provide teachers and therefore students the opportunity to learn not only about technology application but also about technology itself. Studies carried out in Greece and abroad

indicate that teachers are open towards training and positive towards implementing computers in the learning process.

So, in a research conducted in America teachers from the areas of Ohio and Wisconsin were asked about their views on educational technologies with regards to the quality of teaching and covering student needs. The total of teachers who participated in the research corresponds to a sample of 283 people, 65% of which were women and the rest men, who had had an average of 11-15 years of teaching experience. The results of this research are summarized in the following: teachers believe that technology offers variety in teaching methods making lessons more fun and interesting for students, providing motives for class participation, helping them acquire skills necessary for the rest of their life and qualifying them with up-to-date scientific information. However, there is deep concern as the above mentioned advantages presuppose existing resources, appropriate opportunities and conditions for teacher training, internet access, substantial software and of course the necessary school infrastructure (Czerniak et al., 1999).

Another research was carried out during February-April 1995 with the use of a questionnaire at a sample of 466 lower and upper secondary education teachers of all subjects in the wider area of Greece in order to explore their attitudes towards the use of computers and technology in general in schools. The results were that the general attitude of teachers towards new technologies is positive but doubts are expressed on the possible negative effects (Bikos, 1995).

The above discrepancy is justified by the social influences on teachers' view concerning the acceptance of technology, that is the cognitive subject becomes acceptable but, because they are not acquainted with computers, negative attitudes are created. Moreover, the same study ascertained the reluctance of Greek teachers to attend teacher training programmes on computers.

What is more, it is desirable to mention the research conducted in the Ioannina prefecture for which questionnaires were also used. 240 teachers of secondary education took part during the period 2000-2002 and the results of the research show teachers' positive approaches towards the implementation of ICT in the educational process (Tzimogiannis and Komis, 2004).

Another research was carried out in the prefecture of Thessaloniki in 2005 through questionnaires in the context of a dissertation by Gana with the title "Implementing Informatics in the teaching of economics in secondary education". 25 teachers of economics in schools of secondary education took part and the results are similar to the ones described above (Gana, 2005).

All these researches explore teachers' attitudes towards new technologies and their application. The most important factor affecting the use of computers in secondary and higher education are teachers themselves, as well as their views and attitudes towards technology.

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The Development of Industry-led Higher Education Programmes - For the world of film in Denmark

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Abstract

One of the big challenges for Higher Education Institutions is to ensure that their education programmes are in line with the needs of the labour market and that practical experience of the industry is integrated into these educational programmes. This paper presents an example of how this can be done, based on the North Sea Screen Partners project (NSSP). This project, which is supported by the Interreg IVB funding programme, seeks to aid the development of existing clusters in the film/TV/interactive media sector through transnational work within & between clusters, in order to build the capacity of companies, particularly SMEs. One of the primary aims of the project is to engage screen agencies, policymakers, business support agencies, educational institutes, research centres, media companies to network, to identify best practice & to deliver workshops & Master classes to raise skills levels & promote knowledge transfer.

Keywords

Cooperation, networking, practical and applied education, cluster development, work experience

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1 Background

In 2008 a new type of Higher Education institution was established in Denmark in the field of business, ICT, food processing and engineering.

The primary aims of these institutions - the Academies of Professional Higher Education - were:

- To support the government's aim that more than 50% of the Danish population should go into higher education
- To enhance development and growth in the regions of Denmark through national and international cooperation, and through the development and transfer of knowledge and competences

The principal remits for the new institutions are:

- To further develop existing education programmes, and to create new education programmes in cooperation with the regional/ national stakeholders, based on core trends identified in industry and research,

- To conduct innovative and developmental activities for stakeholders and to establish new Knowledge Centres in core competence areas.

The new institutions therefore play a significant role in bringing growth and welfare to the regions. Their activities can be explained using the following "Regional Welfare, Growth,

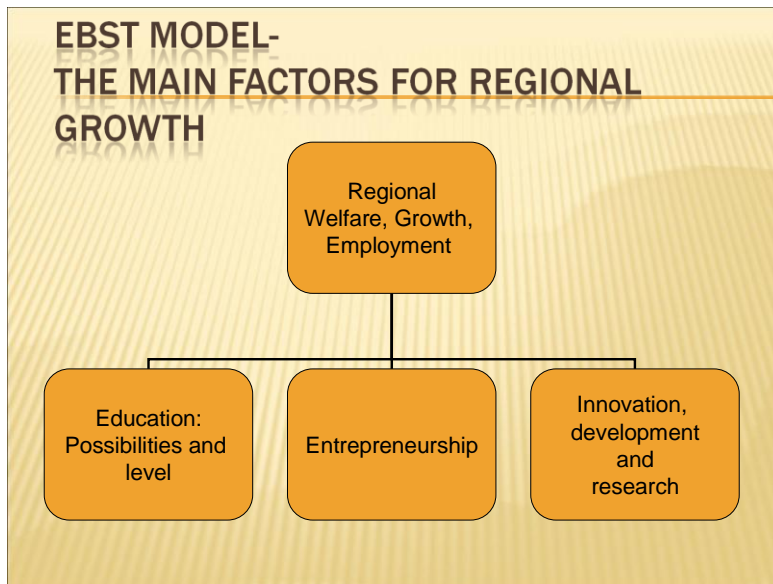


Figure 1: Model for regional Growth: The Danish Authority of Enterprise and Construction

One of the main challenges for the new institutions is therefore to establish partnerships both with traditional research institutions in core areas and with companies that are interested in cooperating with these institutions in the fields of knowledge transfer and innovation, development and applied research.

The Danish Authority of Enterprise and Construction has investigated the growth rates in Danish companies and has shown that

- Danish companies are innovative and
- Development primarily takes place in clusters (a business cluster can be defined as a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Industry_cluster))

Similar research undertaken into clusters in other EU states has revealed comparable trends in cluster development. Dundee College completed research studies in the course of a transnational

project part-funded through the EU Equal Programme, which indicated that collaborative formal and informal structures within clusters led to higher growth and economic advantage (www.clem.pl <http://www.clem.pl>).

2 Potential Results

Participation in cluster development could therefore be one way for the Academies to fulfil their obligations in terms of contributing to regional growth and employment.

Some of the ways the institutions can help the clusters is to:

- deliver to (future) employees the skills and competences required to enhance cluster development
- transfer cutting-edge knowledge from the institutions
- conduct tailor-made courses on demand
- function as a learning lab/ knowledge centre for the cluster

The cluster(s) can in turn help the institutions to:

- give students practical experience through guest lectures
- bring current knowledge to the institutions from the world of work
- provide internships
- provide topics for theses where new theories can be tested

3 The Process - a Case Study

Research carried out by The Danish Authority of Enterprise and Construction shows that, particularly in the culture sector, business development takes place in clusters. The rationale for this can be found both in direct production benefits (qualified labour force and investors), the benefits of subcontracting (risk management), and the ability as a cluster to liaise more effectively with HEIs to gain more general knowledge about management and other topics which are not directly utilised in production but that are important in the longer term.

3.1 The Partners in the Danish Cooperation

In recognition of the benefits cited above, FilmFyn Ltd, as a representative for the Film Cluster on Funen, Denmark, asked EAL, Tietgen Business College to join the Film Cluster.

3.1.1 Danish Film Cluster

The Film Cluster consists of:

- Film producers
- TV producers
- TV2
- FilmFyn
- Kolding Cartoon Festival
- Game developers
- Advertising industry

Business areas related to creative business in:

- Attractions
- Design and advertising
- Music
- Creative experience and commercial development

Their customers are Danish and foreign film and TV production companies.

Their products are film and TV productions and services related to:

- Production facilities (film studios, stage scenery, costumes, make-up)
- Locations
- Post production
- Technology
- Financing
- Services in connection with residence: board, lodging and transportation.

This business sector is of minor financial significance for the region as a whole, but is of economic importance in Southern Funen, where it generates work and profits both directly as a result of film production and indirectly as it increases interest through exposure: The image of Southern Funen as a creative place where the "creative class" is enhanced by the relatively high level of creative entrepreneurship in the area.

There is great potential for developing the film and TV industry on several levels because:

- It creates attractive jobs - for both newcomers and current citizens who may remain in the area.
- It creates interest as an attractive place to live amongst an attractive target group.
- The region already has a well established creative image of long standing that can be further built upon.
- Attracting international production will give the industry critical mass.

3.1.2 The Marketing Management Programme specializing in film

The connections between EAL, Tietgen Business College, and the Film Cluster evolved organically through the development of its Marketing Management Programme specializing in film.

The focus on film in this programme developed as a result of the success of Danish film around the turn of the century. The Danish film industry recognized that stronger commercial skills were needed to help support the artistic side of the industry.

In collaboration with the film industry, i.e. producers, distributors and cinemas, Tietgen Business College developed a specialism within the Marketing Management Programme. The programme is unique in that it is only delivered in Odense and is the only educational programme that unites all the elements of the industry - from concept to screen.

The Marketing Management Programme is closely aligned to industry needs, and contains all the commercial disciplines, such as marketing, sales, economics, communication, project management, organization, logistics and law, whilst also allowing for areas of specialized interest to be developed via elective educational elements. The elective subjects "From Concept to Silver Screen" and "Communication in the Film Industry" were developed for the programme and launched in 2001.

This specialized programme depends on close collaboration with the industry. Each semester one extensive project and several smaller projects are designed based on the current priorities of the industry are carried out. Visits and seminars are arranged between industry representatives and the students prior to the projects. The industry continuously provides current information and material for the students, to enable them to obtain recognised accreditation of sector-specific skills.

The programme contains at least one industry-related field trip per semester. Company visits allow students' insight into the various elements of the industry and the route of films from the Danish

Film Institute, producers and distributors to the cinemas - and all the job possibilities to be found along that route.

The students also remain in close contact with industry when they are invited twice a year to the national pre-screenings. The students get the opportunity to expand their networks, see what is coming up in the cinemas and participate in different seminars related to the film industry.

During the last semester of the programme the students spend a 3-month internship with a company in the industry and gather material for their dissertations. Academic staff was slightly sceptical at first whether placements in the industry could be found for all the students, but these concerns proved to be unfounded. Word quickly spread within the industry that film-interested students were willing to work 3-5 months - without pay! - knowledgeable students, who not only knew about film, but also knew about all the commercial aspects related to the industry. Companies lined up to offer internships for the students - too many, unfortunately, to satisfy their requests for interns.

The film industry has also contributed positively to the student assessment process, by providing external examiners for elective subjects and dissertations based on student internships in the industry.

Close collaboration throughout the programme has given the industry knowledge of the students' competencies. This means that a large percentage of graduates gain employment in the industry - in production, distribution and in the cinema as well as related areas such as TV and the media.

3.2. The Transnational Collaboration Project: NSSP

Within the North Sea Region Interreg IVB programme, Denmark was invited to join a partnership in the North Sea Screen Partners (NSSP) project. This project aims to strengthen the film and media industries within the North Sea Region. The NSSP project seeks to take advantage of the great potential for the film industry to promote innovation and growth in the North Sea Region, and to increase the global competitiveness of the region.

During the 36-month project, transnational cooperation will strengthen the development of existing film/TV clusters in the region from both the business and educational perspectives, in addition to attracting investment to areas outwit major provincial hubs.

3.2.1 Partners and Tasks

The 12 partners are:

- Denmark - FilmFyn A/S, EAL Tietgen Business College, Filmby Aarhus and Roskilde University
- England - Screen East
- Scotland - Dundee City Council (lead Partner), TayScreen, University of Dundee, Dundee College
- Germany - Nordmedia Fonds GmbH
- Norway - Bergen Mediaby, Kunsthøgskolen in Bergen (KHIB/Bergen National Academy of Arts)
- Sweden - Västra Götalands Region.

The project is divided into 4 Work Packages, each with its own focus area and participating partners. Activities include conferences, seminars, Master classes, creation of databases, web-based communication and the exchange of teachers and students.

The 4 Work Packages are:

- W1. 'Business Development Platform': Development of a platform to strengthen the network in the North Sea region
- W2. 'Cluster Mapping to attract Inward Investment': To chart existing film networks in the North Sea region and promote them jointly internationally
- W3. 'Knowledge and Skills Development': Coordination and exchange between educational institutions, creation of a web-database of information for both students and businesses, exchange of experience
- W4. 'Production and Distribution Technology': establishment of research centre for film and visual media

4 Collaborative Transnational Activity

Within Work Package 3, lead Dundee College, the collective focus has been on the creation of exchange programmes for students and staff, incorporating Master classes, visiting lecturers, and student project activity leading to national accreditation in the host region.

4.1 The Master class Programme

The Master class programme aims to ensure that:

- current trends in the film and Events Management industries which the students should be familiar with in order to perform future job functions are integrated into teaching
- knowledge of core trends within the film and event industries is shared through transnational collaboration within the partnership
- current knowledge about latest trends is disseminated among teachers, students and management

Within the framework of an exchange programme between EAL, Tietgen Business College and Dundee College, the first Master class programme was delivered in Dundee in the autumn of 2009. This will be followed by two more Master class programmes in Denmark in the course of 2010.

17 Danish students from third semester Marketing Management took part in the first Master class in Dundee. Of the 17 students, 7 specialise in Film Marketing and 10 specialise in Events Management. The students range in age between 20 and 26.

Developed by Dundee College, the Master class programme was delivered by specialists from the Events and Film industries in Scotland:

- Thomas Gerstenmeyer, Research Associate on a Leverhulme Foundation funded project, "Dynamics of World Cinema," University of St Andrews, School of Philosophical, Anthropological and Film Studies, delivered the first Master class entitled "Global Hollywood." This Master class focused on the range of international business models used by regions of the world to develop their film industries; Hollywood vs. Bollywood vs. Auteurs in Europe. The class gave the students a broad insight into how the industry functions differently in different local market contexts.
- Michael Gubbins, consultant and journalist specialising in film and digital media change, presented the second Master class entitled "The Web and how to use it for 'Exposure' and 'Connecting'" which feature in the second and third semester study programmes for International Marketing and Experience and Film Communication. This Master class explored how new media is changing the relationships between product and audience. It explored areas where the web fundamentally changes all aspects of the film business and dealt with the use of internet and other technological media for the distribution and marketing of film and ways of communicating with a mass audience via technological

media. It was supported by a PowerPoint presentation and illustrated through a number of internet resources.

- Susie Wilson, Festival Director Projector, Glasgow & Dundee, who is founder, creative director and producer of Scotland's only Animation Festival, featuring screenings, workshops, master classes, etc., delivered the third Master class. The title of the Master class was "Public Platforms in Specialised Film Festivals" and gave the students a thorough insight into the difficult art of planning, funding and disseminating specialised film festivals and supported the second semester Event Economy and third semester Market Communication subjects. Using the theory and models from the Marketing Management Programme, the Dundee Master class programme proved very rewarding.

All three Master classes were designed to align specifically to theoretical material already covered in the EAL, Tietgen Business College curriculum, thereby enhancing the learning process. Each was videotaped and will be entered on the EAL, Tietgen Business College BlackBoard system and thus can be integrated into teaching for future students at Tietgen and at other associated schools. The videos will also be relevant for specialized areas other than film and Events Management, as they reflect the real life work environment which students will experience after graduation. The subjects dealt with are generic, but illustrated through case studies taken from the Film and Events Management industries.

While the lecturers at EAL, Tietgen Business College were not directly involved in planning the Dundee programme of Master classes in the first instance, a first draft was prepared by Dundee College, and sent to Tietgen for comment and amendment. Tietgen requested the inclusion of certain components to ensure the relevance of the programme for both groups of Danish students. This resulted, for example, in the addition of a lecture by the organizers of the Edinburgh Festivals. To ensure maximum benefits were derived from the Dundee Master class programme, 2x2 classes were included in the schedule so that each Master class related to theory previously studied within the Danish curriculum. For example, one Master class on business models related to theoretical studies in first and second semesters dealing with core competencies, resources, segmentation, value chain, economies of scale, and internationalization theory such as the "closest neighbour method."

The students were presented with the programme several weeks before departure and were advised to review the theory previously covered in the Marketing Management Programme. This was to ensure that the Master class programme in Dundee would not sit in isolation, but would add value to the existing theoretical frame of reference.

While in Dundee, the students were privileged to attend a Season of Screenings of 5 iconic films, including the Scottish "Rob Roy," at Dundee Contemporary Art Centre and College facilities. The students were subsequently given the task of producing a marketing plan for them with the opportunity to achieve SQA (Scottish Qualifications authority) accreditation for their work. The internationally acclaimed producer of "Rob Roy", Peter Brougham, participated in conversations and discussions with the students about the issues involved in film production.

4.2. Evaluation of the First Phase of Activity in Work Package 3

Initial evaluation of the Master class programme has been carried out by:

- EAL, Tietgen Business College – Management
- EAL, Tietgen Business College – Faculty
- EAL, Tietgen Business College - student participants in the Master class programme in Dundee
- The Film Cluster - FilmFyn, Ltd.

4.2.1. EAL, Tietgen Business College – Management.

The College management has evaluated the initial activities as follows:

The work taking place in work package 3 has helped:

- To better understand the structure of the film industry,
- To identify the skills demands our specialised education programme - the only one of its kind in Denmark - is meeting
- To expand our network both nationally and internationally, in order to enable us to gain a unique, in-depth observation of film, television and media companies. This insight will
 - allow the organisation and customisation of the training programmes on offer in these areas
 - ensure that future graduates' competencies meet industry needs and that the demand for qualified employees can be met
- The project also uniquely provides a number of guaranteed international internships in the industry through the cooperation and commitment of the project partners to make such opportunities available to one another across the partnership

4.2.2 EAL, Tietgen Business College – Faculty

From an educationalist's point of view, NSSP is a welcome opportunity to rise above the hectic routine of everyday life, and to gain new knowledge in the Film and Events Management industries. It is very rewarding to see how other nations work in the same disciplines, and where these industries sit within the national context in terms of their economic contribution and profile. Furthermore, it is rewarding to plan activities such as Master classes across national borders and to have a concrete and successful cooperation with partner institutions in other member states, for example Dundee College. Not least, it is very rewarding to interact with students in a different cultural environment. It brings increased mutual awareness and understanding and it fosters better relations between staff and students for the remaining study period.

4.2.3 EAL, Tietgen Business College – Students

The students were in general positive in their assessment of the Dundee

Master class programme:

	Very positive	Positive	Positive	Very negative
The programme in general	54%	46%	0%	0%
The Master classes in general	15%	77%	0%	8%
Coordinators engagement	100%			

Figure 2: Evaluation of Dundee Master class Programme, MO284

4.2.4. The Film Cluster - FilmFyn Ltd.

FilmFyn has stated:

"We are incredibly excited to participate in the NSSP-cooperation that supports the long-term strategy to strengthen the film environment on Funen with an international focus," says Lars Hermann, director of FilmFyn. "More than 35 film projects have now been recorded on South Funen, and we are well underway to establishing a genuine Funen film industry, including inviting all the Funen municipalities to take part in ownership, so we can live up to our new slogan - Fyn is Film - and NSSP is an important step. Our Funen production and service companies have access to international contacts, analyses and knowledge, and NSSP strengthens educational co-operation to ensure that we get employees with the right skills to Funen. VERL, our Scottish partner's computing effects laboratory, which is also part of the NSSP, gives us the access to the latest in special effects for film, television and new media. With a budget for FilmFyn of around DKK 6.5 million over three years, NSSP is a perfect tool to strengthen the film cluster, to which also Region Southern Denmark has previously committed support."

5 Conclusions

The Danish Higher Education and Film Industry sectors benefit significantly from the involvement in the NSSP project of four Danish organisations. Collaboration with transnational partners throughout Europe stimulates:

- development in the region through national and international cooperation
- increased knowledge and skills development
- further development of existing educational programmes in cooperation with the regional/national stakeholders which integrate trends from industry and research
- innovative activities for HEI stakeholders.

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Work Based Learning Partnerships: A Match Made in Heaven?

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to identify the critical success factors for a Work Based Learning (WBL) partnership between a Higher Education (HE) provider and an employer and to make recommendations for successful WBL partnerships. A WBL partnership involves a programme of learning which is jointly developed and delivered by an employer and a HE provider. An increasing number of employers now recognise the importance of investing in their employees' development and are turning to HE providers to deliver the appropriate learning. In order to ensure a successful WBL programme, it is extremely important that there is a good partnership between the HE provider and the employer. Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT) has acquired significant experience in developing WBL partnerships with local and national employers. This paper reports on findings from a series of depth interviews with experienced WBL practitioners from both industry and HE. The findings from this research will contribute to the debate on how HE providers can engage in successful partnerships with industry to offer innovative WBL programmes.

Keywords

Work Based Learning Partnerships

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1 Introduction

WBL involves programmes of study where ‘students are full-time employees whose programme of study is embedded in the workplace and is designed to meet the learning needs of the employees and the aims of the organisation.’ (Sobiechowska & Maisch, 2006, p. 270).

Boud and Solomon (2001) describe WBL programmes as typically sharing the following six characteristics:

1. A partnership between an external organisation and a HE provider is established.
2. The learners involved are employed in an external organisation.
3. The learning programme derives from the needs of the workplace and the learner and not from a pre-defined academic curriculum.
4. Learners engage in a process of recognition of current knowledge, skills and competencies prior to commencement of the programme of study.
5. Learning is taking place as an integrated part of projects/tasks completed in the workplace.
6. The learning outcomes are assessed by the HE provider.

How these six characteristics are prioritised is the responsibility of the HE provider. In Ireland there has been a recent interest in the development of WBL programmes by HE providers. This has been driven by a combination of government policy, initiatives from the HE providers and a willingness from employers to engage in WBL partnerships. This represents a significant departure from the traditional emphasis in higher education. ‘In Ireland, until recent years, the emphasis in state-funded third level education was almost entirely towards “for-employment” rather than “in-employment” education and training. In-employment training has, for the most part, been largely disconnected from the formal education qualifications system. The newer emphasis on upskilling of persons already in the labour force poses new and significant challenges’ (Linehan and Sheridan, 2009, p. 496). With the competition to attract the traditional learner (18-25 year old full time student) more intense than ever, many HE providers are focusing their attention on those in employment. According to a recent report, ‘the current climate of rapidly rising unemployment puts future skills needs into sharp focus. Future recovery largely depends on capitalising on the full potential of the people that live and work in Ireland, and this requires a flexible education and training system that enables our workforce to make the most of enterprise and employment opportunities as they arise’ (Forfás, 2009, p. 2).

2 Literature Review

Murphy (2007) suggests that partnerships between HE and the world of work are not entirely new. Traditional and contemporary arrangements for training of professional practitioners in areas such as in law, IT, accountancy, medicine and in the pharmaceutical industry have been in existence for some time. Off campus delivery is now quite common.

‘In modern economies, closer interaction between public knowledge institutions and enterprise is increasingly important. One of the reasons for this is the increasing global competition which forces companies to specialise and strengthen their core areas. By working closely with the knowledge institutions, companies gain access to the new knowledge they need as well as the latest technologies’. (Forfás, 2007, p. 10).

If the WBL programme is to be successful, then it is essential that there is a good partnership between the employer and the HE provider. There are a number of prerequisites for a successful WBL partnership including:

- The WBL programme should be jointly developed by the HE provider and the employer.
- There needs to be continuous communications between the partners.
- The programme requires the full commitment from both the HE provider and the employer.
- Cultural barriers need to be overcome.
- The learner requires support from both the HE provider and the employer.
- The programme requires flexibility in terms of delivery and assessment.
- The employer must feel there is a good return on investment.

2.1 Collaboration in Programme Development

Traditionally, the majority of WBL programmes have been designed solely by the HE provider. However, current thinking on WBL programmes is that they should be developed in collaboration between employer and HE provider. Participation by employers in programme design (including duration, timing and content) should ensure that their employees will gain the maximum benefit from the programme. Those in favor of WBL programmes suggest that an important component should be the delivery of a major work-based project which is jointly developed by the HE provider and the employer. ‘The potential for aligning assignments to business objectives provides a

significant incentive for employers to be closely involved in design and delivery of work-based projects' (FDF, 2007, p. 16).

2.2 Communication and Commitment

The HE provider and the employer must develop a communication channel and meet regularly to review the partnership and discuss the progress of learners. 'Commitment from the top and "down the line" is needed if work-based learning is to be successful' (Duckenfield and Stirner, 1992, p. 28). Rowley (2005) suggests working in partnership requires individuals and organisations to direct considerable effort toward agreeing a shared agenda where both parties are convinced that they will benefit, and to which both parties are committed to contribute, not just at the beginning, but over the lifetime of the relationship. Duckenfield and Stirner (1992) further suggest that there needs to be effective communication between organisations, and within organisations. All the stakeholders (learner, HE provider and employer) need to be involved in the planning of the WBL programme. It is a process that requires negotiation, with the aim of achieving clear and well understood definitions of roles and responsibilities.

2.3 Overcoming Cultural Barriers

There is a recognised cultural difference between HE providers and industry. This is due to a large extent to the different priorities of each. HE providers are concerned with academic standards while industry generally is concerned with productivity and profit. Gallacher and Reeve (2005) suggest that WBL partnerships, in attempting to bring together employers and HE providers, run the risk of failure due to cultural disparities.

Employers, particularly SMEs, may be 'turned off' or simply baffled by the jargon of learning and skills. Despite the many links that exist between employers and education institutions, they may still perceive each other as inhabiting different worlds. Institutions whose staff have recent or concurrent industry experience have a clear advantage in bridging the gap (Anderson and Hemsworth, 2005, p.16).

Finally, FDF (2007) further emphasise the cultural differences by warning that HE providers should guide employers with the development and validation process of WBL programmes and be mindful of the jargon that may be commonplace in HE but baffling to employers.

2.4 Learner Support from Employers

Employees completing the WBL programme need support from the employer, particularly in terms of time allocated to attend class and to complete assignments. Anderson and Hemsworth (2005) suggest that due to work commitments, issues may arise over work/study balance. Their learning backgrounds may well leave shortfalls in study skills and academic writing may prove challenging. Due to the complexities often associated with WBL programmes, mentor support from within the organisation may also be required.

To enable employers to take an active part in the student's learning in the workplace, students are allocated a mentor in the workplace who helps the student to identify their individual learning needs, apply knowledge to practice and act as a resource for the student's development. The mentor and student are supported during the placement by the tutor through telephone or e-mail communication and tripartite meetings (Wilson et al 2005, p. 119).

Benefer (2007) explains that mentors can protect the employer's investment in learning, as well as provide an opportunity for employee development which is both motivating and challenging.

2.5 HE Provider Support and Resources

The HE provider must ensure adequate resource allocation and the necessary motivation in delivering the WBL programme. Resources should include appropriate qualified and capable staff who have sufficient time to develop and deliver the programme along with appropriate equipment and other facilities. FDF (2007) identified a key component in WBL partnerships - HE staff who are enthusiastic about the WBL programme with relevant recent work experience.

2.6 Flexibility

The HE provider needs to be flexible in terms of delivery and assessment in order to respond to the requirements of the employer and employee. Brennan (2005) suggests that WBL satisfies the criteria for flexible learning by being flexible in terms of time, place and mode of learning. It transforms the role of the HE provider into one of facilitating and supporting learning, rather than delivering a prespecified programme of study. In order to effectively provide this support, when and where it is needed, flexible learning has come to be associated with e-learning and distance learning and with negotiated learning outcomes.

In developing WBL programmes, there needs to be multiple access points of learning for learners to engage. For example, the student/employee should be able to attend some structured lectures, undertake e-learning modules, undertake self-directed study, attend one-to-one tutor discussions and take part in mentor assisted e-forums (Engage, 2008, p. 9).

2.7 Value for Money

Because employers are investing considerable resources into the WBL programmes, it is important for the HE provider to demonstrate a return on investment from engaging in the WBL programme. Wedgwood (2008) believes that ultimately, employers' primary motivation in participating in a WBL programme lies in the expectation of a positive impact on productivity and performance.

3 WBL at Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)

LYIT has significant experience engaging in WBL programmes with industry in the North West region of Ireland. WBL in LYIT became more formalised in 2006 through involvement with a Lónra project entitled Education in the Workplace (Lónra is the network of HE institutions from the Border, Midlands and Western region of Ireland). The major objective of this project was to recognise and accredit learning in the workplace with a third level qualification. A Facilitator was appointed to promote WBL to employers in the region. In 2007, LYIT participated in a Higher Education Authority Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) project along with a number of other HE institutions from Ireland. A significant component of this SIF project involved the promotion of WBL.

LYIT has developed a number of WBL programmes in partnership with local and national employers. The WBL programmes developed by LYIT cover the full spectrum of HE qualifications on the National Framework of Qualifications from Level 6 (Higher Certificate), through Levels 7 and 8 (Ordinary and Honours Degrees) to Level 9 (Masters Degree).

Some of the WBL programmes developed between LYIT and employers include:

- Higher Certificate in Computing in IT Support - jointly developed and delivered with Pramerica Systems Ireland Limited.
- BA in Retail Management Practice - jointly developed and delivered with the Irish Business and Employers Confederation Retail Skillnets.
- MSc in Computing in Enterprise Applications - jointly developed with SITA.

- Higher Diploma in Financial Services Technologies - jointly developed and delivered with two major financial services employers in the region.
- Higher Certificate in Business (Financial Services) - jointly developed and delivered with Pramerica Systems Ireland Limited.
- Certificate in Managing and Mentoring People (Minor Award) - jointly developed and delivered with a number of local and national employers.

Some of the key features of the above programmes include:

- Learners are given recognition in the form of admission or exemptions for demonstrated prior learning in the employee's working or personal life.
 - Mentor support is provided to learners.
 - Components of the programme are available using on-line tools and virtual learning environments.
 - Programme assignments are aligned to employer objectives.

Since 2007, over 300 learners have enrolled on WBL programmes delivered by LYIT and in excess of 60 staff from LYIT have completed training programmes on WBL and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

4 Methodology

In-depth interviews were conducted with 12 individuals with extensive experience working in WBL partnerships between LYIT and industry. Half of this group were from the LYIT and included academic staff and managers. The remaining participants were managers from industry who engaged with LYIT on a WBL programme.

The depth interviews with the academic respondents focused on the following themes:

- The nature of the WBL partnership (duration, the industrial partner, who initiated the partnership, delivery of the programme etc.).
- Resource allocation.
- Stages involved in planning and delivering the programme.
- Key differences between the WBL programme and traditional programmes of study.
- Problems encountered.
- The relationship with the employer.

- Lessons learned.
- Key factors for a successful WBL partnership.

The depth interviews with the industry respondents focused on the following themes:

- Why and how they got involved in the WBL partnership.
- How they selected learners to participate on the WBL programme.
- Resource allocation.
- Problems encountered.
- Possible recommendations for WBL partnerships.
- Relationship with LYIT.
- Impact of the programme on company performance.
- Lessons learned.
- Key factors for a successful WBL partnership.

5 Findings

The findings from this research concur with much of the evidence from the literature. However, some significant new findings were also identified from the depth interviews conducted with the academic and industry respondents. A significant amount of the research conducted on WBL programmes to date is based on the perspective of the HE provider, so gathering the views of industry respondents ensured that the opinions of both partners to the WBL partnership were represented. The findings suggest that employers primarily want a WBL partnership with a HE provider that offers value for money, minimum disruption to the working schedule of employees and results in an improvement in company performance and productivity. HE providers suggested that for the partnership to succeed the employer must be committed in terms of investing time in the planning of the programme. Employers also need to support employees on the programme in terms of mentoring and allocation of time to attend lectures and complete assignments. HE providers also suggested that the employer should carefully consider the suitability of employees chosen to complete the programme. The major prerequisites for a successful WBL partnership identified in this research are discussed below.

5.1 Trust and Commitment

Like any partnership, the performance and ultimate success will be largely influenced by the degree of trust in existence between the partners concerned. All the respondents mentioned the importance of trust if the WBL partnership is to succeed. One respondent summarised the importance of trust by suggesting:

If a WBL partnership is to be successful then it is essential that the parties involved trust each other. This means that the partners are honest and open from the start. It also means that the partners have full confidence in each other. Traditionally there has been an element of suspicion between employers and third level providers. The college / university often suspect that the employer is only concerned with profits whereas the employer often assumes colleges/universities put too much emphasis on the theory aspects of training (Respondent B – academic).

A number of industry respondents believed that the HE provider should ensure that lecturers responsible for delivering modules on the programme have a good insight into the culture, functions and workings of the employer. This helps demonstrate lecturer commitment to the programme. Lecturers should be encouraged to visit the organisation and see how the organisation operates. Lecturers should also be aware of the tasks an employee is expected to carry out upon completion of the programme. This will help ensure that the objectives of the programme are satisfactorily achieved. Feedback from a number of respondents from industry suggests that the level of trust between the partners in the WBL programme is affected by the motives each partner has for engaging in the partnership. If the employer believes that the main reason the HE provider is engaging in the WBL partnership is for financial gains, then the employer will tend to have less trust and respect for that HE provider.

5.2 Communication

All respondents emphasised the importance of communication in a WBL partnership. Communication between the various partners is essential. Ideally all decisions relating to the development and delivery of the programme are made in collaboration.

There needs to be regular feedback sessions between all the stakeholders. There needs to be a learner representative appointed whose responsibility is to voice the opinions and concerns of the learners on the programme. The need for this is especially important during the initial stages of the WBL partnership as there are usually teething problems at the start. The dates for these feedback

sessions should be identified at the commencement of the programme otherwise the meetings probably will not happen (Respondent F – industry).

The importance of communications is also emphasised by the HE provider's perspective.

Due to the unique nature of WBL partnerships, and the diverse needs of the different stakeholders involved, a steering group should be established to oversee the programme. There should be regular meetings organised where the progress of the programme can be discussed. The steering group should comprise learner, HE provider, employer and mentor representatives (Respondent D – academic).

While the literature clearly emphasises the importance of regular communications between the HE provider and employer, it is worth noting the opinion of respondent D above who asserted that communications needs to move beyond meetings. If communications are to be properly managed, a steering group composed of the four stakeholders (HE provider, mentor, employer and learner) needs to be formed. Interestingly, a number of academic respondents suggested that working in partnership with the larger organisations that have a dedicated person responsible for training and education is less challenging compared to working with the smaller organisations without such a person. Several respondents suggested that communications between employer and HE provider should not just be confined to issues relating to the WBL programme. For example, employers could invite HE provider representatives to corporate or social events or offer sponsorship to the HE provider for events or sports teams. Similarly, the HE provider could promote the employer as a good place to work for their full time learners.

5.3 Importance of Planning and Direction

It was very apparent from conducting the research that if the WBL partnership is to succeed, both the HE provider and employer must invest significant time and efforts towards the planning of the programme.

A roadmap should be created, outlining the key roles and responsibilities for all parties. This plan should also include the objectives the programme seeks to achieve. If possible deadlines should be built into the plan, for example the programme must be developed by February 15th, delivery of the programme must commence on April 1st and be completed by June 18. (Respondent A – industry).

5.4 Programme Design and Delivery

Both industry and academic respondents stressed the importance of collaboration in programme design. Interestingly, a number of respondents (particularly academic respondents) believed that initially the partners should collaborate on smaller programmes as opposed to programmes comprising many modules. This ensures a planned evolution of the partnership allowing both partners to get to know each other before engaging in a major WBL programme.

Providers or departments new to WBL programmes should initially engage in shorter WBL programmes, for example programmes with two to three modules as opposed to trying to deliver an eight to ten module programme. The learning achieved from delivering a short WBL programme can then be applied when delivering the larger WBL programme (Respondent B – academic).

One of the industry respondents expressed the concern that sometimes HE providers try and develop a general programme and make this available to all employers.

From an employer's perspective, it's very important that the programme offered by the college is sector specific. Employers are not interested in a 'one hat fit all' approach. They need to feel that the programme developed is tailored to their individual needs in terms of programme development, delivery and assessment (Respondent C – industry).

5.5 Flexibility

The need for flexibility in terms of programme delivery was mentioned by the majority of respondents. For example industry respondents suggested that the times and dates of lecturers and assessments may require amendments from time to time, especially at times when the organisation is particularly busy. On other occasions the employer may require the HE provider to change the content of certain parts of a programme due to market changes or legislation. Having a HE provider that can accommodate this is very important to the employer. A significant number of both industry and academic respondents emphasised that point that HE providers need to utilise flexible learning tools such as Blackboard when delivering WBL programmes.

Blackboard has the potential to revolutionise WBL programmes. In my opinion it is the single most important tool in such programmes. It allows the learner to learn at a time, place and pace most suitable to them. I started off using Blackboard to offer support materials to my learners, now the majority of my notes and lectures are available to the learner via this tool. I have received very positive

feedback from my learners, especially learners that are in full time employment and require a flexible approach to learning which Blackboard certainly offers (Respondent F - academic).

Industry respondents also recommended the use of tools such as virtual learning environments to facilitate asynchronous learning. Several industry respondents stated that they prefer WBL programmes that cause minimum disruption to the employee's working day and that the use of e-learning tools can help ensure that the learner is not required to attend a substantial amount of hours in class when learning can take place using a blended learning approach.

5.6 Mentor Support

Many of the respondents emphasised the importance of workplace mentors as suggested in the literature, for example Benefer (2007) and Wilson et al (2005).

Employees should be able to avail of mentoring support within the organisation. The nature of these WBL programmes is that the lecturer is expected to deliver a lot of information in a fairly short space of time. Additional mentor support from a properly qualified and capable mentor within the organisation could contribute towards a successful programme (Respondent F – academic).

Interestingly, a number of industry respondents noted that if mentors are expected to provide support to learners, then they need to be allocated time by the employer to provide this mentoring support.

During the early stages of our WBL programme, I was made aware by one of the learners that the mentoring support service that was supposed to be offered to learners was not happening. When I investigated the cause of this, I discovered that mentors refused to offer any support unless they were allocated time off from their normal working duties to do so. It was agreed that participating mentors be allocated two hours a week to help learners and that the company would pay for interested individuals to complete an accredited mentoring programme. This ensured we were able to provide a good caliber of mentoring (Respondent C – industry).

5.7 Assessment

The assessment component of the WBL programme was cited by the majority of respondents and the importance of the timing and nature of the assessment were highlighted as key factors affecting the success of the WBL partnership. A number of industry respondents suggested that assessments should be linked to organisational objectives.

WBL Partnerships work best when the programme assessments are linked to what the learner (in this case the employee) is expected to do in the organisation. For example, if one of the modules is Marketing, the learner could be expected to develop a marketing campaign for the organisation as part of the assessment. It is important to remember that in many instances the learners are full time employees and where possible assessment should be linked to tasks the employee could perform in the workplace (Respondent D – industry)

WBL partnerships work best when HE providers consult with the employer when deciding assessment dates. There will be certain dates in the year when employees will be particularly busy and will be unable to commit fully to the WBL programme. Assessment and exams should not be set for these times. A number of academic respondents suggested that employees participating on the WBL programme should be given adequate support in areas such as study skills, assignment completion, presentations, referencing and completing exams. These typically are areas where learners on WBL programmes are weak.

5.8 Bridging Cultural Differences

The issue of overcoming cultural differences was cited by both industry and academic respondents. Appreciation of the other partner's background and requirements is vital if a WBL partnership programme is to be successful. It is important to consider the cultural differences that exist between the partners. Being able to compromise is vital.

Overcoming the cultural differences between private industry and third level institutions is a major challenge. Both partners need to be understanding and realise that for the partnership to work, each partner is going to have to be patient. There will have to be compromises on both sides. The ability to overcome the cultural differences will depend a lot on the personalities of the partner representatives (Respondent E – academic).

A lot of the feedback received from the respondents suggests that HE providers predominately focus their efforts on education while employers seem to be more concerned with training. If the HE provider can bridge this gap, then there is a much greater likelihood of ensuring a successful WBL partnership. According to a number of respondents, when academics have recent relevant working experience and when employer representatives are familiar with higher education, then there is an increased likelihood that cultural differences can be overcome.

5.9 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

LYIT sees RPL as an extremely important component of all its WBL programmes. LYIT recognises that many of the learners on WBL programmes have already acquired relevant knowledge, skills and competencies prior to the commencement of the programme and these learners should be given an opportunity to seek exemptions from relevant modules.

The RPL component of the programme was vital to the success of the programme. It allowed learners to get skills and knowledge they already acquired recognised by the college and entitled the learner to a number of exemptions. This reduced the time and effort required to complete the programme. Learners were still required to complete a RPL assessment for each of the modules they sought exemptions in. (Respondent A – industry).

Learner expectations regarding the possibilities RPL can offer also has to be managed.

The employer and the student also have to have realistic expectations of what is achievable from a WBL partnership. In some cases there may be an expectation that a student can gain sweeping exemptions from often non-relevant work-experience (Respondent D – academic).

5.10 Selecting Suitable Learners for the Programme

It is important to remember that the learners on WBL programmes in many instances are also full time employees with family and social commitments. Prospective learners need to be made aware of the demands and expectations of WBL programmes.

When an employer informs employees about the programme, typically a significant number wish to register. It is important that the employees interested in completing the programme are made fully aware of the demands involved. It is a good idea to have an information session which gives an honest account of what an employee should expect. If possible give employees that previously completed the programme an opportunity to offer their views to potential applicants. (Respondent C - industry).

A number of academic respondents believed that the employer should ensure that all employees on the WBL programme are suitable. Suitability should be determined by an academic and employer representative interviewing all prospective learners thereby significantly increasing the likelihood of success.

6 Win - Win Approach – A Match Made in Heaven

All respondents agreed that if the partnership between the HE provider and the employer is to be successful, both partners must gain from the partnership. The employer should gain by having better trained staff leading to improved productivity and performance. The HE provider should also gain, not just financially, but also perhaps more importantly in terms of industry engagement and staff development. Several academic respondents mentioned the fact that the main motive for them engaging in the WBL partnership was to get a better insight into the workings of industry. Building relationships with local employers can also help HE providers secure work placements for their full time students. This realisation that both partners can benefit from the partnership should help ensure partners are fully committed. This collaborative approach needs to permeate programme design, delivery and support. This can be challenging due to cultural differences between the partners.

If the partnership is to be successful there needs to be high levels of communication, commitment and trust between the HE provider and employer. Employers are anxious to ensure that they are getting value for money and a flexible delivery that does not detract from the employee's productivity while HE providers need to know that the learner is suitable for the programme and will receive adequate support from the employer. It is anticipated that this paper will make a significant contribution to scholarly debate on WBL partnerships by providing insights from both the HE provider and the employer's perspective.

Findings from this exploratory study raise a number of interesting challenges for both partners as well as proposing recommendations for a successful WBL partnership.

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Creativity as a part of Entrepreneurial Behaviour in Higher Education

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Abstract

Creativity is a partially inherited feature in an individual, but it is expressed in connection with a specific culture and context. The use of creativity can be regarded as a desired behaviour in most firms and creativity can be recognised as the degree to which an employee demonstrates new ideas or applications for activities and solutions at work. There are a lot of studies indicating the importance of the creativity in the work place, however limited attempts have been made to translate creativity into the classroom environment. This study explored how business students have used creativity in their studies and identifies the factors which discourage and promote its use in higher education.

Keywords

Creativity, business students, entrepreneurship education, higher education

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1 Introduction

New pedagogical conceptions about learning and societal changes have strongly changed the goals of the educational system and the requirements of the working life. Along with this, the implementation of entrepreneurship education requires many significant changes compared to previous practices. (Leskinen, 1999). In addition, the comprehensiveness of entrepreneurship education sets expectations particularly to university pedagogics, which have traditionally emphasized knowledge and knowing. For example since the 1990's the way of teaching in entrepreneurship education has been the drawing up of a business plan. The chances of this kind of pedagogical approach to reach genuine entrepreneurial learning can be questioned, however, but realising this can be considered the first stage in developing new practices. (Kyrö & Ripatti, 2006). Therefore it seems that there is a clear need to develop more enterprising individuals in educational institutions. For instance schools which offer business studies ("the business schools") should no longer emphasize so much business planning or managing small enterprises, but creativity and change (Kirby, 2004).

It is commonly agreed that creativity is an essential asset of entrepreneurship and business. In general, creativity turns ideas into useful knowledge, and then the useful knowledge into added value. (Gurteen, 1997). Often creativity is connected to new product or service development, and creativity is important in entrepreneurial behaviour since it is also linked with the identification of new business opportunities. Thus, creativity can be regarded as a key link to entrepreneurial behaviour of an individual (Ko & Butler 2007). In addition, creativity is an important antecedent of entrepreneurial intentions (Hamidi, Wennberg & Berglund, 2008).

Although creativity is a desired behaviour in most firms, it is still difficult to understand how creativity occurs and to increase its rate of occurrence (Ko & Butler, 2007). Nevertheless, it can be argued that creative insights often occur by making unusual connections, seeing analogies between ideas that have not previously been related (Robinson, 2001). In practice, creativity can be recognised as the degree to which an employee demonstrates new ideas or applications for activities and solutions at work. Further, it is worth emphasising that risk taking is an integral part of creative processes. In order to find out whether the proposed solution is effective or not it is important to implement it in practice, which means a chance of success, but also a risk of failure (Jalan & Kleiner, 1995).

There are a lot of studies indicating the importance of the creativity and creative climate in the workplace; however they have not yet been translated in the classrooms (Petrowski, 2000). Further, it is important to pay attention to the ways graduates are inducted into organisations in

order to encourage and support their innovative and entrepreneurial behaviour (Kandola, 2002). Nevertheless, to increase students' abilities to diagnose and solve problems confronted in organizational creation, teachers can incorporate creative thinking and behavioural techniques into the classrooms. In fact, there are different methods and techniques for enhancing creative thinking and behaviour in a classroom. (Gundry & Kickul, 1996; Epstein, 2000; Bowkett, 2006; Higgins, 2006; Proctor, 2006). In general, to promote creativity in classes a few general guidelines can be presented: provide opportunity for student choice and discovery, emphasise mastery and self-development rather than sticks and carrots, promote supportable beliefs about creativity, and teach techniques and strategies for creative performance. (Petrowski, 2000).

All in all, the competencies that students need in education institutions and in the workplaces have changed dramatically. To prepare them for what is expected involves a commitment to teach a new set of skills. For example, by building creativity skills into entrepreneurship instruction, students will gain a great advantage when they enter into working life after graduation. (Gundry & Kickul, 1996). However, there are contradictions related to that: if we try to force students to learn or try to make them to be more creative in supposed disciplinary ways, it will have the opposite effect. In addition, in an educational and business tradition we lay great emphasis on rewards and punishments; management by objectives, appraisals and exams are all geared towards the improvement of performance. However, in the area of creativity these policies are counter-productive (Gurteen, 1998).

Because creativity (e.g. creative problem solving, seeing new opportunities) and risk are the most essential phenomena related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behaviour (Robinson & Stern, 1997), the use of those should be nourished and promoted during the studies already. However, since creativity is connected with expertise, creative thinking and the motivation to utilise creativity (Amabile, 1998), the problem is how creativity best can be realised already when the future experts are still studying. To examine that, this study focused on students' creativity in business studies. The context of the study was one international business management degree programme and the sample consisted of the first year students who had taken entrepreneurship course and also learnt the basics of creativity in general and in entrepreneurship in specific. The main objective of this qualitative study was to explore and understand students' opinions and experiences related to the use of creativity in their studies and what are the discouraging and promoting factors in using creativity in the studies in higher education.

2 Various Dimensions of Creativity

2.1 Concept of Creativity

Creativity can mean a variety of things. Basically creativity can, however, be defined so that it is the skill to create something new, different and practically usable (Sternberg & Lubart 2003). In literature creativity is often considered from the point of view of the final result, a process or an individual. In addition, creativity is context-related: the operational environment is very significant in the use of an individual's creativity. (Tuomivaara, Hynninen, Leppänen, Lundell & Tuominen, 2005). As a matter of fact creativity and the use of it is one of the most essential features which distinguish the human being from the other species (Ko & Butler 2007). The psychologists consider creativity a mental process of an individual, and creativity is considered partly hereditary and partly as the consequence of training. But there is a cultural and a social point of view to creativity, too. Therefore creativity should be studied within the interaction of these three factors and from their point of view (individual, culture and interaction). We can simplify that an individual's creativity gets an expression in practice only when s/he makes some kind of change in his/her operational environment. (Csikszentmihalyi, 2003).

Further, creativity can be regarded as the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e. original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e. useful, adaptive concerning constraints) (Sternberg & Lubart, 2003). Within each individual, creativity has three components: expertise, creative thinking skills, and motivation. Expertise is technical, procedural, and intellectual knowledge. Creative-thinking skills determine how flexibly and imaginatively people approach problems. Motivation, in turn, is created unequally: an inner passion to solve the problem at hand leads to a more creative solution than external rewards do (such as money and bonuses). This intrinsic motivation can be most immediately influenced by the work environment. These components can be influenced both in a promoting way and in a discouraging way (Amabile 1997; Amabile, 1998). Figure 1 shows that creativity is highest in that area where the three components are overlapping.

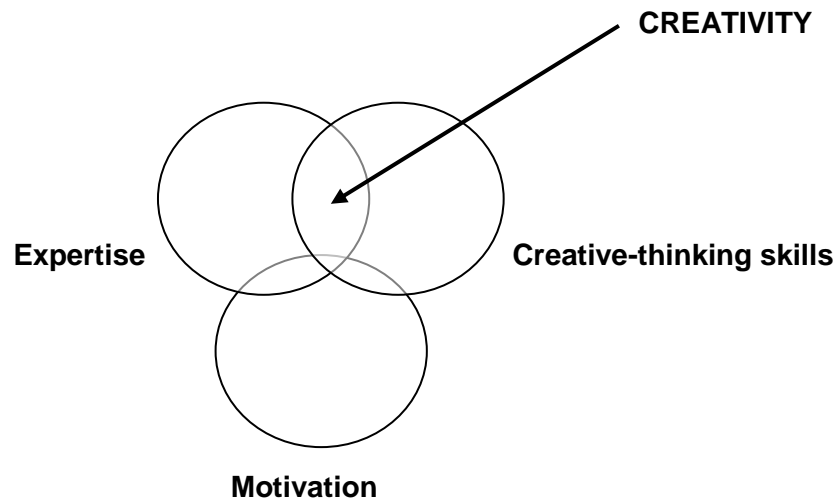


Figure 1: The three components of creativity (Amabile, 1997; Amabile, 1998)

Often creativity is mixed with innovations. Indeed, creativity and innovation are both related to the process of creating and applying new knowledge. However, creativity is about divergent thinking and the generation of new ideas, whereas innovation is about convergent thinking and putting the new ideas into action. (Gurteen, 1998). Actually, creating new ideas means challenging all assumptions and thinking productively by looking at things in many different ways. Typically, however, we think reproductively, which means that we think on the basis of similar problems encountered in the past. (Michalko, 2003). Therefore, creativity and creative thinking can be considered a break of habitual patterns of thought (Robinson, 2001). It is worth emphasising that creativity is more than just problem solving (Ward, 2004).

2.2 Different Types of Creativity

There are four different creativity types: responsive, expected, contributory, and proactive. These creativity types can be considered in terms of two different dimensions: Driver for engagement (is a creative behaviour initiated through a person's self-determined choice or due to external demands), and problem-type (has a problem presented to the individual or is it discovered by the individual). (Unsworth, 2001). Figure 2 illustrates the matrix of the creative types.

open

**Problem
type**

closed

<p><u>Expected creativity</u></p> <p>Required solution to discovered problem</p> <p>Example: creating artwork</p>	<p><u>Proactive creativity</u></p> <p>Volunteered solution to discovered problem</p> <p>Example: unprompted suggestions</p>
<p>Required solution to specified problem</p> <p>Example: Responses produced by “think tank”</p> <p><u>Responsive creativity</u></p>	<p>Volunteered solution to specific problem</p> <p>Example: Contribution by non-project member</p> <p><u>Contributory creativity</u></p>

external

internal

Driver for engagement

Figure 2: Creativity types (Unsworth 2001, 291)

In addition, one can make a distinction between different kinds of creativity in business management. For example, there is individual creativity and corporate creativity. The first one is a

combination of personal traits and learnt characteristics, whereas the latter one is a feature of an organization on which organizational culture has influence (Robinson & Stern, 1997; Trompenaars, 2007). Creativity relating to management is specific, creativity comprises four elements: the capacity for envisioning and understanding intuition, the ability to have a much wider and deeper perception in order to see more than “what meets the eye”, to see deeper significance and connections which may not be obvious, and the ability to break old connections and make new ones, and the skill to convert such connections into concrete applications relevant to the organisation and its mission. Creativity implies a capacity for vision, intuition, perception, connection, and application (Parikh, 1997). Entrepreneurial creativity, in turn, can be exhibited in established organisations as well as in start-up firms. It can be defined as follows: the generation and implementation of novel, appropriate ideas to establish a new venture (a new business or new program to deliver products or services). It may have to do with: a) the products or services themselves, b) identifying a market for the products or services, c) ways of producing or delivering the products or services, or d) ways of obtaining resources to produce or deliver the products or services. A standard definition of creativity focuses on novel, useful ideas whereas the entrepreneurial part of the phrase requires action. (Amabile, 1997).

2.3 Creativity and Time

Time and creativity are related to each other. To understand the association between time and creativity, three temporal modes can be introduced: cyclicity, linearity, and timelessness. Cyclicity consists of the periodic dimension of creativity, whereas linearity is related to evolutionary and contextual aspects. Then, timelessness concerns the deep immersion states of the creative process. (Mainemelis, 2002). Further, time pressure affects creativity in different ways. Although time pressure seems to undermine creative thinking in general, there are striking exceptions. It depends on whether the environment allows people to focus on their work, conveys a sense of meaningful urgency about the task at hand, or stimulates or undermines creative thinking in other ways. For example, creative thinking under *low* time pressure is more likely when people feel as if they are on an expedition (ie. more oriented towards exploring ideas than identifying problems). Further, creative thinking under *extreme* time pressure is more likely when people feel as if they are on a mission (ie. they believe that they are doing important work, and their creative thinking is equally oriented towards identifying problems and exploring ideas). (Amabile, Hadley & Kramer 2003).

According to Robinson (2001) creativity is a time consuming process rather than an event. A classical division of the stages of a creative process are preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. The nature of creative process is personal to the individual, yet creative activity involves a combination of control and freedom, conscious and unconscious thought, intuition and rational analysis for everyone. In other words, the creative process has interrelating phases and it needs time. Since creativity moves through different phases, the situation in which a person tries to produce a finished version of an outcome in the beginning of the creative process is not possible. If the person does not understand this, it can make the person think that s/he is not creative at all. (Robinson, 2001).

2.4 Creativity and Entrepreneurship Education

Nowadays, the goals of entrepreneurship education can be very different: establishing a company or improving the management of SME's, increasing the knowledge related to entrepreneurship and business operations, and increasing the use of entrepreneurial methods. (Paajanen, 2001; Paasio & Nurmi, 2006). It is also important to note that entrepreneurship can be channelled through other means than starting a business. Therefore entrepreneurship education in schools does not mean a straightforward aim to contribute to the development of the amount of enterprises, but to the individuals' enterprising behaviour or activity. (Ristimäki, 2004).

The role of entrepreneurship education is becoming more significant when students confront new problems that demand more integrative responses. One approach which integrates real business issues into classroom is experimental learning. It can be regarded as a method which draws on structured behavioural activities to teach complex affective, cognitive, and behavioural aspects. Learning occurs as students explore interactions among the participants and the scenarios. The purpose of learning is considered to be process-driven, not solution-driven. The main focus is to examine the ways in which participants create ongoing relationships and connections with one another and the content of the exercise. (Gundry & Kickul 1996).

Gibb (2005) argues that entrepreneurial behaviour includes the following aspects: opportunity seeking and grasping, taking initiative to make things happen, solving problems creatively, managing autonomously, taking responsibility for, and ownership of, things, seeing things through, networking effectively to manage interdependence, putting things together creatively, and using judgement to take calculated risks. Further, he concludes that in general these things refer to "the active person, getting things done, thinking strategically on one's feet and harnessing resources

imaginatively". In addition, many of them can be developed, yet some of them can also be regarded as in-born characteristics. Also Ristimäki (2004) summarises features and characteristics relating to a person behaving entrepreneurially for example as follows: self-confident, persistent, creative, independent, flexible, energetic, dynamic, optimistic, having an ability to take risks, need for achievement, uncertainty-bearing attitude, and sense of responsibility. He continues that the diversity of the features is large and some of them are related to personality, while some of them are related to learning and growth. Ristimäki (2004) emphasises that entrepreneurial learning of students aims at new kind of behaviour for the present and for the future. In other words, entrepreneurial behaviour of students could be an aim, if there are circumstances, methods, learning activities and processes which support and facilitate it. Therefore, as an outcome of entrepreneurial learning there could be changes in behaviour, not only in setting up a business.

3 The Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore and understand students' opinions and experiences related to the use of creativity in their studies and how the use of creativity can be promoted in higher education. One international group of business degree students was selected in the study. The students were young adults (average age was about 20 years), and there were 9 female and 9 male students. They represent different nationalities.

The method for data collection was an optional self-assessment task. It is worth mentioning that the task was an authentic learning assignment related to an entrepreneurship course at the end of the first year. During the course the students had had a visiting lecturer teaching them creativity and entrepreneurship before the essay task. In other words, the students had a basic understanding of the concept and phenomenon of creativity. The students were asked to write an essay by considering the following aspects: 1) How have you used your creativity in your studies, 2) What kinds of risks have you taken in applying creativity in the studies, and 3) How could you increase the use of creativity in your studies? The first question aimed to explore the use of creativity in studies whereas the two latter ones aimed to examine the factors which promote or discourage the use of it.

The main phases of the data analyses were as follows: First all the essays ($n = 18$) were read as such in order to get a whole picture of each student's opinions and experiences. After that all the answers were arranged by the three different questions introduced above. Next all the answers to each question were analysed one by one. The content analysis revealed all the frequencies

concerning the students' use of creativity in their studies. Finally, the frequencies were put in groups by sub-themes and they were reported by ranking order.

4 Findings

First the experiences of the use of creativity will be presented, and then the findings related to discouraging and promoting factors will be introduced. In each case also the original quotations are presented verbatim, in order to illustrate the students' experiences as examples.

4.1 The Use of Creativity in Studies

The students' experiences of the utilisation of creativity varied greatly. Partly of the students wrote that they use their creativity all the time, both in advancing the studies and in carrying out various learning tasks, projects or other study-related assignments. On the other hand, other students reported that their use of creativity is rather limited in their studies, although they otherwise indicated to be creative persons (having music, painting, drawing etc. as their hobbies). Nevertheless, according to the findings the use of creativity is related to finding new ways and methods for the rationalization of their own studying, but also in various problem solving situations and in setting up a new venture and they are introduced accordingly.

4.1.1 New Ways and Methods to Rationalize Studying and Learning

The majority of students (13) explained that creativity is connected to the rationalization of their own studying and to finding new methods for studying. Eight students out of those stated that they seek new ways to rationalize their studying and learning. The aim of each case has been to improve the outcome. The following quotations illustrate this.

"I surely am able realize creativity in my studies in various ways since I am responsible for my own thinking and learning process. In my opinion, the key to success is to consider the unimaginable. Quite often this process helped me discovering new dimensions, which to include in further considerations. I consider studying strategy as an important part of creativity in study life. Study strategies and study behavior may vary widely among people. Personally, I have experienced that I am studying more efficiently when it comes to visualizing contents, drawing certain schemes or simply learning by doing. "

"I have tried another approach to make studies more creative. Sometimes, having nearly finished an assignment, I stop for a while, allowing my work to "cool down", and then return and revise the work, keeping only one question in mind: "How can I do this particular assignment better?" Then, in my case, the ambition to do better acts as a trigger for creative thinking "

4.1.2 In Different Course-Related Assignments

The most common thing how creativity has been utilized in the studies is by doing different course-related tasks, assignments and projects. Part of the students wrote that they use their creativity particularly when doing the learning tasks in the different study modules or while carrying out projects, which are assessed by the teachers as parts of a study attainment. Eight students stated that they had applied their creativity particularly in the projects and learning tasks where the student is allowed enough freedom in carrying out the tasks. Six students mentioned having used creativity in making a PowerPoint presentation, four while writing an essay and two while writing a report. In addition, one student stated having been creative while writing the answers to exam questions and another having applied creativity when making traditional overhead transparencies for a presentation. These experiences were described, for examples, as follows.

"For me, after a long thinking, the creative tasks have been the kind of "free hands" assignments, the bigger ones with just a subject not necessarily even topic."

"I have a plenty of opportunities to show my creativity. Even the simplest things, like PP-presentations, could be made in original ways..."

4.1.3 Problem Solving Situations

Altogether 10 students told that they had utilised their creativity in various problem solving situations and in attaining certain goals. One half of them emphasized the importance of finding and utilising new points of view at the beginning of the process. Part of them stated that the use of creativity is connected to getting the assignment done within the time limit or to solving the task when there is no ready answer, or to finding creative explanations to the teacher when returning an overdue assignment. The following quotations illustrate the use of creativity in problem solving situations.

"When you are a student you face a lot of small problems like homework deadlines or difficulties with some tasks. In such situations creative problem solving is essential. When I cannot give my

home homework in time I may come out with a reasonable excuse that the teacher would accept. Maybe it is not fair to some extend but still it is some sort of creativity to my mind”

“When I don’t know how to solve the task given I usually try to do it from another angle so that it could help me to find the answer. For example in math, if I am unable to solve some equation, I try to figure out the answer without solving it. Then when I have the answer I try to understand what you should do in order to get it. Sometimes that really helps.”

4.1.4 Setting up a New Venture

Two students have used their creativity in setting up a new venture together during their studies. The following quotation illustrates this.

“During the last month, my colleague and I have started a creative web-design company. The purpose of the company is to create creative websites for businesses. I believe that designing websites is one way that I have used creative ideas in practice. Designing a website consists of developing a website layout, finding creative designs, fonts, photos and putting all together. This could be compared to making a piece of art. Each website will be made to have its own unique style and all the colours and format is the creative side of our business.”

4.2 Discouraging Factors in Utilising Creativity

The students pondered on the risks and their *consequences* caused by creative solutions, but also on different obstacles which prevent the use of a creative solution. Based on these, the findings will introduce the discouraging factors of using creativity in the studies.

4.2.1 Risks in Using Creativity in Studies

The students told that these risks were related to either the reactions of the other people involved in the process, or to the outcome of the project. Because other people may have greatly different opinions about creativity and about the task to be solved, the students found the following matters as risks: other students or the teacher do not appreciate (4 comments), do not like (2 comments), do not understand (2 comments), or do not accept his/her creative idea or solution. In addition, according to two students’ point of view the whole project received a poor mark because the

teacher did not like the whole idea. One student felt that the new, too creative way of carrying out the project finally prevented the whole work getting finished. One of the students also stated that too many creative ideas in the same group assignment means too different points of view, which has totally prevented the forming of a unified view in the group. The following quotations represent the students' experiences concerning these aspects.

"New things and new ideas sometimes take time to be accepted by the others, by the society, due to the fact that nobody can tell if it will be positive or negative consequences as it has never been done before. There is always a risk of rejection."

"... not being understood by other people, not recognised and approved. It has been criticised – as it differs from unusual approaches..."

Utilising a creative idea in a project could mean failure in the final outcome. For the students it meant the following: the subject has been a totally wrong one, and s/he was not even him/herself satisfied (2 comments), the final outcome had no connection with the real life (2 comments), and the work was too difficult to carry out (2 comments). Also two students mentioned having used a new study method and having failed by it. For one of them it had slowed down the studies considerably and the other had failed in the exam because of it.

4.2.2 Educational and Social Obstacles for Using Creativity in Studies

Besides the risks they had taken, the students also pondered on the obstacles for not having utilised their creative ideas more in their studies. The results were divided in two parts: the obstacles related to *the educational and social obstacles*. According to the findings it was considered to be the greatest educational obstacle (10 comments altogether) that although the assignments in the study modules make the students think and learn, they also limit and prevent the use of creativity. The assignments are often too tedious and boring and they do not motivate for using creativity. Also the school's standards and the limitations set to the assignment by the teachers prevent the use of creativity. Another obstacle given by three students was that deviating from the ordinary approaches evokes criticism, and the use of creativity in study tasks does not lead to good marks. Also three students' inadequate knowledge of business life prevents the use of creativity, because the student cannot proportion one's own creativity to the practice and is unable to see the things from different points of view. Two students regard their own previous ways and habits of studying as comfortable and the stress related to new ways has been an obstacle in

adopting new, possibly better ways to study. To conclude the educational obstacles, the following quotation represents the most typical aspect in the findings.

“Sometimes it is hard to be creative in studies, there are lot of strict rules, borders, which you can not cross. The teachers not always want to see creativity... educational process unfortunately is designed mainly so that students pass the examination.”

The fear of failure and the lack of courage to realise one’s own creativity turned up as social obstacles (7 comments altogether). Part of the students pondered on other people’s prejudices and expectations, some mentioned being afraid of showing their own creativity because it often means trouble and they do not wish to “oppose” the existing practices at the school.

4.3 Promoting Factors in Utilising Creativity in Studies

According to the findings there are two different kinds of factors which promote the usage of creativity in studies. First, the students could, if they so wished, by themselves influence on their use of creativity. The students told of various means and ways how they could influence by themselves on the use of creativity more in their studies. Secondly, they told that also changes in the school environment and in the present practices would enhance the use of creativity.

4.3.1 New Creative Ways and Techniques for Studies

The majority of students (13) stated directly that they can increase their use of creativity by learning and utilising new methods and techniques for studying. For part of them some creative study techniques are already familiar and they sometimes use those. However, everyone stressed that their own study methods are too traditional and also routine. The students also told that they should change their own thinking more open and positive towards new things and changes (6 comments), to acquire more courage (4 comments), to develop their tolerance towards risk taking and uncertainty (3 comments), and to actively acquire more knowledge about the business life (2 comments). The following quotations illustrate these aspects:

“Obviously, several techniques of creative thinking already exist. One of my possible approaches will be to study and analyze the well-known techniques, apply them for practice, get out the best of each technique and construct my unique strategy of creative thinking. “

“Tolerance for failure is something I don’t quite have at this moment. Because my resources are small, I really have to concentrate my creativity to “sure” picks. ...tolerance of failure that closely relates to risk taking ability should be a little higher in order to apply more ideas into practise.”

Some other factors affecting their chances of increasing creativity according to their opinions were the drawing up of a new kind of personal study plan (3 comments), studying in a creative environment (2 comments), discussions with a fellow student (2 comments), observing others, how they use creativity in their studies (2 comments), developing social networks (2 comments), selecting and passing new kinds of courses in order to diversify one’s own professional competence (1 comment), preparing for an examination with a fellow student (1 comment), and setting one’s own study motivation in order (1 comment). The following quotations represent the possibility of increasing creativity in studies.

4.3.2 Need for Changes in the School Environment and in the Present Practices

The findings illustrated that also changes in the school environment and in the present practices would enhance the use of creativity. According to the students the study-related practices and modes of operation at school should be changed so that they enable and encourage the use of creativity in an appropriate way. The students suggested that more innovative tasks during the study modules (2 comments), more freedom and leeway to the assignments (2 comments), and more cases and projects from the working life (2 comments), would increase the chances into creative thinking and creative problem solving in studies. Also more team work in projects (2 comments) and the teacher’s role in encouraging to creativity (2 comments) would enhance it. All in all, the school should encourage the students more towards creative thinking and problem solving (1 comment). The following quotations illustrate theses examples:

“The level of creativity used depends on many variables such as the teacher’s ability to present problems, the state and mental awareness of the student and the know-how of the subject in hands. My creativity usage is highly dependable on these things.”

“... school should give us more opportunities in using creativity. I think we need more tasks and assignments with using our imagination, like making tasks in groups, presenting something in an unusual way, doing some unusual assignments - of course connected with business.”

4.4 Summary of the Findings

According to the results of this research, creativity means different things to different students and the utilisation of creativity is shown in various ways. Still the students have mostly used their creativity to finding new ways to study and to improving their current study methods. They have also used their creativity in different learning tasks and projects and in occasional problem solving situations.

In utilising their creativity the students have taken various risks, for example from the point of view of other people's reactions and the final outcome of the project. Further, according to the results, there are both educational and social factors which discourage or even prevent the utilisation of creativity in studies. Nevertheless, the students could increase their use of creativity in studies by finding out themselves about new study methods, by changing their own way of thinking more positive, by acquiring more courage, by developing their ability to withstand uncertainty and risk and by actively acquiring more knowledge about the business life. The results also showed that changes to the current practices at school and to the teachers' modes of operation are required, in order that they would encourage and support the students' use of creativity in their studies.

5 Summary and Conclusions

The research results can be pondered and on basis of them conclusions can be drawn, from the point of view of the students and the teachers and a bit wider from the point of view of the aims of the current educational environment and entrepreneurship education. First of all, the willingness to take risks and to do creative accomplishments seems to go together in an individual. Therefore the student needs both courage and encouragement to try something new. Because creativity (e.g. creative problem solving, seeing new opportunities) and risk are the most essential phenomena related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behaviour, the use of those should be nourished and promoted by means of entrepreneur education.

If creativity, on the other hand, is defined fairly commonly as the ability to create something new, different and practically usable (Sternberg & Lubart 2003), then creativity can be utilised in many different ways in teaching. Then essentially only the teacher's own activity, ability and willingness set limits to the use of creativity in teaching. If the teacher oneself aims to work in an entrepreneurial way (Paajanen 2001), the challenge is especially how to encourage the students to use creativity when it is possible and appropriate, how to develop the students' creative thinking and problem solving skills, how to encourage them to take controlled risks, how to develop

expertise and at the same time help them to see new opportunities and the current things from different points of view.

Because there is always some uncertainty in testing a new thing, there is also the chance of success or risk of failure. Therefore the teachers should have a fairly good tolerance towards uncertainty, so they could utilise their own creativity in entrepreneurial education. As a matter of fact this is also connected to the students' use of creativity in their own studies and learning: the more the students have tolerance for uncertainty, the more likely are they to have tolerance for risk, too (Kyrö & Ripatti 2006).

Entrepreneurship education meets several challenges in creativity, in spite of the goals it has in each case. The curricula of Business Management Programmes are often drawn up in a very explicit manner and they contain concrete and practical learning targets and competences for business work tasks. If different levels are set for the goals of entrepreneurial education according to the model of Ristimäki (2004), the role and the need for creativity can be considered from different points of view. For instance, if the goal of entrepreneur education is considered to be only the teaching of commercial subjects, the need for creativity in entrepreneurial education is likely to be rather small. The higher one advances in the said levels, the greater is both the possibility and the need to utilise creativity, because entrepreneurial education is then seen widely, as a matter concerning the whole school community and promoting an individual's entrepreneurial behaviour.

Furthermore, as creativity is usually connected with some special field and because creativity is partly hereditary, it increases the challenge for the use of creativity in entrepreneur education. Then one should ponder in more detail how to link creativity and the students' limited knowledge of a field of business by the means of entrepreneur education and how to support and encourage individual students' creative thinking and problem solving skills in learning.

Creativity always requires time and freedom; compulsion does not fit with it. With creative processes there is always the risk of failure; therefore it is necessary to emphasize the importance of an atmosphere where failure is allowed. From this point of view creativity, inventiveness and the courage to utilise them are strongly related with entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial behaviour. Then the utilisation of creativity is a real challenge for both the teachers and the students. The different challenges of creativity in entrepreneurship education are multidimensional, containing many different factors. How to answer to them and how to build operational environments, teaching methods and -practices to support the students' creativity, remains to be seen.

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Student Enterprises, Educated Through the Triple Helix Circulation

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Abstract:

Aalesund University College (AAUC) in Norway uses Student Enterprise (SE) as an important component in their education in innovation and entrepreneurship. We have chosen the perspective of Triple Helix (TH) to examine the SEs best practice. The TH interaction between AAUC, public support system, industry and commerce during a lifetime of a SE, is essential to experience a realistic process of running an enterprise. This approach has resulted in winning national competitions and 2nd place two years in a row in European competitions (JA-YE). Looking closer at 3 of the best SEs, (one from the Engineering Department and two from the Business Department) we are able to examine different factors that were significant for the degree of success. The factors are: Grade, Merits, Quality of Network, Quality of process using Inside Action Research method (IAR). The Student enterprise process involves lessons learnt during the time on campus, and means that the students obtain a favorable position to become successful in a competitive business environment. Our Vision is that graduated bachelor students from AAUC have acquired knowledge and experience to establish and manage an enterprise in real business life.

When modifying a SE to a real enterprise, there are other factors than grades and merits that are important. We observe that the quality of network and executive intelligence have vital importance.

Keywords

Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Student enterprise, Triple helix, Higher education

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1 Introduction

Entrepreneurship in higher education has gained much focus in the last years. The purpose of this paper is to share some of our experiences regarding the use of Student Enterprises in a higher educational setting. The examples in this Best Practise are from the AAlesund University College in Norway where Student Enterprises (SE) are used as a pedagogical platform for entrepreneurship education by two institutes. The authors' positions as teaching supervisors for 38 SE's (25 finished and 13 continuing) give unique opportunities for a better understanding of the various processes involved in starting a new company. The findings are relevant for other educational institutions as well as for more general research on entrepreneurship. Our conclusions seem to confirm the importance of authentic experiences (Lucas et. al, 2009; Bandura, 1997) in entrepreneurial education. We believe that the experiences from contact with various governmental institutions and the industrial sector, as found in Triple Helix (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997), will have a positive influence on the motivation and the capability for establishing new startups. We also look into the importance of networks as a key success factor for startups (Zhao & Aram, 1995).

We have used both quantitative and qualitative approaches as a research method. The Best Practice is organized as a Theoretical Section, Student Enterprise Process, Measuring the results and the Lessons learned.

2 Theoretical Section

Entrepreneurship and innovation in Higher Education are topics for several political initiatives in Europe. The Lisbon strategy for growth of employment and The Oslo Agenda for Entrepreneurship Education in Europe (Web 1) are typical examples of this. The emphasize on entrepreneurship and innovation as the driving forces for economic growth in the capitalistic economy goes back to Schumpeter (Schumpeter, 1943). Entrepreneurship in higher education has been focused on in many European countries and is regarded as a key factor in prosperity and regional development.

2.1 Triple Helix Model

The theoretical perspective for this work rests on the “Triple Helix Model (TH)” (Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff, 1997; Leydesdorff, 2000). In this model (TH) the framework of innovation occurs as a triple helix of evolving networks of communication between an Academic Institution (A), the Government (G) and the Industry (I). Dzisah & Etzkowitz (Dzisah & Etzkowitz, 2009) introduce the term “Triple Helix Circulation” as the driving force of innovation and regional development. The circulations of people, ideas and innovations between the spheres of Academy, Industry and Government are essential for Innovation in a society.

The TH model is a macro model, but we will adapt the TH model into a regional setting in Norway. In order to do so, we need a brief description of the three spheres in TH model. Norway is divided into 19 counties and Aalesund is the largest town (40.000 inhabitants) in the county of Møre and Romsdal. The Aalesund University College (AAUC) is one of three academic institutions (A) in the county, and the only with an Engineering department. AAUC is characterized by close ties to the Local Industry. The county administration, as well as the central governments, have a strategic focus on entrepreneurship and innovation. Both try to stimulate these activities through various programs and initiatives. The county supports the Junior Achievement – Young Enterprise Europe office (JA-YE Europe) and the organization of SE’s. The local industry (I) is dominated by three export oriented industrial clusters; Maritime, Marine and Furniture.

2.2 Education and Entrepreneurship

There has been an ongoing discussion among scholars as to how education can contribute to entrepreneurship (Gornman et al, 1997; Dainow, 1986). An excellent review on the topic can be found in (Dickson, Solomon & Weaver, 2008). They conclude that the preliminary findings of the relation between entrepreneurial education and subsequent entrepreneurial selection and success are promising, but needs further research. According to these authors, the main challenges are the lack of definition of entrepreneurial education and lack of consensus regarding what should be the measurable outcome of such an education. An additional challenge is the time scale over which the outcomes should be measured. Two Norwegian studies on the effect of participating in a student enterprise (Johannesen & Eide, 2006), (Studentundersøkelsen, 2009) conclude that the entrepreneurial activities increased with approximately 100% compared to a reference group.

2.3 AAlesund University College (AAUC)

AAlesund University College is a small college located in the northwest part of Norway with 2000 students. AAUC is organized in 4 Departments:

- Department of Health Sciences (IHF)
- Department of International Marketing (IIM)
- Department of Life Sciences (IBF)
- Department of Technology and Nautical Sciences (ITN)

The SE's are implemented in the education at two Departments; ITN and IIM. The SE's with

Engineering students have their main focus on product development processes, where as the focus for Business students emphasizes business development. The SE's at AAUC have given the University College much positive media coverage and attention. The publicity ranges from national TV, local TV, radio, national papers and websites. One of the SE's had more than 10.000 visitors on their web site during a short period. This has given the AAUC a good reputation in regards to good Entrepreneurship Education.

2.4 Student Enterprise (SE) According to JA-YE Europe Regulations

SE is an enterprise formed by students with a teaching supervisor and a mentor from the relevant industry. The students organized an enterprise over a 12 months period, develop a business idea, participate in competitions and exhibitions, and finally close down the enterprise. The enterprise is organized as a simplified private limited company with students as share holders. These enterprises have exemption for VAT and taxation as long as their turnover is below NOK 140 000.(EURO 17 000). The mentor from the local industry contribute with: Experience, Business related Knowledge and Network.

Lucas, Cooper, Ward, & Cave (Lucas, Cooper, Ward, & Cave, 2009) have studied the effect of authentic experiences in building venturing self-efficacy. Bandura (Bandura, 1986; 1997) describes four predictors of self-efficacy: actual performance, vicarious experience, social encouragement and overcoming anxiety performing tasks in a new environment. Participating in an SE is an experience which can be considered to a certain extend to fulfill the four predictors above and this may explain the high motivation of participating students.

3 Student Enterprise Process

We will in the following give a brief description on how the SE's process is organized. As can be seen in Fig. 1, the lifespan for a SE is an academic year (10 months), from start August until finish and exams in June following year. The SE is a part of the curriculum for the 2 Year for the Engineering students (PoD), and the 3 Year for the Business students (IE).

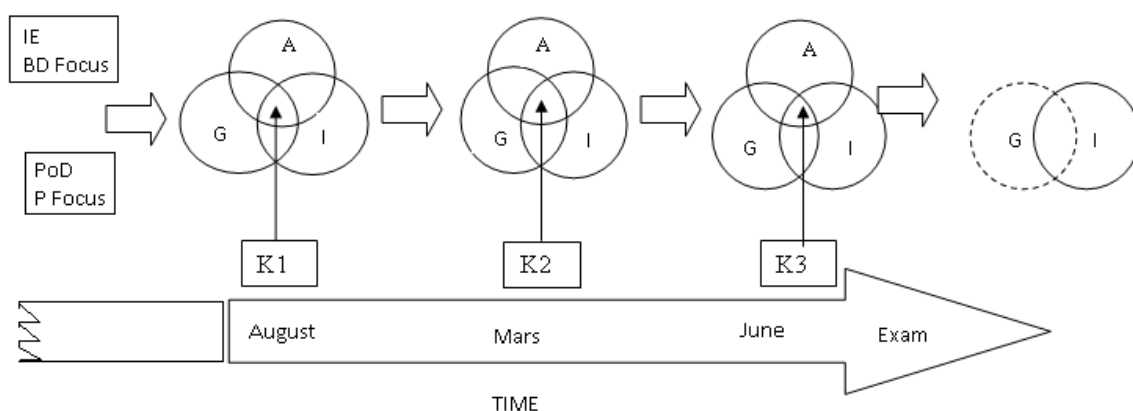


Figure 1. The Student enterprise process at AAUC

Triple Helix Spheres, Academy (A) Government (G) Industry (I) are indicated on the figure above. The three areas where the spheres overlap are representing three major milestones in the process (K1, K2 and K3). Previous to establishing the SE, the students follow the curriculum as mention above. It should be emphasizes that the SE is an integrated part of the curriculum.

3.1 Milestones

In the process of running the Student Enterprise, we have established some Milestones for different stages. We look on a selection of three formal trilateral check points: Establishing the Student Enterprise (K1), halfway evaluation (K2) and the endpoint or switching point between being a Student Enterprise and a Startup (K3). (Fig.1).

3.1.1 Establishing the Student Enterprise, K1

When establishing the Student Enterprises, the Government engage through the Young Entrepreneurship program (JA –YE Europe), The Local Industry engage through contribution with mentors and the Aalesund University College engage through lectures and teaching supervisors. The formal procedures register of the Student Enterprises are carried out through the Register authority, the local Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) use the Industry network to find suitable mentors and the Aalesund University College contribute with office location, professionals, network and suitable teaching supervisors. The teaching supervisors have an important role to encourage and support the process of developing a Business idea and a Business plan. The teaching supervisors have hands on experience from running development processes in different Industries. Each SE goes through different concepts of business ideas and based on specific criteria that fulfill different demands of academic challenge, recourses availability and that the ideas are realistic to realize. A good business plan is an important success factor here, when this plan encourage enthusiasm, empower processes and enables healthy business environment. The teaching supervisor undertakes the role which usually is taken by the Public Support system, finance institutions and market participants.

3.1.2 Halfway Evaluation, K2

This is a local Competition and Exhibition. The Exhibition is a cooperation between the local Young Entrepreneurship (JA–YE), AAUC and a Student Organisation (NLU). This Exhibition has been arranged in cooperation with a local conference about Entrepreneurship, "Gründerdagen". This is a popular event at the college where representatives from local Industry, national lecturers, pupils from high schools, teachers and college students meet for discussing questions concerning entrepreneurship. The juries of the competitions are a combination of representatives from the local Industry (I), Government (G) and other Organizations. The Exhibition has achieved much interest from media and has been covered by different newspapers, TV channels and websites. This Exhibition represents a close to realistic commercial situation for the Student enterprises, and facilitates a good experience in sales, marketing and communication. The Student enterprises are also subject of testing the Business ideas and allow feedback on the Business ideas and how to further develop the Products. The Student enterprises also provide the experience of high quality demands and time limits during the development process. (Fig.1)

3.1.3 The End Point or the Switching Point between a SE and a Startup, K3

During the last stage of the Student enterprise period a workshop will be arranged about the possibilities after the SE period. In this workshop the SE present their business plan for representatives in the Public support system, consultants (LEN), Research and development programs (FORNY) and Incubator facilitator (AAKP). After this Milestone the AAUC reduces the activity and focuses on exams and completing the SE period with a final report to the School, to the Register authority, and by closing of the student enterprise bank account. (Fig.1)

4 Best Practise of SE

4.1 To classify the Best Practice of the SE we Use the Following Parameters:

4.1.1 Grades (0 - 5)

As a quantitative measurement we have chosen the student grade in the course. This grade is well explained based on academic regulated guidelines.

4.1.2 Prizes and Merits in Competitions (0 – 5)

The Student enterprises compete in different local, national and international competitions during the Student enterprise period, and they are awarded based on different categories like: Best student enterprise, International potential, Human resources, Business plan, Industrial design, Innovation, and Economics and accounting. We use the number of rankings as a factor describing the Best Practice.

4.1.3 Quality of Network (0 – 5)

One of the tasks during the Student enterprise period is to report activities registering number of Meetings, Phone calls and Letters linked to the TH. These Meeting points between the Student enterprise and TH might signalise to a certain point how the SE establish a spiral of activities concerning Academia, Government and companies inside the Industry. The important role of networking for startups is discussed by (Zhao & Aram, 1995). They conclude that the number of external relationship (range) and the frequency of contact (intensity) can be used to divide between high- and low growth companies.

The factors above complete a quantitative measurement of how the Student enterprises have performed.

4.1.4 Classification from Reflection Based on Inside Action Research (IAR) (0–5)

Even though the research method IAR has been the target of criticism concerning findings and accuracy of research reports (Winter, 2003, quoted by Drummond & Themessl-Huber, 2007), we see the IAR as suitable as a research method concerning best practice for measuring these Student enterprises. We consider establishing Student Enterprises is seen as a complex learning process and as a part of a changing social system.

Lewin described action research "as a way of generating knowledge about a social system while, at the same time, attempting to change it" (Lewin, 1945, as quoted in Hart & Bond, 1995, p.13.) Thereby, Lewin established two basic components of action research – generating knowledge and changing social systems. (Drummond & Themessl-Huber, 2007).

Only by actively taking part inside ongoing processes in organisations for most of the time and occasionally moving out of the system to view it from a distance, and also to compare it with other systems and processes, can the optimal situation arise for a deeper understanding of the complexity of management and teamwork. (Ottosson, 2003)

We have chosen to use IAR as a qualitative scientific research method to measure and develop best practice for the Student enterprises. The researcher is the teaching supervisor for the Student enterprise during a period of 10 months and judges the project based on an overall evaluation of the SE.

4.2 Student Enterprises

A sample of three successful SE's. The SE Pitches are as follow:

4.2.1 Student Enterprise A (VibraTools SB)

“In different physically jobs many have looked into how to minimize the heavy load and risk for injury to employees. Some attempts have been tried out in the Mason Industry. Some success has been achieved despite the complexity of the craft. The heavy loaded and repetitive operations have yet to be simplified. We now, however, offer new tools for the Mason Industry. VibraFloat and VibraLevel are designed to eliminate the heavy monotonous movements for this kind of work”.

Characteristics for company A:

- Product innovation
- Product focus
- Knowledge of the industry (up and downstream)
- Average operational skills
- Broad International market potential
- Merits in competitions: 1st. price in Local competition, 1st. price in technology competition, 1st. price in regional competition, 1st. price in national competition and 2nd. price in European competition

4.2.2 Student Enterprise B

“Hendig SB developed the Shelf-Organizer a tool, which makes it easier and more efficient to tidy up shelves in grocery stores. Our product makes it easy to reach and buy the last package in the shelf, and pull out the whole row towards the front”.

Characteristics for company B:

- Product innovation
- User focus
- Knowledge on marketing Channels (mainly downstream)
- High operational skills
- Narrow International market potential
- Merits in competitions: 1st. price in Local competition, 1st. price in regional competition, 1st. price National Competition and 2nd. price European competition

4.2.3 Student Enterprise C

“FARO Transport SB is a transport company for both the business market and consumer market. In addition to traditional services such as goods transport, help in removal and dispose of rubbish, we have found a niche in the market that no one else in our region previously has thought about. This service is called "IKEA-transport" and we offer a special service for customers with long distance to the IKEA store in order to purchase IKEA products without undo transport and expense”.

Characteristics for company C:

- Market innovation
- Customer focus
- Knowledge to industry (up and downstream)
- High operational skills
- Narrow International market potential
- Merits in competitions: None

4.3 Results

We have chosen to visualize the result of Best Practice regards to several parameters in a table. (Table1). The 3 SEs have motivated students and Mentors with special experience from the

specific Industry connected to the Business idea. The Table shows that even if **C** does not get any Merits, the SE is able to establish a High Quality business network with high probability of success if established as a real company. **A** has good grade and merits but have less quality in network and the SE process. We believe **A** need to develop more of their network and to be more professional in stage K3 (Fig.1) to experience success in real business life. **B** experience rather high results and seems to be ready to establish a real company with upstream and downstream network. Looking at the three SE's, we observe that despite of the high grades and merits it is not enough to experience success alone. A reason to this might be that the academic and the competitions evaluation do not include quality of network and execution intelligence. We believe that this might be one of the reasons why some of the SEs experience trouble becoming a real enterprise after the SE period.

Student enterprise	Grade	Prizes/Merit RC/NC/EC VC	Q of Network	IAR	SUM
A	5	5	3	3	16
B	5	4	5	4	18
C	4	0	5	4	13

Table1 Best Practices AAUC

5 Lessons Learned

Factors which seem important for a successful SE:

- Advisors with entrepreneurial experience
- Mentors with long experience from industry
- Good facilities
- Inspired students
- Broad networks and close ties to local industry
- School management aware of the importance of entrepreneurship in education.
- Realistic business life, with real customers

Aalesund University College (AAUC) uses Student Enterprise (SE) as an important component in their education in innovation and entrepreneurship. During the last years AAUC has developed expertise on processes and best practice with SEs, resulting in winning national competitions and 2nd place two years in a row in international competitions (JA-YE Europe). AAUC has both a Business and an Engineering Department and is able to exchange knowledge about student enterprises from one department to another, or combined in interdisciplinary teams from the college. We have studied one SE from the Engineering Department, one from the Business Department and one customer oriented SE. Looking closer at 3 successful SEs (Table 1), we are able to examine different factors that were significant for the degree of success in the Student enterprise process (Fig1). This involves lessons learnt during the time on campus which means that the students obtain the most favorable position to become successful in a competitive business environment. The students in the SEs are at the bachelor level and have taken courses in innovation management, entrepreneurship, product development, accounting, marketing and human relations. (PoD and IE, Fig1).

During lectures and team work, students have achieved academic tools and experience to manage an enterprise in real business life. We have chosen the perspective of Triple Helix to examine the SEs because of the necessity of interaction between AAUC (A), public support system (G), industry and commerce (I) for experiencing a realistic process of running a Student enterprise. As a summary of the theory used in the research, we cite: "University-industry-government relations can be considered as a triple helix of evolving networks of communication" (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorf, 2000). We believe and have experienced that this interaction is a direct cause of the success of most of our 38 SEs. By looking at key parameters in the interaction between the different participants (Table 1), we have revealed innovative and measurable processes of best practice for SEs and at this increased the student's possibility to achieve success with their own business project or in cooperation with other innovative companies after the final exam at AAUC.

We are in an early period of developing the Student enterprise process and we believe that it is possible to develop our Best Practice further to become more solid and accurate. We would like an opportunity to do this research in cooperation with other institutions in Europe. We know that it will take some time for students to be successful in their new startups, but we are eager to measure the final result of number of new enterprises, new jobs, new products and tax income for the next coming years.

We think that the Student Enterprise process and resulting key parameters will be of interest for other institutions in higher education and the public support system in Norway, and the European Union.

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Track 2

Regular Revision Stupid! – The Retention of Knowledge after the end of Module Delivery

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Abstract

The paper is devoted to measuring effectiveness of IT-assisted continuous assessment regime used for Economics 1 module delivered to four cohorts of first year undergraduates' students of Napier University Business School in two academic years 2006/07 and 2007/08.

The study involves retesting a sample of 60 participants from all cohorts with the same tests and measuring the retention of knowledge delivered in the course of the module. Using multiple regression analysis this retention level is confronted with the amount of preparation devoted to particular tests in the first week of material presentation and later. Also relation between the preparation and the initial tests' results is researched.

The results confirm the fact that revision within the first week after material presentation is vital in the process learning: in the time of module delivery it increases tests results and after it enhances the knowledge retention.

Keywords

Undergraduate Teaching, Introductory Economics, IT-assisted assessment, Material Revision, Retention of Knowledge

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1 Introduction

Our lecturers' ultimate goal is to make students know. This seems to be obvious but sometimes is forgotten in everyday university life requiring meeting deadlines, limits and benchmarks. Therefore, sometimes our regimes of assessment are led by the administrative requirements not by the ultimate goal. The results then are easy to defend against bureaucracy attack but students after getting a pass mark just forget everything that was taught and assessed in the module. In our paper we wanted to check whether our regime of assessment was only another tool just for the sake of meeting bureaucratic passing limits but real mean of inducing students to deep learning.

We tried to create an IT-assisted regime of assessment, which would be free of shortcomings but would induce students to learn deeply in the short term and to retain knowledge in the long term. The detailed discussion and assessment results of this regime are presented in Jaworski (2008) and Jaworski (2009). However, despite the encouraging results of students' assessment, we were not sure whether the long term goal of knowledge retention was achieved. The paper is devoted to this problem: by retesting the students with the same set of tests and relating these results to their initial grades we wanted to find out what factors influenced their retention of knowledge. This way we managed to identify the impact of continuous revision on the initial marks as well as on the long term internalisation of knowledge.

2 Assessment Regimes for Economics 1 in Academic Years 2006/07 and 07/08.

Economics 1 was a first-year undergraduate 15-credit module presenting basic economic concepts of micro- and macro-economics, consisting of ten units of material*. Lasting for one semester it was addressed to business school students as an introduction to a more advanced Economics 2 module and to all other interested students seeking to acquire elementary economic skills. Usually each trimester of 12-week length had an enrolment of around 200 students on average. Every unit taught usually comprised a two-hour lecture and one hour tutorial. Every lecture was accompanied by detailed lecture notes conditionally revealed to students if they passed quiz having been a part of the assessment regime described below. There was no final exam; a continuous assessment was used instead.

The assessment regime was built using Web-CT platform with usage of basic economic concepts of principal-agent problem and utility analysis together with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) with extensive use of extrinsic type of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Its aim was to encourage continuous, weekly revision of the material by introducing short term goals related to

this. Such construction was aimed at increasing the overall benefit of continuous work. The expected result was an increase in systematic students' effort and better internationalisation of the knowledge. This way the regime would result in deep rather than surface learning in the sense of Marton and Slajo (1976).

The quality of learning is influenced by the way it is assessed (Biggs, 1999). On the other hand, students and lecturers play an unfinished game: the selection of a particular assessment tactic induces a response where students describe all aspects of their learning to be dominated by the assessment regime requirements (Snyder, 1971 and Miller & Parlett, 1974).. Furthermore, Sambell and McDowell (1988) stressed the importance of understanding the students' responses to innovations in assessment

Another important fact is that students consider coursework to be fairer than exams as it measures a wider range of abilities and allows students to organise their own work patterns individually (Kniveton, 1996). Conway et al (1992) suggested also that coursework marks are a better predictor of long term learning of course content than exams are. But as Gibbs and Simpson (2004) observed withdrawal of coursework from a module discourages students from doing the associated studying: for example students will rarely write unassessed essays.

With all these factors in mind we decided to design the assessment regime divided into two parts: two IT-assisted tests, constituting summative assessment, and an essay. We tried to integrate the assessment through the tests with the delivery of the material through the lectures and in this way create new means of integrated course delivery involving interrelated teaching and assessment. The IT platform allowed us to create assignments serving as gateways to the lecture notes: every student got access to the particular set of lecture notes only when she or he passed a quiz on previous lecture material (50% right answers); the continuous assessment was used as an incentive for the students to study from week 1, rather than just concentrating on 1 piece of CW and exam, as it is the situation with other modules. Furthermore, the questions from the quizzes were then used for summative assessment in the form of tests described above. This way we tried to integrate formative (quizzes) and summative (tests) assessments due to suggestion of Ramsden (1992) and Brown & Knight (1994) that they are not mutually exclusive and that the latter can actually support the former. Another important feature of the quizzes was their uniqueness: the questions of every quiz were randomly drawn out of a database (Jaworski, 2008).

The weighting of the essay (40%) in the final grade was the same for both years. In the case of the tests, in the first year they counted for 60%. However, in the second year it was only 50% and a total of 10% was allocated to weekly quizzes if completed within one week of the material presentation. The other difference was the content of the tests; whereas the tests in the first year

consisted only of 30 questions taken from quiz database and weighted 1% each, the second year involved much more complex solution. It included the same number of question but only 20 for 0.75% each were taken from quiz database while the remaining 10 were new true/false questions for 1% each. The amendments were needed as we spotted that under the initial regime students still did not work systematically enough: the access to lecture notes was not a sufficiently high reward for the effort as we should have predicted knowing Gibbs and Simpson's (2004) observation. Table 1 contains a summary of all the regime features.

In the first year of the regime operation the number of participants was 227 and 166 in trimester 1 and 2 respectively. The pass rate was 83.70% (190 passed) in first trimester and 83.79% (139) in the second. The average final mark was 64.61% and 61.13% with a standard deviation of 18.46% and 21.84% respectively. The results of the second year adjusted regime revealed an increase in the students' pass rates: out of 260 and 140 participants respectively in the first and second trimesters 89.62% and 91.43% passed the module. This was a substantial increase, but on the other hand, the average final mark decreased from to 56.70% and 54.10%. Also standard deviation of the final marks decreased to 15.87% and 14.24% in respective trimesters 1 and 2 of 2006/07.

The regime introduced seems to have been effective: the amount of revision effort was fairly considerable: systematic work was induced and strengthened and the results of students were fairly positive. However, there still remained open question about a correlation between the time when quizzes were completed, their number and the type of learning induced: was it a deep or just surface one. This issue was crucial to answer a question whether the expected formative character of the assessment regime materialised or we just landed with another form of summative assessment.

	Quiz		Test	
	2006/07	2007/08	2006/07	2007/08
No of questions	10	10	30	30
known before	N/a	N/a	30 for 1%	20 for 0.75%
not known before	N/a	N/a	0	10 for 1% each
Total value towards the final mark	0%	Max* 1%**	30%	25%
			75	100

*	Drawn out of	15	20	(15 per unit)	(20 per unit)
	Pass mark	5 questions	5 questions	None	None
	No of attempts	Unlimited	Unlimited	2	2

Table 1: Quizzes and tests

Proportionally to fraction of right answers.

***if done within a week of a unit presentation, if after - 0%.*

Source: Jaworski, 2009

3 The Research

In order to answer the question above we decided to do a research, which involved two stages: in the preparatory stage we had to retest the sample of students with exactly the same tests which they had done in the course of the module. This stage also involved counting the number of all quizzes completed in the first and following weeks for every student. Second stage was to correlate different parts of the assessment with the initial tests results and the results for knowledge retention. The research was sponsored by the Higher Education Academy Economics Network within the framework of Mini Project Programme.

Academic year	2006/07		2007/08	
Trimester	1	2	1	2
Number of students	197	136	230	122

Table 2: Number of students in particular trimester

The total population of the students over the four trimesters of the module, for whom we had complete data, was 685. The detailed distribution over trimesters is presented in table 2. The population mean of the final mark was equal to 64.98 with standard deviation of 12.28 and median 64.98. Each of 685 records included number of trimesters from the end of module delivery (NTR), final mark (FIM), Essay mark (ESS), midterm mark (MTM), which covered both tests marks and the bonus for quizzes completion if existed in particular edition and tests' marks (TST1 and TST2).

3.1 Preparatory Stage

In preparatory stage we counted the weekly quizzes completions and aggregated them into total completion in the first week and later separately for material covered in both tests. This extended our initial records by the number of quizzes completed in the first week and later separately for tests 1 and 2 (NQF1, NQL1 and NQF2, NQL2 respectively). We also managed to retest a total of 60 students from different cohorts; the detailed distribution of the sample is presented in table 3.

Academic year	2006/07				2007/08			
Trimester	1		2		1		2	
Test	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Number of students	11	11	9	8	29	26	11	9

Table 3: Number of students in particular trimester

Unfortunately, the sampling process was not easy: the initial invitation sent to 100 students resulted only in 10% response. Therefore, this way we retested 10 students in the same supervised environment while the remaining 50 sets of data we acquired through voluntary completion of the retests from home after the invitation sent to all students. Eventually, the sample mean of final mark was equal to 69.41 with standard deviation of 12.21 and median 70.50. As can be seen, the dispersion within the sample was similar to that of the population but the mean and median were around 5 points higher. This suggests that the students in the sample were on average better students even if their dispersion was similar. The 60 sample out of the population of 685 gave us also a confidence interval of a little bit more than 12% for both tests (95% level). Unfortunately, attracting more students to take part in the study failed.

The preparatory stage resulted in the set of 685 records, comprising the following data: final mark (FIM), Essay mark (ESS), midterm mark (MTM), number of trimesters from the end of module delivery (NTR), results of test 1 (TST1) and test 2 (TST2), quiz completion done within the first week and later numbers separately for material covered by test 1 and test 2. (NQF1, NQL1, NQF2, NQL2). Additionally, we also had the results of tests 1 and 2 (HEA1 and HEA2) for 60-student sample.

3.2 Stage 2

Having had the data on quizzes completion for the whole population we were curious whether the assessment regime had any impact on the initial students' tests results. In order to check this we performed two sets of regression series involving the initial tests' results (TST1 and TST2) as an independent variable and different combinations of other data treated as dependent variables for the total population of 685 students. In these regressions we also added dummy variable NAS, which reflected the fact whether the student was under the initial (0) or adjusted regime (1) of assessment.

After using several sets of dependent variables it turned out that the most meaningful results are generated by using NQF, NQL and NAS as dependent variables in the multiple linear regression with constant (CON). The results, which are presented in table 4.; confirmed our belief that the regular and continuous work on the material was crucial for the level of final test mark: with very high significance and high R square the number of quiz completion within first week of material presentation had the highest influence on the final mark in the case of both tests.

TST1				TST2		
	Coefficient	Standard Error	t stat	Coefficient	Standard Error	t stat
NQF	5.30	0.34	15.51	6.57	0.34	19.35
NQL	0.13	0.01	15.30	0.13	0.01	13.76
NAS	0.10	0.02	4.39	0.06	0.02	2.88
CON	13.91	0.28	49.22	14.17	0.27	51.72
R square			51.33%	R square		54.12%
Standard error of estimate			4.11	Standard error of estimate		4.25
Degrees of freedom			681	Degrees of freedom		681
F statistic			239.43	F statistic		267.80

Table 4: The results of "final mark" regressions involving total population

Although the two other dependent variables, the number of quiz completion after the first week and the influence of the new system of assessment, have also been statistically significant, their

positive influence has been much lower, if almost non-existent. These results strongly suggest that our assumptions used for assessment regime construction (Jaworski, 2008) were valid. Furthermore, the low influence of adjustment in the regime in the second year, which encompassed inclusion of new questions not known before to the tests, seems not to decrease the internalisation of knowledge even increasing a little the final test's results of both tests.

The second set of regressions that we performed was related to the knowledge retention problem. In this case we used the data for the 60 student sample. In order to do this we created an indicator of retention (RTN) which was equal to HEA divided by TST for both tests separately. It served then as an independent variable. Here we also performed regressions with several sets of dependent variables combinations. The most meaningful results we obtained for the regressions without constant involving NQF, NQL and NTR. The results are presented in table 5.

Also here the number of quizzes completed in the first week turned out to be the most important factor: with relatively high significance it influenced the retention of knowledge for both tests with the R squares being even higher than for the “final mark” regressions. This influence was also considerably higher than the “final mark” influence. On the other hand the influence of completing quizzes later was insignificant and had practically no influence on test 1 but a moderately statistically significant modest influence on test 2.

RTN1				RTN2		
	Coefficient	Standard Error	t stat	Coefficient	Standard Error	t stat
NQF	18.28	3.05	5.99	16.86	2.43	6.92
NQL	0.01	0.25	0.04	1.33	0.39	3.43
NTR	1.46	0.42	3.43	-0.08	0.22	0.34
	R square		74.10%	R square		79.43%
	Standard error of estimate		38.40	Standard error of estimate		30.43
	Degrees of freedom		57	Degrees of freedom		51
	F statistic		54.37	F statistic		65.65

Table 5: The results of “retention” regressions involving sample.

In case of the NTR the results were reversed: statistically significant for test 1 and insignificant for test 2. Furthermore, the time passing increased the retention in a similar degree to practising after the first week of module delivery; while the time in the case of the test 2 was slightly negatively related to knowledge retention: even if not statistically significant, the latter reverse relation had been expected by us, while the former, positive one, has been a kind of surprise. However, after reconsideration we concluded that it must be related to a difference between materials covered by tests 1. and 2., micro and macroeconomics respectively: while micro aspects of the economy are under constant revision in the modules following Economics 1, macroeconomic issues are not so often recalled. Therefore, the material revision in following modules serves as a similar tool of revision as the quiz completion after the first week of module completion in the case of test 2.

4 The Conclusions

It seems that the revision in the first week after initial presentation of material is crucial for the process of learning: in our study the number of quiz revision in the first week played critical role for amount of knowledge learned in the module. This conclusion is suggested by statically significant link between the levels of final grade and the mentioned number of quiz revision. This number being also significantly linked to the indicator of retention created by us suggests also that long term retention of knowledge is dependent on the first week revision. This result is compliant with results acquired by Jeppson (2008) in case of weekly revision courseworks.

Of course we are aware that we still do not know what factors induces the students, who did not revise using the quizzes: we were not able to check this in quantitative way. Furthermore, we also know that the regression equations cannot serve as a model of student behaviour, which we did not attempt to formulate, but just show the links between different activities they do in the process of learning and the knowledge absorption. However, we still feel entitled to claim that the design of our assessment regime induced deeper and better learning.

Inducing students to continuous and systematic revision was also crucial for our other goal, which was creation of a regime which would constitute formative rather than summative form of assessment: according to Sadler (1989) this constitutes one of most conditions of formative assessment. Furthermore, we hope that through using self assessment in the revision element of our regime may foster lifelong learning skills (Boud, 2000). Least but not last by creating the regime of assessment for the students not to the students, which is another characteristic distinguishes formative and summative assessment (Biggs, 1998).

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Creativity in education – the preparation of students to face their professional activity and competitiveness: Lessons learned from a case study

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Abstract

Assuming that creativity plays an important role in the development of societies and that citizens can and need to develop such a competence, we introduced the use of a blog in the unit of “Marketing Communication” in the course of Business Communication (3rd year (1st Bologna cycle), 1st semester) at ISCAP – School of Accountancy and Administration of Porto with the aim to contribute to the development of creativity among students. In this article, we present and discuss findings and draw some recommendations.

Keywords

Blog, higher education, creativity

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1 Introduction

In the Knowledge Society and OECD countries it is widely accepted that innovation is the key driver of growth and well being. New technologies, products, services and organizations create jobs and contribute to social progress (Vincent-Langrin, 2009). However, the effort cannot be promoted only by the society and technologies. Citizens play here an important role. They have the knowledge and they should apply it in order to contribute to competitiveness. We all agree that in order to meet this challenge and objective, the education system, instead of valuing only hard skills and math, should also provide opportunities for people to develop soft skills (creativity, innovation, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking, among others) thus contributing for the development of knowledge workers. Educators, policymakers, business leaders, parents and youth must identify and develop new sets of e-skills and e-competencies to help youth succeed, and build a capacity for success toward the 22nd century (Moravec, 2008). The question that remains now is how we, as lecturers and educators, can help our students to become more creative? Are there strategies, activities or tools helping to increase creative thoughts? In order to contribute for this discussion, we introduced the use of a blog as a learning tool in the course of Business Communication, in the unit “Marketing Communication” (3rd year (1st Bologna cycle), 1st semester) at ISCAP (School of Accountancy and Administration of Porto) which belongs to the Polytechnique Institute of Porto. In this article, after a brief introduction we describe creativity and innovation as well as some activities that can be designed to enhance them. We also discuss the use of the weblog as a learning tool. After that we describe the above mentioned case and the role of the blog in the learning process. We present and discuss the results and draw some recommendations on how to help students to develop competences related to creativity and innovation.

2 Creativity and Innovation in the Knowledge Society

2.1 The Importance of Creativity and Innovation

Innovation constitutes an important issue for the organization to be competitive today. According to the OECD (OECD, 2010), there are four types of innovation (Oslo Manual – last version 2005): a) Product innovation, which involves a good or service that is new or significantly improved (technical specifications, components and materials, software, user friendliness or other functional characteristics. In education, it can be a new or improved curriculum, a new educational software, etc.); b) Process which involves a new or significantly improved production or delivery method. In

education it can be an improved pedagogy; c) Marketing innovation which involves a new marketing method comprising changes in product design or packaging, product placement, product promotion or pricing. In education it can be a new way of pricing the education service or a new admission strategy; d) Organizational innovation which involves the introduction of a new organizational method in the firm's business practices, workplace organization or external relations. In education this can be a new way to organize work between teachers, or organizational changes in the administrative area.

Furthermore, innovation is also considered an essential drive for business (Darso, 2008), providing economic value and "social prosperity through benefits to the individual and society" (European Parliament, 2008). **Innovation** is often coined with **creativity**, which can be described as a

"process of playing with ideas, thoughts, and possibilities. It is often part of an innovation process, but whereas creativity is inspired activity, innovation is more about the strategic overview in order to create an output that will be used and bought by the customers and clients" (Darso, 2008).

In order to be innovative and creative people has to develop some skills and competences. The European Union sets out 8 key competences: 1) Communication in the mother tongue, which includes the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions both in oral and written form, 2) Communication in foreign language, 3) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology related to the ability to develop and apply mathematical thinking in order to solve a series of problems in everyday situations, 4) Digital competence which involves the use of information technologies, 5) Learning to learn which means to pursue and persist in learning and organizing one's own learning, 6) Social and civic competences which comprises working in teams, collaborating, communicating in groups, being able to work in multicultural environments, 7) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship which refers to the ability to turn ideas into action, including creativity, innovation and risk taking as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives and 8) Cultural awareness and expression which includes the awareness of the European cultural heritage (European Council, 2006).

Society recognizes the importance of these competences in the attempts by both employers' pressure groups as well as in education policy to value the role of 'soft skills' in the qualifications which in turn determines the success both at interview and at work. As a matter of fact, during the 90's and the 00's, the European Union has stressed the need for people to develop basic skills and key competences as part of their lifelong learning strategies ((cf. European Councils of Stockholm (2001) and Barcelona (2002), Communication from the Commission "Making a European Area of

Lifelong Learning a Reality” (2002), Guidelines for Growth and jobs 2005 – 2008 (2005), just to name a few).

Skills related to **creativity** are important for employers because they allow coping with change. As Chandler and Grzyb say (Chandler and Grzyb, 2005: 2), “If we are creative, if we are skilled at innovation, we can come up with new ways of approaching situations that have changed”. This means that educational institutions and the education system need to combine the development of specific or technical knowledge and skills together with generic capacities linked to creativity (curiosity, intuition, critical and lateral thinking, problem solving, experimentation, risk taking and the ability to learn from failure, use of the imagination and hypothetical reasoning, and a sense of entrepreneurship). In particular, there is a need for skills and competences that enable people to embrace change as an opportunity, to remain receptive to new ideas and to respect and appreciate the values of others (European Council, 2008).

One may say that there are some persons more creative than others. However, it is possible to help those less creative to improve their innovative capacities and competences. According to the “Conclusions of the roundtable of the Ambassadors of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation” (2009), European countries need to

“commit to invest in education and in boosting Europe’s skills and creativity as its main policy focus, recognizing that this is more important for the future than concentrating on short-term objectives; Europe’s future depends on its human capital” (Ambassadors ..., 2009: 2).

This means that educational institutions as well as all educational actors play an important role in this process. They have a social responsibility in preparing professionals able to face all the challenges of a knowledge society, which means, creating opportunities for people to develop new ideas and critical thought, to develop capacity of team work, to collaborate, to be flexible and to adapt. Web 2.0 can play a key role in this process, in particular the blog. This role will be discussed in the next section.

2.2 The Blog in the Classroom

Although the word “blogging” has become one of the most visible phenomena of the online world, there is no single definition of what constitutes a “blog” (or weblog).

Barger’s original **definition** of a weblog reads as follows (Downes, 2004):

“A weblog (sometimes called a blog or a news page or a filter) is a webpage where a web logger (sometimes called a blogger or a pre-surfer) ‘logs’ all the other webpages she finds

interesting. The format is normally to add the newest entry at the top of the page, so that repeat visitors can catch up by simply reading down the page until they reach a link they saw on their last visit."

According to the Wikipedia,

*"a **blog** (a contraction of the term "**web log**") is a type of website, usually maintained by an individual with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video."* [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog>]

It is also possible to read that

"many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. Most blogs are primarily textual, although some focus on art (Art blog), photographs (photoblog), videos (Video blogging), music (MP3 blog), and audio (podcasting)". [<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blog>]

Hsu (2007: 8) refers that the objective of a blog is facilitate learning while doing a critical reflection and self-analysis. McMullin (2004) adds that the blog is most usually published by a single person, with, perhaps, occasional "guest" bloggers. Moreover, postings rely heavily on hypertext linkage. A user normally needs no tools beyond a basic browser, and can quickly master the requisite simple, plain text, authoring format. Consequently, blog content is highly variable, idiosyncratic, and personal to the particular blogger.

To sum up, a blog is a sort of diary in which the author can post his/her thoughts, comments, ideas, suggestions under different format and using several media. Moreover, doing so, the blog is also an opportunity for self reflection and analysis, contributing to the learning and growth of his / her author.

The question that remains now is why should teachers to introduce it in the educational proces, or how to use it or to make profit of it in the learning process?

The first advantage of blog is that it will help students to write. It provides an opportunity for students to engage in authentic publishing. Of course we have no guarantee that the result will be a good one but the fact that they write and expose themselves to the critic and support of teacher and colleagues will provide extra encouragement to improve the results and products. Furthermore, this will give them a purpose, a meaning for writing – they will feel that they are been read and commented, an important aspect in the learning process. The use of electronic Weblogs

as educational tools also offers the benefits of increased information sharing, simplified publication of information, and improved instructor monitoring and review. As a matter of fact, it is easy for the lecturer / instructor to accompany the work of the student, to review it in a daily or weekly base and give him / her some feedback. This process helps the lecturer to see what the student is learning and making the necessary adjustments while providing information to the student to know if he / she is going in the right direction.

Blogs can also be seen as a communication medium under the control of the main writer (author) and the ability to encourage reflection from the author derives from the fact that he/she knows that there is an audience that is “watching and listening.” This means that what is written and said “is not merely a one-sided set of thoughts and reporting of events” (Hsu, 2007: 7) but there may also be responses to feedback and reactions from the “viewing audience.” This implies that blogging is considered a highly social activity, rather than a personal one (*op. cit.*: 7).

WEBLOGS (BLOGS)	
Description	A technology that allows a sequence of entries (online diary, journal) to be posted and published online
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection and critical thinking are encouraged Authenticity through publication Social presence Development of a learning community Active learning encouraged Ability to receive and respond to feedback
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controlled primarily by blog author Editing/modifications not open as in a wiki
Educational applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online learning journal Problem solving/manipulation space Online gallery space (writings, portfolio, other work) Peer review exercises
Course/subject suitability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing courses Foreign language courses Research seminars
Theoretical foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity theory Guided discovery Cognitive scaffolding Receptive learning Social cognition Community practice Communities of inquiry

Source: Hsu, 2007: 9

Figure 1 – Summary of the most important aspects of a blog as an educational tool

Blogs also allow learning and interaction to be more “knowledge-centred, especially if the assignments are structured in the format of encouraging feedback and input from the instructor and outside experts” (*op. cit.*: 7). Blogs let students to gain a better understanding of a subject’s

knowledge domain since it is possible to ask them to built bridges between what is being taught in the class and what they see in their everyday life outside school. Finally, they are an opportunity to bring the real life into the classroom.

As for the applications that may be used, while the basic features of most blog software emphasize the creation of blog pages, some of the more sophisticated ones offer the capability to track readership, see who followed what links, add photos, and set up more advanced structures.

As we can see, the blog has many potentialities that can be used in a classroom in order to enhance student's motivation as well as to help them to develop a certain kind of competences. This tool is easy to use and has also a good usability. This means that the students do not need to spend a lot of time learning how to use the application. The most challenging issue would be for the teacher to identify possible ways of using the blog in a pedagogical way. In the next section we describe a case where the blog was used.

Figure 1 shows a summary of the most important aspects of a blog as an educational tool.

3 Case Study

The case presented took place in the unit of Marketing Communication (Business Communication course, 3rd year – 1st cycle diploma) at ISCAP (Porto, Portugal), in 2009-2010 (1st semester). The assessment of students in this unit is done by 3 complementary elements: 1) the development of an integrated marketing communication plan for an existing product / service (60%); 2) the development of a blog (10%) and 3) all the work done in the classroom or asked to be done outside it, during the semester (30%). In the next section we describe the use of the blog.

Blog

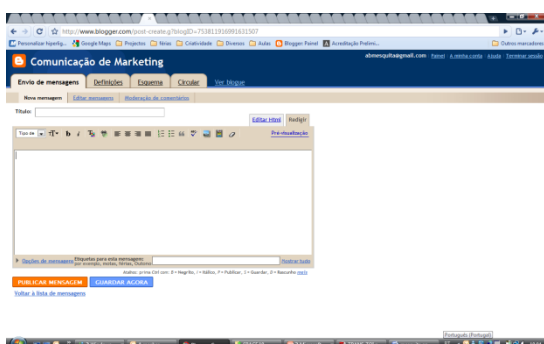
The blog consisted on a digital platform where students were invited to post at least once a week, for a period of 15 weeks (one semester). The contents of that post could cover aspects related to the unit (marketing communication) or other topics that students may find interesting to share. They were also encouraged to reflect about their learning process, the difficulties felt, and about the use of the blog.

The blog application chosen was the Blogger [<http://www.blogger.com/home>] because it was free and easy to learn. Furthermore, lots of students already have an account at Google which made even easier the use of the application. The next image is a print screen of the blog of one of the students.



This application allows posting comments, ideas, opinions as well as videos, photos, links and other multimedia documents. Moreover, it also permits to personalize the application, follow other blogs and know who is following us. It is also easy to see which blogs were updated lately.

The next image shows the window where the students had to insert their comments, ideas, reflections...



4 Presentation of Results

In this section we present the results obtained by the analysis of the content of the blogs. The presentation of the results is organized in three main categories: 1) contents / topics discussed, 2) enablers to the use of the blog and 3) constrainers.

A. Contents / topics Discussed

Topics chosen covered mostly the marketing communication field. For instance, there was the commercial side of Halloween, the inciting to spend money during Christmas time, the association between McDonalds, Google and Coca-Cola, just to name a few. Below, some of the photos accompanying the comments are shown.



A photo for the Halloween

An advertisement inciting to spend money during Christmas season.

The power of the brand – McDonalds, Coca Cola and Google. One student said:

“In the past it was not Santa Claus that give the presents but the child Jesus. The image of Santa Claus was invented by the company Coca Cola in the 30’s. The aim was to increase the volume sales during the winter” (Cecy)



Some students just posted the photos without the comments or just with a tag as presented below.



Other topics discussed concerned society. For instance, one of the students talked about Malalai Joya, a woman from Afghanistan who is 31 years old and was in Portugal recently. One can read in the student’s blog:

“In 2003, in the local government, she made a 3 minutes speech denouncing the presence of corruption and lords of war. She escaped with the help of the United Nations. Then she was elected depute and continued with the same denounces and compared the Parliament to a zoo and to a stable. They managed to put her away but they do not succeed to end her fight”. (In)

Students also profited to criticise some situations that they felt unfair. For instance during Portuguese elections, they criticized the way some parties behaved. Another one criticized the

Portuguese Federation of Rowing and what was happening in this federation. He believes there is corruption and justifies his statement. They also commented the displacement of the Red Bull Air Race from Porto to Lisbon showing their deception because they feel that this displacement is due to some corruption of the mayors of the two cities involved in this show in Lisbon. (DS)

Another one reports a good practice in Brazil, concerning visual pollution in São Paulo. He says that there was recently a Law forbidding placing ads in some places in the city. The photo shows a “before” and an “after” situation. It is the same place.



Other topics mentioned were the Berlin's wall fall, energy saving, among others.

As one can see from the examples shown above, students like to say their opinion regarding different topics, covering different areas – communication, politics, ethics, elections, advertisements, etc. and the blog constitutes an opportunity for them to have a voice, to have an opinion and to be heard. It is not very usual to see young people to comment this kind of situation but here, with the blog, they comment, they point the finger to the unfairness, they try to argue and defend their point of view. In some occasions, the topics presented were so controversial that the other colleagues profited the fact that they could had comments to the post, and manifested against the opinion of the colleague.

B. Enablers to the blog's use

Intrinsic motivation

Students point out some reasons to have a blog and update it in regularly. Apart from being a component of the evaluation process in the marketing communication unit which makes the blog compulsory, students refer that they use it because: 1) they like to express and share their opinions, experiences, and thoughts; 2) they feel becoming more attentive to what is happening around them; 3) they like to see and comment their colleagues' opinions; 4) they are able to link theory learned in classes to the real world. These conclusions emerge from the comments made by the students. Some of these comments are transcribed below.

“ The blog (...) become an essential tool for me to understand my colleagues' opinions, what attracts them more, the areas they like to talk about, the conformity of opinions, and so on. The blog is a personality and knowledge mirror of each author. (FO)

“This blog is interesting and useful because it forces me to be more attentive to everything that is happening around me. In the Marketing Communication classes we learn the

theory but the fact that we have to apply it in our everyday life, makes us to see things in a different way” (Sa)

“I think that the blog is a light form of interaction, expression, sharing and discovery.” (CC)

“I think that blogs are a wonderful way to disseminate to world a little bit about our culture, our identity. And also learn with the experience of other people. Writing, for me, is a relief for the soul. It is a way to cry to the world what we sometimes fear to say to somebody...” (SS)

Sometimes, they even dare to open their hearts and talk a little bit more than if they were talking in front of the class. They feel that they can talk about anything, although usually they prefer writing about aspects of the society and its relation with the marketing communication (subject of the course). One of the students said:

“Reflecting about ourselves, although complicated, it is a starting point to set us free. Talking about ourselves should not be seen as a privacy invasion but an opportunity to get closer to somebody” (RA)

This idea of allowing the other to be closer to us is an interesting one. The act of opening ourselves to the other, instead of creating vulnerabilities, allows the other to know us better, to understand us and so creating an opportunity for interaction and learning.

Another student mentions the power of words and the writing process as motivating aspect to post.

“The power of words fascinates me, the languages fascinate me, and the advertising world fascinates me. I like to observe, to analyze, to describe perspectives and mostly, to create”. (FO)

They also knew that others could see their posts and therefore comment them. Students also recognize that posting will contribute to improve writing as well as to present and defend ideas.

“As for the benefits of the blog, I think that they are related, in particular, with the fact that we are forced to write and, simultaneously, we have to argue and defend our positions, which is a very important skill in the communication area” (SM)

Due to the fact that they had to post weekly, they had to look for unusual and attractive topics. They had to pay more attention to the world around them, and for ideas in the internet and magazines. One of the students referred:

“In my opinion this was a great initiative. As we know the world is changing at a rapid pace towards the new technologies and learning needs to adapt to this speed.” VS

Another one added:

"Sometimes I didn't know what to write about but I turned on the TV, the radio or looked at the internet or outdoor while waiting for the metro or train and ideas emerged immediately. Sometimes I had so many ideas at the same time that it was difficult to say which one was the most important (...). [Having a blog] demands knowledge and research and also teaches us something since we visit our colleagues' blogs and we see real things to which we had not paid attention before." DS

The use of the blog for educational purposes helps the education institution and system being closer to the reality of youth, helps to speak the same language of the students while captivating them for learning as states one student:

"[The blog is] an interesting idea. I think that teachers and educational entities should be more connected to the reality of young people because this is the only way to attract them. (...) This is a clever way to catch the attention of students and I believe that the future of education needs precisely methods like this one" CC

Other student mentions:

"I did everything to find a topic every week! I must say that this was not an easy task. The world of Marketing and advertisement is broad and sometimes it was very hard to select the topic to write about." AR

The role of feedback

Another issue that emerged from the balance of blog's use was the importance of feedback. When students realized that someone have read their posts, the motivation and commitment to the blog increased. They felt more motivated to find interesting ideas to talk about. And somehow in certain moments, there was a healthy competition about the topics. This feedback could have been provided by the teacher or even by the colleagues since all of them were following every colleague and commenting all posts.

"To finish, I want to thank all those that came to my blog, with comments or not" Feedback is very important, it gives you a push to go on but the fact that you read my post makes me happy and grateful!" VS

"(...) At the beginning it seems hard because we have nothing to say (or we think so); the next message is a question mark, but then I realized that people liked what I was

presenting and the will to show more grows. For that, the comments are crucial because they help us to understand if we are going in the right direction” (AM)

“(…) a blog without comments is sad and empty. When I write, I like to know that a least one person read what I wrote. Feedback is very important because it motivates the author. That is why I want to say “thank you” to all the persons that commented my blog :)” (AR)

“Even though, for each new post, I feel anxious to know if someone read or made any comment” (CC)

Finally, another student stated:

“To resume and conclude, I enjoyed a lot to create and update this blog. I think this was an excellent idea because this is truly continuous assessment. (...) I think we learn more [with this kind of situation and tool]. Because of the blog we were obliged to research information regarding Marketing and so learning is much more effective” AR

The content analysis of the posts revealed that there was a kind of evolution in the relationship between the student and the blog. If at the beginning, students posted because they had to, after a while they realized that writing and expressing their opinions was fun. And for this feeling the feedback played an important role: it made sure that there was a public, there were people reading and giving some feedback about what each student was writing. They realized that they were writing not just for the teacher, not just to be graded but for their colleagues, for other people with the same problems, with the same experience. Suddenly they realized that they were not alone, they belonged to a community with whom they shared meanings and practices.

C. Constrainers of the blog's use

Lack of self confidence

Some students recognize the difficulty in writing something that the others consider interesting. And it is curious to note that this classification – interesting – is very personal. This judgement is made by the writer and not by the reader. This means that the author is already judging him / her even before beginning to write.

“It was not the first time that I created a blog. I confess that my interest in the blog passed out immediately in the first attempt to write something interesting or something that made sense. (...) Well, there is always something interesting to say but I think that the difficult is to choose, having time to argue and to show personal perspectives. (...) that is why my

blogs had a short life. I couldn't take the pressure to write interesting posts, with logic and understandable ..." (Gi)

Another difficulty was finding topics to talk about.

"I confess that I had already thought about creating a blog but never found a topic interesting enough to write about". (Sa)

This problem soon disappeared and was replaced by another one - having too many topics to talk about. Throughout the weeks it was visible an evolution in the way the student looks around him / her and wants to give his / her opinion or just to present something that he / she thinks is interesting. If at the beginning they didn't have enough self confidence to trust that the topics chosen were interesting, after a while, the problem was a reverse one – they were so excited with the blog that they wanted to talk about everything.

"Updating the blog every week is not a very complicated task because I have lots of interesting topics to talk about. Having a blog is a great opportunity to show our thoughts, to share opinions, to teach and to learn". (AR)

Technical problems

Some students also referred that they had some technical problems at the beginning (mostly due to the fact that some of them didn't have internet at home). Problems were also related to the lack of time (time is never enough to accomplish all the tasks and projects of the subjects).

"Since the beginning of the blog, the majority of the difficulties felt were technical. Lack of time and mostly, lack of internet till half of November were the biggest difficulties. " (Sa)

"I am sorry for the time... Mine, unfortunately, is very short and so I cannot dedicate myself to the blog as I wish." (CC)

"I apologize for not having participated sooner but the truth is that I am not very good with these things such as blogs, hi5, Skype ... and it took me a little bit longer to reach this stage. But here I am! And it was easy after all!" (DB)

Expectations

Another category of difficulties is related to the fact that, at the beginning some students really had high expectations concerning this tool and after a while these expectations disappeared. Or it could be the other way round – they had no expectation at all.

"I never had great expectations regarding the blog although it was something that interested me. Whether our life is spectacular and we have lots of things to talk about and to show to our friends or there is a topic, a reason that leads us to the creation of a blog which is the case" (AM)

This happened because they were not confident and thought that a certain topic was not interesting enough to be posted. Then they realized that a colleague posted about that exact topic and were angry with them because they had thought so before but were afraid of taking the risk and posting about it. Of course, they felt disappointed and didn't want to continue with the blog.

"As time passed by, the initial charm vanished and vanished also the will to visit or update it. I thought very often: "but why didn't I think about this first?" or "Why didn't I post this when I thought about it?" (two or three times I saw some colleagues' posts with some of my ideas). The flame started to disappear. It was not lack of interest, it was lack of motivation. The blog was not abandoned but was asleep". (LT)

Nevertheless, it was good to see that even with these feelings, the student wanted to overcome the difficulties and proceed with the blog

"And now, after all these feelings, experiences, self-knowledge, I want to say that I am coming back, I want to recover the time I lost, I will try to overcome my difficulties, I will write, I will comment and I will do research, I will..." (LT)

Obligation

At the beginning some students created the blog and posted just because they had to. The curriculum and the way they were assessed forced them to do so. It was something compulsory as shown by the statements below.

"When I had to create this blog, I saw it in a curricular perspective; I had to do it because the lecturer said so". (FO)

"I just created the blog as a request (almost obligation) made by the lecturer and let me be carried on by the unknown". (AM)

"At the beginning, when I knew that I had to create a blog, I was not very happy because I had the idea that it would be something to give us extra work.". (DS)

This obligation had reflection on the amount of post and of course in the quality of the comments. Some of the post comprised only a few lines or even just a photo saying "I'd like to share with you

this image". In some cases, this situation evolved throughout the semester and some of these students ended by writing more and going deeper on their comments and observations.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

During the graduation courses the opportunities to develop competences related to creativity and innovation are not usual. Due to lack of time or even lack of knowledge on how to help students to develop those competences, lecturers prefer using traditional methodologies. However, there are other possibilities and lecturers can innovate in their classes as well as in the way they assess students helping them to be more creative and innovative..

In the case study presented, lecturer introduced a new tool – the blog – in order to motivate students to look around them, to express themselves, to improve their writing skills, to be more critical and of course, more creative and innovative.

At the end of the semester students revealed to have improved their soft skills. The factors that contributed to this situation were self motivation of the students and the role of feedback. As constrainers, we have the lack of self confidence, the expectations at the beginning of the semester concerning the use of this tool, the obligation to use the blog and technical problems.

Taking into consideration the results obtained, we would like to make the following recommendations:

- The blog tool revealed to be a good tool to help the student to express his / her opinions and to write.
- The tool helped them to be more attentive to the world around them, to do some research in order to select the topic they were going to talk about
- It also helped them to follow their colleagues' blog and see their colleagues' interest. In a certain moment there was a healthy competition about the topics
- **The comments / feedback of the lecturer to all the posts of the students are very important. They are even** more important when the student is not used with this methodology and the objectives are not yet clear. The feedback made by the colleagues is also important since it shows to the author that he / she has an audience that is following the comments and is enjoying what is being written

So far the experience has been successful and students acquired relevant professional soft skills. Of course some issues need to be improved for future situations but a general conclusion is that such practices should be repeated and applied in other subjects.

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Business Game Realgame – A New Opportunity for Teaching and Learning Business

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Abstract

One of the main objectives of business teaching in the University of Applied Sciences is to fulfill the competence requirements set by the business sector. Understanding and managing a holistic picture is being emphasized especially in the teaching of business logistics. Content based curriculum largely being utilized for business teaching in universities has been criticized as it does not adequately support the development of extensive knowledge based key competences and formulating the holistic view. Therefore, the integration of teaching and combining curricular should be considered. One solution in teaching the understanding of comprehensive packages, combining the theoretical knowledge and practical process knowhow, has been a learning environment based on business game Realgame. In the business game the different elements of business can be taught and studied at the same time, and the game is acting as a glue integrating different courses horizontally. The power of the business game in teaching and learning is based on real-time transactions, experimental learning and group-working.

Keywords

Business game, integrated teaching, horizontal integration

Authors

Principal Lecturer, PhD Kari Jalkanen has brought the business game into the degree program of business logistics, actively used the game in teaching for several years and lead the development of businessgame teaching in the Turku University of Applied Sciences

Project coordinator, BBA Kati Falck has made a thesis about the use of business game Realgame in teaching, and strongly worked to develop the business game towards a well-working learning environment.

Senior Lecturer, MSc (Eng) Rauni Jaskari has used business game in teaching business logistics.

1 Introduction

Excellent theoretical and professional governance of the own specific study area is not enough in today's society. New competence requirements coming from the corporate sector are challenging students in their learning. Companies are expecting that their employees understand and are able to manage comprehensive packages and that they know how the theory will be put to practice. The student, soon the new employee, is expected to also have new type of skills and qualities: business skills, problem solving skills, team-working skills, decision making skills and willingness to learn.

Students should get to practice and apply their basic theoretical learning in dynamic and real decision making situations, also as part of day-to-day studying and not just through separate internships in companies. The degree program of business logistics in Turku University of Applied Sciences has integrated the theoretical knowledge and practical process skills by utilizing a business game in teaching. Business game Realgame has been found to suit well in demonstrating and practicing the supply chain management and the business activities within a company.

Integrated teaching is one way to provide the competences required by the business sector. In this context, the integrated teaching means combining different curricula in order to meet the joint objectives. Integration can be either horizontal or vertical. In horizontal integration the simultaneously studied courses are grouped together. A good example about integrated teaching

is integrating the communication studies with the professional studies. In vertical integration learning is happening in a series of temporal succession. (Aaltonen 2003)

This article will discuss businessgame as one pedagogical method, a new learning environment and a tool for integrating teaching in the program of Business Logistics at the Uusikaupunki unit of Turku University of Applied Sciences. The article will describe different ways of utilizing the business game Realgame, both from the content and the extent of implementation point of view.

2 Realgame

Realgame was developed at Turku School of Economics and Business Administration for business training purposes first in companies but later on also in universities. Realgame was developed to help its players to understand how a business functions as a whole and to improve decision-making. Time-dependency, transparency and process oriented approach make Realgame a unique and pedagogically advanced learning method.

Realgame is a computer-based interactive business simulation game illustrating the interdependence and influence of business processes and operational decisions on business strategy and company performance. Realgame presents business processes as time-bound, continuously evolving, dynamic processes.

Teams of two or three players are set up as the management board of a company. The teams make operational and strategic decisions about the future of this company. Each company then competes with up to eight other companies in the industry for customer orders, based on the performance metrics in the industry.

The teams make different decisions within the company functions such as sourcing, production, pricing and offers for sale. This means that they manage the material flows, make ordering and manufacturing decisions based on projected sales and react to competitor market actions. For example, decisions are made on terms of delivery, sales prices, terms of payment, product development, marketing investments and other ways to differentiate their offering. The participants also have to manage their materials process (purchasing, steering the production process and deliveries) and the monetary process (loans, repayments and interests) as well as investment decisions in new computer systems, manufacturing equipment and decisions related to the amount of personnel.

Realgame develops strategic, managerial and operational level capabilities by illustrating interdependence, cause-and-effect and providing a holistic understanding of business processes. Interdependence shows how different functions, tasks and people work together to create a company result. It shows how upper level decisions are connected to operations and the importance of appropriate operational and strategic responses to market situations. Holistic understanding is the result of knowing the causal interdependencies of company processes. (www.realgame.fi)

Success in the game can be evaluated by several different metrics. Customer data, raw material suppliers and game environment management are located on a separate computer which is operated by the game master. Speed of the game can be adjusted. Decisions that the companies make, impact the market dynamics immediately.

3 Business Game and the Curriculum

The business game has been targeted to be integrated to the curriculum of business logistics in Turku University of Applied Sciences. The game could be either part of the basic or the professional studies. Business game has not been played as its own course, but it has always been a part of some course or a larger unit of integrated courses. The curriculum of the faculty of business logistics is a curricular based curriculum, in which the stand-alone courses are not formulating large competence units as in the module or theme based curriculum. (Karjalainen, Jaakkola, Alha and Lapinlampi, 2003). This to certain extent makes the integration of business game to teaching more complicated. In order to get the business game to support teaching, the content and objectives of each course have to be clarified in detail. That is why the links between each individual course and the business game have been mapped in detail in Uusikaupunki unit. (Falck 2008).

Realgame is a normal business game in which firms eg. procure raw materials to manufacture products for sale and it covers a broad range of various business topics. Realgame will also provide an extensive and illustrated experience how to run a business. The game will enable the student to apply the theory to which has been found to make learning deeper. For example, profitability or variable and fixed costs are key issues in the course of financial management, and the game will facilitate the understanding of these issues. Game also includes a wide range of financial reports.

Business game helps students gain a comprehensive and illustrative overview of logistics as part of a business, which issues it affects and what is the significance of different variables. The main features of business game Realgame are the areas of material control and process-based thinking and the overall interest of the importance of visualization. One of the most important advantages of the game is that the economical impact of the decisions and practical measures are directly visible. Professional identity is a central theme during the course Study skills and professional growth. The business game supports the growth of professional identity in business logistics well.

Business game Realgame can be also used for teambuilding, as it requires a partner to play it. The teams will get a common experience and common decision making and playing will familiarize the new students to each other. Realgame is a team game and the team is continuously going through different communication and interaction situations. Analysis is an important part of the Realgame and the learning process and various written and oral reports and presentations can be part of the learning. Combining the course of communication with the business game learning could provide excellent results.

Business game supports the learning of business management and logistics professional vocabulary in English and utilization of the various reports available can be used eg. in learning the use of Excel graphs.

4 The Development and Usage of the Businessgame in Turku University of Applied Sciences

Businessgame Realgame was played at Turku University of Applied Sciences Uusikaupunki, degree program of business logistics, for the first time in 2005, when the developer of the game took a business logistics student group through a game session. Excellent feedback from the students lead to a licence agreement between the game developer company Magisys and Turku University of Applied Sciences. After this, the businessgame has been used widely in the teaching of business logistics. Businessgame has been used in stand-alone courses as well as in a larger implementation combining several courses. Total playtime has varied from couple of hours simulation to a series several all-day sessions. Positive feedback from students, learning outcomes and awareness of the unexploited potential of the game have encouraged to continue the usage and the development of the business game.

As the business game had not been originally developed for teaching at the universities, there existed several challenges related to the technical setup and to the content of the game itself. Uusikaupunki unit has actively taken part in developing the game to make it suit better to teaching business logistics and there have been developed several methods to utilize the game. One of the methods is the backbone model. The idea of the backbone model is to integrate several curricular to one game implementation. Another developed model is a solo simulation, where every company can play their own game without having an impact to other companies.

In solo simulation the students can focus to certain issues at the time and experiment different options. Playing the game at their own speed and seeing the impact of different decisions at different time enables deeper learning. In solo simulation both the game company as well as the game control functions are loaded to the computer. In normal game environment the game control functions are located on teacher's computer only. (Falck 2008)

4.1 The Course-specific Implementation and Vertical Integration

The first business game implementation was done at the course Materials and Inventory management autumn 2006. Business game was really well suited to the course context and after that the game implementation has been developed to be more comprehensive for the course. Business game is supporting well the objectives for the course. Game versions, simulation exercises and other tasks have been developed to support learning. The latest implementations have consisted of focused simulation exercises, extensive preliminary tasks eg. creating the company strategy, interim tasks and final analysis. Essential part of learning and reflection is a free-form personal task, a learning diary, which leads the student to consider the effects of learning through the game and also serves as an important channel for feedback collection.

Evaluations are done, and the game evaluation can only raise the grade upwards. Genuine effort, well done tasks, and active participation in game sessions, profound analysis and thinking about the cause-effect relationships and the learning process are key evaluation criteria.

Course materials and inventory management is scheduled to the second year of study in the business logistics curriculum. In recent implementations of the business game the vertical integration model has been used so that there has been a game session during the first study year

as part of the course professional growth. After that, there will be a more deep business game section during the second study year.

4.2 The Backbone-model and Horizontal Implementation

The backbone model is one of the newly developed pedagogical methods to utilize the business game. The key thing in the method is to integrate several courses in the degree program curriculum in a way that the holistic knowledge perspective view is emphasized and that the working life based comprehensive skills package get stronger. The backbone method means a long game implementation, in which every game session is continued from the final stage of the previous session. Game is combining different courses together as it is played in parallel with the ongoing studies.

Target is that the game acts as a practical playground and the game acts are supported by the theory teaching. Students can apply their learning in practice continuously. The opportunity to put the learned theory to practice makes learning easier but also deeper. With a long game implementation the target is to increase students' curiosity to know more and to motivate to learn. As the student gets a grip of practical matters, sees the impact of his own acts and decisions, and hopefully understand some of his limitations in knowhow or skills, he/she could be eliminate those limitations by studying more.

In addition to the deeper learning, the backbone model enables more effective use of resources and opportunities. As one course can not utilize all potential and information the business game and as the game sessions take same resources despite how many different courses are involved, it is more useful the more courses are utilizing the game. This way the use of game gets deeper, wider and everyone involved will benefit more. Each course may utilize the playing individually, but then there is a risk for overlaps or gaps in handling the basic items of the game. It is more useful, friendly to students and more motivating if the course teachers jointly plan and coordinate the implementation. This way the teachers and their courses can, according to the agreement, focus on their key issues being aware that the important issues from holistic perspective are taught. Co-operation can be broad or narrow. It can be limited to an agreement about which supply chain, business and thus Realgame topics each course will handle, or it can be tight co-operation in which the tasks, reports and evaluation is common. The businessgame and the linkage and co-operation between courses will help the student to understand that there is a big picture behind the individual pieces of information from different courses.

Backbone model involving eight different courses from basics of logistics to transport and from warehousing and materials management to communication was for the first time implemented during 2008-2009. Feedback from the implementation showed some key development areas:

- Planning: main objective and themes in courses, timing of issues, commitment from all teachers and full content of the game implementation must be clarified in detail before starting the implementation.
- Cooperation: Implementation requires seamless cooperation and commitment from teachers.

Planning and cooperation will help the students to get a clear and systematic picture of the implementation.

Overall, the backbone model implementation proved to be useful and interesting, but at the same time very challenging to implement.

5 Summary

Teaching in the University of Applied Sciences is focusing to fulfill the growing competence requirements by the business sector. Understanding and managing a holistic picture is being emphasized in the competence requirements. Content based curriculum does not adequately support the development of extensive knowledge based key competences and formulating the holistic view.

One solution in teaching the understanding of comprehensive packages, combining the theoretical knowledge and practical process knowhow, has been a learning environment based on business game Realgame. In the business game the different elements of business can be taught and studied at the same time, and the game is acting as glue integrating different courses horizontally. The power of the business game in teaching and learning is based on real-time transactions, experimental learning and group-working.

In the degree program of business logistics in Turku University of Applied Sciences, in addition to usage of the businessgame in teaching, also extensive development work around the topic has

been carried out. Development work has consisted of eg student task development (pre-tasks and reporting before and after the game) for both individual course and integrated course developments. Close co-operation with the game developer to even further improve the game operations and has resulted to new improved versions of the game. Teachers utilizing the game in teaching have also studied how by changing different parameters or settings in the game, eg certain market changes or influence to company business metrics can be taught to students more clearly.

The good news is that the usage of business game does not require a reform of the curriculum. However, it is obvious that the usage of the business game would be much easier if the curriculum was already integrated around wider themes. Business game has been found to suit well in demonstrating and practicing the supply chain management and the business activities within a company. Business game has proven to be useful and inspiring way to develop comprehensive business and logistics knowledge based competences. Depending to the extent of implementing the business game, there has been identified several strengths and development areas in the implementation.

As Huusko and Kosunen (1997) have aptly pointed out, many reform projects, in which the teachers should assess themselves and the school working practices, increase teachers' sense of community and development-oriented attitude to work. Activities, in which the teachers should evaluate and develop their teaching and working methods and increase the co-operation among colleagues, will require pro-activeness from individuals as the school culture and practices change slowly. The objective should be a better learning environment, where teaching may also become more meaningful in many ways.

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Track 3

SPACE Students Right on Time! Intercultural Comparative Study on Time Management Perceptions

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Abstract

This study represents a virtual intercultural communication project within the SPACE network, between four institutional members: Constantin Brâncoveanu University from Pitesti - Romania, Polytechnical Institute of Porto (ISCAP) - Portugal, Vilnius Law and Business College - Lithuania and Innsbruck University (School of Business) - Austria. The study interviewed 150 students/master students from each of the four participating European universities on the topic of time management. It was conducted following the assumption that perceptions and representations over time management vary highly due to social and cultural factors. The results showed there are significant differences regarding both the attitude towards managing time and the time spent for activities that go into a day and the different career preparation activities that respondents chose. Romanian students spend a great amount of time for their jobs or looking for a job. Also, they think career preparation activities mean almost exclusively experiences given by having a job and not by taking an internship or attending additional classes/modules. Portuguese students spend most of their time attending classes and studying individually. They prepare for their career by attending additional classes/modules and are the least interested in searching for a job and going to job interviews. They differentiate from the other students as they spend a lot of time shopping, socializing and with their families. Lithuanian students spend the greatest amount of time doing internships and consulting professional networks. They can be considered 'champions' of watching TV, working on the computer and text messaging, activities which they prefer to attending classes and studying individually. Austrian students spend most of their time (in a day's frame) going to the university and studying as well as spending time on the computer and with thier friends, watching TV and doing sports. Career preparation holds a medium to a high importance and mainly means

attending additional classes/modules and internships. Finally, the study compares these results to the socio-cultural variables described by SPACE's Country Profiles and opens the way for universities and higher education institutions to a future analysis of the connection between student time management and different cultural patterns.

Keywords

Time management, career, intercultural dialogue

Authors

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1 Introduction

"Time is the coin of your life. It is the only currency that you and only you can decide how you will spend. Be careful don't let others spend it for you. " (Carl Sandburg)

Definition of time is a difficult approach, which specialists in management and planning attempts to find the most productive approaches. Literature abounds with evidence of impressive titles that provides "unbeatable" recipes for organization of time, establishing priorities and the use of rigorous programming tools. Beyond some exaggeration, it is widely agreed that time is a source and a valuable resource: "Time is a valuable resource, given to the princes and beggars to the same extent. Each day has 24 hours, no more, no less. And no matter how much we cherish, we can not do anything for the store and stopping the flow. Time waits for no one. Time is, however, a limited resource. He is consumed continuously and we have no power to make it come back "(Harvard Business Essentials, Time management. Increase your personal productivity and interest, 2005). Time management is based on three pillars: planning, organizing and controlling time. In the work *First things first*, author Stephen Covey (1994) considers that there are three generations of approaches to time management, first of them based on setting an agenda (to-do list), the second by setting priorities and the third - time programming based on personal values. Specifically, the latter approach requires long-term prioritization of tasks, to the detriment of tasks that seem urgent to solve the short term, but which are actually irrelevant. In the spirit of the same idea, David Allen (2001) has developed the method GTD (Getting Things Done), based on the central idea that a person must move away from tasks in order to solve them; once released from the stress to remember what to be done, can focus on current and important tasks, control and perspective becomes key elements.

According to studies in the field, perception of time management it is not only influenced by *individual factors* (personal beliefs, values system, status, priorities, etc.), but also by *technological factors* (for example, by use of a digital agenda or an answering machine), *social* (in many developed countries, there is a growing concern for the leisure of each individual and many institutions which organize and animate the extra-professional activity, appears) and, of course, *cultural factors* (Deaconu A., 2004). The influence of national culture on the perception of time is fully explained by the researcher and Professor Geert Hofstede (1994), who conducted extensive research on the classification of cultures in function of five dimensions: *power distance* (the perception of social inequality, of power and authority and relations regarding authority), *individualism* (the relationship between individuals and groups), *masculinity* (the social and emotional implications of being born male or female), *uncertainty avoidance* (how to deal with

uncertainty and ambiguous situations, control of aggression and expressing emotions) and *long-term orientation* (extent to which a society accepts or not long-term dedication, tradition and values orientation).

This paper is based on results of a study conducted under the assumption that the cultural perception of time management varies a lot depending on social and cultural factors. Conducted from January to March 2009, the study was developed in collaboration with academic partners from SPACE network (European Network for Business Studies and Languages) and tested a new method of working - through an online platform.

2 Research Methodology

The study was set to identify and analyse by comparison the perception on time management of 150 students from each participating institution (Constantin Brancoveanu University, Romania; International School of Law and Business, Vilnius, Lithuania; Innsbruck University - School of Management, Austria and Instituto Politecnico do Porto – ISCAP, Portugal). Respondents' average age is between 18 and 24 years (bachelor and master students).

The main variable of segmentation that was considered as appropriate was the geographic one based on the country of origin (Romania, Lithuania, Portugal, Austria), although some respondents were of other nationalities than the ones mentioned before. For example, French for Portugal, Polish for Lithuania, German, Italian, Luxembourgian, American and Emirati for Austria.

The research objectives (O_n) were the following:

O₁: Identifying whether students use/don't use a to-do-list (agenda) when organizing their time and how important can a to-do-list be when planning for short and medium periods of time.

O₂: Setting down a time-table of activities that a student/master student would do during a normal day of work and identifying the strongest *time enemies* (factors that hinder an optimum valorification of time).

O₃: Identifying the importance of career preparation and setting down a top of activities used by students for career preparation

O₄: Identifying the students perception regarding punctuality, dead-lines and priorities.

The final questionnaire was created using a prototype questionnaire that was pre-tested in each of the four participating universities. The teams of each university then sent back the observations from administering the questionnaire and the project coordinators decided that the final

questionnaire will include 12 questions in English regarding the research – 11 closed questions and an open one – and 4 questions the demographic items of respondents (see Annex 1).

The sampling population was a nonprobabilistic and a simple random sample, the only factor influencing the choice was the respondents' status of student(bachelor and master) of the university participating in the project.

Of course, being a pilot project meant encountering one or more difficulties due to geographic distance between universities and the need to train the members of teams who collected the data. Fortunately, the enthusiasm of the whole team surpassed all difficulties and made a small and significant step into scientific research and intercultural studies.

3 Study Results

Role of agenda for student time management

Two thirds of the Romanian students (66%) say they have a to-do-list to better manage thier time. This to-do-list is mostly a daily one (37%) or a weekly one (21%).

Only 56% of the Portuguese students manage thier time using a to-do-list, this being mainly a weekly one – 32%.

Similar to the Romanian students, almost two thirds of the Lithuanians have a to-do-list (68%) which is a daily one for 27% of them, a weekly one for 23% of them or another type of to-do-list for 3% of them.

30% of the Austrian students say have a weekly to-do-list and almost as many don't have a to-do-list.

Image No. 1

Do you have a TO-DO-LIST?

A mental to-do-list or a written one?

55% of Romanian students that say they have a to-do-list prefer a mental to-do-list, a similar situation to the one in Lithuania where 54% have a mental to-do-list. A written to-do-list is preferred by the Portuguese students (62%) and by the Austrian ones (64%). More exactly, the Romanian and Lithuanian students mostly have a daily, mental to-do-list in the meantime, the Portuguese and Austrian students mostly have a weekly, written to-do-list.

Follow-up/Update of to-do-list

77% of Romanian students and 81% of Portuguese students that say they have a to-do-list periodically update their agenda. In comparison, only 63% of Austrian students and 59% of Lithuanian students say they have a follow-up of their to-do-list to include unpredictable tasks and activities that were not finished.

Priorities in the to-do-list

Most Romanian (87%) and Lithuanian students (70%) set their agenda according to priorities; Portuguese and Austrian students do the same in proportion of 62%, 60% respectively. The answers to this question should not come as a surprise as the former say they prefer daily mental agendas which can be easily prioritized to short term events.

Time for unpredictable tasks

Romanian students are the most reactive to unpredictable tasks with 59% YES answers in comparison to the Austrian students. 56% of them say their agendas don't include time for unpredictable tasks. In the case of Lithuania and Portugal only 50% of the students save time for unpredictable tasks.

Daily time-table

Regarding their daily time-table, Romanian students spend most of their time sleeping (7,5 h) and working (5,1 h) while spending the least amount of time for sports & leisure (0,8 h) and extracurricular activities (0,2 h). Other high ranked activities are computer related activities (3,2h) and watching TV (2,1h), the later activity being as popular as going to classes (2,6h).

Portuguese spend the highest amount of time attending classes (3,8 h), studying individually (3,3 h) as well as shopping (3,4 h). Like Romanians, they don't like to spend their time for extracurricular activities (0,34 h), but spend less time at work (2,3 h) or watching TV (0,4 h).

Naturally, Lithuanian students also spend most of their time sleeping (6,5 h). Their remaining time is spent between watching TV (2,5 h), working on the computer / being online (2,5 h), working (2 h), talking on the phone/text messaging, socializing and spending time with the family.

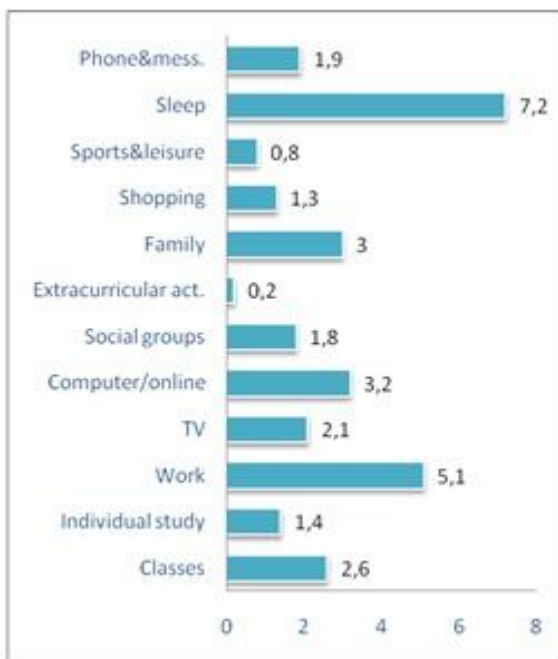
Attending classes is given 2,5 h from a Lithuanian student's time and the individual study gets an extra hour. Lithuanians spend the least amount of time for extracurricular activities.

Besides sleeping - which takes an average of 6,4 h from their time – Austrian students spend most of their time attending classes and studying individually – 5,4 h in total – but also socializing and working on the computer (2,34 h). Their least favorite activities for spending time are shopping (0,8 h) and extracurricular activities (0,4 h).

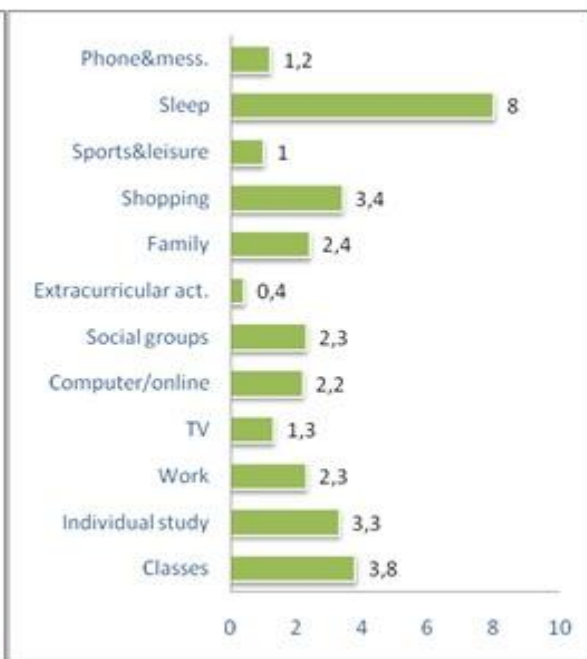
Image No. 2

How much time do you give daily (on average) to the following activities (...)?

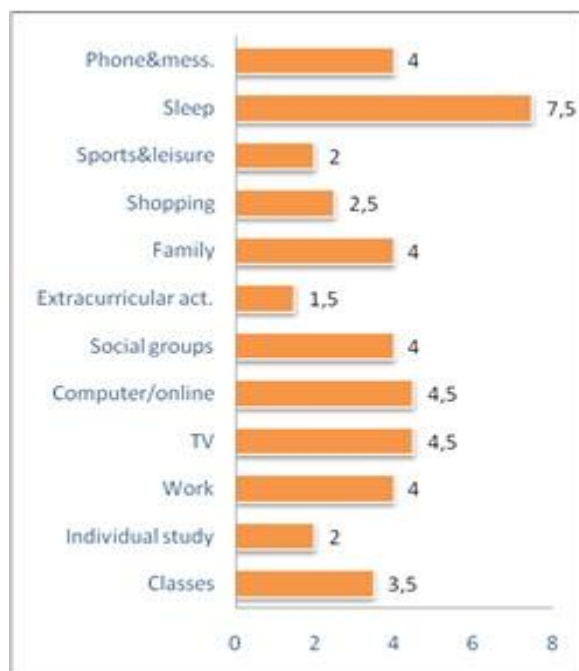
ROMANIA



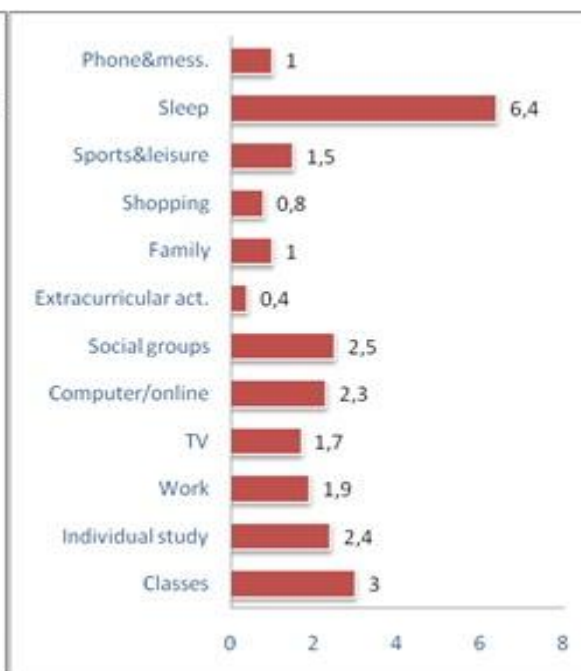
PORTUGAL



LITHUANIA



AUSTRIA

*Career preparation*

On a scale from 1 to 7 (1=minimum, 7=maximum), career preparation activities have the maximum importance for almost half of the Romanian students interrogated and a great importance for another 36% of them.

Lithuania's situation is similar to the one in Romania as more than two thirds of the students say career preparation activities hold a great and a maximum importance to them.

Most Austrian respondents (34%) think career preparation activities are very important (5, on a scale from 1 to 7) while only 10% think they are of maximum importance.

Portuguese students gave the most varied answers to this question: 22% of them think career preparation activities hold a relatively small importance (smaller than the average of 4, on a scale from 1 to 7), 14% think these activities hold a medium importance and the rest say they hold a great and even a maximum importance (25%).

A comparative analysis of the results was possible by calculating the weighted mean of the data. The means of the four countries are the following:

- Romania – 5,82
- Lithuania – 5,26
- Portugal – 4,98
- Austria – 4,90

Career preparation activities

Of all the given career preparation activities, Romanian students say they spend most of their time job searching although few of them later go to an actual job interview for which they say they spend an average 0,7 h/month.

Portuguese students are the least interested in career preparation activities as they only spend 2,5 h/month for this purpose. This result is fourteen times much smaller than the same result in Lithuania. Attending additional classes/modules has the biggest average (1,4 h/month) being the most interesting and important activity.

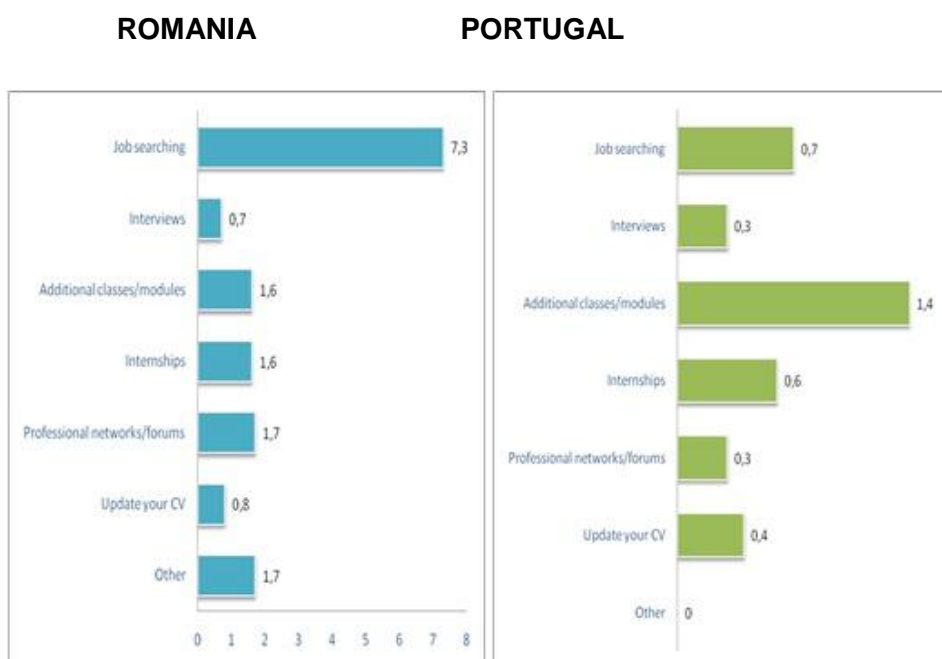
Lithuanian students are the opposite of Portuguese. Except updating their CV, which is a rather simple activity, the least favoured one is attending additional classes/modules. Internships, on the other hand, are the most popular (8,8 h) and we can assume students in Lithuania are practice oriented students.

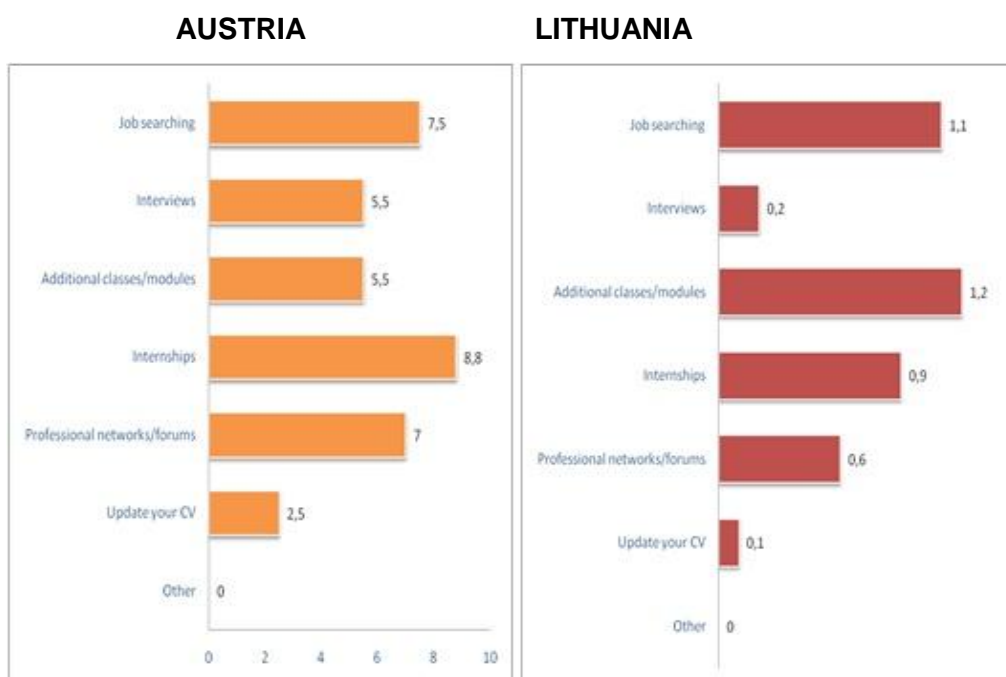
The results of Austrian students are similar to the Portuguese results and a total opposite of results among Lithuanian and Romanian students.

Career preparation means focusing on attending additional classes/modules and applying for internships.

Image No. 3

How much time do you give monthly (on average) to the following activities (...)?





Accomplishment of tasks before deadlines

At this matter, Austrian students lead with 89% affirmative answers while Lithuanian students lead the negative answers with 49,74%. Romanians and Portuguese have similar answers, 85,31% of the former and 74,08% of the latter say they accomplish tasks before deadlines. Lithuania has the most surprising results as half the interviewed students are not able to accomplish their deadlines.

Attitude to punctuality

All students are, at least on paper, punctual persons: 80% of Romanians, 77% of Austrians, 74% of Portuguese and 73% of Lithuanians. The answers to this question are quite unitary as we can see there is only an 7% difference between the highest and the lowest porcentages.

The “best time” for studying

Most Romanian students say the best time for studying is in the morning (44,73%), the worst time being in the afternoon (10,53%).

Unlike Romanians, Portuguese students prefer studying in the afternoon (28,21%), but all moments of the day seem to be as perfect.

Almost half of the Lithuanian students (46,4%) say evenings are the best time of day to study while only 12% answered ‘during the night’.

Most Austrian students would rather study in the morning (37%) and in the evening (31%) and less during the night (5%).

Comparing the results, most students say they would rather study in the morning (33%) or in the evening (31%) and not so much during the night (15%).

Main “enemies” (factors) that usually waste time

As expected, the new communication technologies are time’s worst ‘enemies’ more so as the average age of respondents is between 18 and 24 years. But other factors, some of which are heavily influenced by national profile, contribute in defining the factors that cause wasting time.

Romanian students named watching TV, the PC and the mobile phone as the worst enemies that waste their time. Next came shopping which some sociologists call ‘a national sport’. Daydreaming and doing nothing are the last time enemies Romanian students list.

Just like Romanians, Portuguese students spend great part of their time watching TV, listening to music and searching the Web. Time spent with family and friends seems very important to Portuguese students and dislocations are blamed for wasting this time. Finally, lack of motivation ends the list.

Lithuanian students are the only students that don’t name watching TV as their top 5 time enemies. The first place goes to ‘working on the computer’ and spending time with family and friends. Eating and sleeping also prevent Lithuanians from best taking advantage of their time as well as traffic jams.

Austrian students named Internet, TV/DVD, friends, public transportation and unpredictable situations as their 5 time enemies.

Comparing the students’ answers we find both the common traits and the specific differences.

A top 5 factors that waste respondents’ time in all four countries would look like this:

1. TV
2. Internet/Computer
3. Family/Friends
4. Urban jam
5. Sleeping/Relaxing/Daydreaming

Factors that are influenced by the national profile

Shopping and spending time for make-up are seen as time enemies only by Romanian students who are the only ones who don't list family and friends as enemies. The current job is also seen as an enemy (most students have jobs) along with slow administrative procedures so characteristic for a bureaucratic system.

Eating as a time enemy is only listed by Lithuanian students while smoking is only mentioned by Romanian students and alcohol and coffee, only by Austrians.

Lack of motivation only appears in responses given by Portuguese students. They also mention stress and tiredness caused by a filled time-table.

Austrian students have a few particular answers such as house work, Amazon, sex, Skype, Xbox and even surveys, probably referring to this one.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

The central idea of the study, stated in the introductory part of this paper was therefore that the perception of time management varies according to cultural and social factors. Confirmation of this can be achieved by linking the results obtained through objectives with intercultural profiles of the participating countries, as they are described in the Intercultural Communication ("Country Profiles" part) course developed by SPACE network members (it is a model of intercultural presentation profile of a country based on certain cultural and social determinants, including intercultural items proposed in the literature by Professor Geert Hofstede) (see Table 1).

COUNTRY PROFILES

Socio-cultural profiles of countries participating in the study

Country	Important adjectives for country profiles
Romania	Well-informed, humoristic/joyful, family-oriented, tolerant, smart, creative, proud, flexible, friendly, curious, enthusiastic, hospitable, ambitious, party people
Portugal	Welcoming, friendly, eager to learn, creative, problem solver, relaxed, able to adapt, flexible, sense of humor, tolerant, smiling

Lithuania	Reserved, serious, honest, reliable, hard working, family-oriented, quick-witted
Austria	Punctual, hard-working, honest, supportive, loyal, friendly, charming, with a great sense of fun, old-fashioned

Table 1

An interesting perspective of the present study is comparing its results to time management related adjectives that can be found in each of the four countries' profiles, alongside adjectives related to attitude towards work and orientation towards solving problems. From the four participating countries, only Austria is characterized by *punctuality* (the German model/pattern); Romanians describe themselves as *party people* and *family-oriented*, Portuguese - *eager to learn*, *problem solvers*, but also *relaxed* and Lithuanians - *hard working* and *family-oriented*.

Comparing these adjectives to the objective-based results we can draw the following conclusions:

Romania. Two thirds of Romanian students keep a to-do-list, mostly a daily and a mental one which they update according to priorities and unpredictable tasks. They say they manage to accomplish their tasks before deadlines and are punctual persons. Their daily time-table is divided mostly between working hours spent at their current jobs, time spent at the computer and time spent with family. The least amount of time is dedicated to sports and extracurricular activities. Watching TV, the Internet and the mobile phone are their worst time enemies as well as shopping and doing nothing. Romanian students' answers are particular compared to the other students' because they spend a great amount of time for their jobs or looking for a job. Also, they think career preparation activities mean almost exclusively experiences given by having a job and not by taking an internship or attending additional classes/modules.

Portugal. Surprisingly, only 56% of Portuguese students keep a to-do-list, mostly a weekly and a written one updated periodically according to priorities and unpredictable tasks. They generally accomplish their tasks before deadlines, are punctual and can study at any time of the day. Of all students that answered the questionnaire, Portuguese students are the ones who spend most time attending classes and studying individually. They prepare for their career by attending additional classes/modules and are the least interested in searching for a job and going to job interviews. They differentiate from the other students as they spend a lot of time shopping, socializing and

spending time with their families and also because they complain about fatigue, stress and lack of motivation.

Lithuania. Similar to Romanians, 66% of Lithuanian students keep a to-do-list, mostly a daily and a mental one which they update only in part (compared to other students) and which doesn't include, in most cases, time for unpredictable tasks. This is why half of the respondents say they don't accomplish their deadlines. By far, Lithuanian students can be considered 'champions' of watching TV, working on the computer and text messaging, activities which they prefer to attending classes and studying individually. They also spend the greatest amount of time doing internships and consulting professional networks. They see their PCs, family & friends, relaxing, cooking and urban jams as their 5 most dangerous time enemies.

Austria. 71% of Austrian students keep a to-do-list, mostly a weekly and a written one updated and structured according to priorities only by part of the students which doesn't include times for unpredictable tasks. Nonetheless, they say they accomplish their tasks before deadlines and are punctual. Career preparation holds a medium to a high importance and mainly means attending additional classes/modules and internships and not giving any interest to searching jobs and going to job interviews. They spend most of their time (in a day's frame) going to the university and studying as well as spending time on the computer and with their friends, watching TV and doing sport. The least amount of time is spent shopping and with the family. Their five worst time enemies are the Internet, the computer, friends, having a drink or having a coffee.

The present study emphasizes the theory that time perception and a normal day's time-table is influenced by social and cultural factors. Therefore, Romanians are *curious* and *ambitious*, Portuguese are *eager to learn*, Lithuanians are *family-oriented* and *friendly* and Austrians *punctual* and *serious*. The results of the study show that these perceptions can also be influenced by the economic situation of each country. For example, students that come from countries which have a bigger GDP per capita (such as Austria) don't feel the need to have a job while studying and focus their time on attending classes and individual preparation unlike students countries with a lower GDP per capita who in most cases have to pay for their studies themselves and are therefore forced to find a job and work. The study also leaves room for further information from students in other countries as well as further interpretations focused on economical, technological, social and cultural factors.

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Matching Enterprises and International Bachelor Students in Professional Higher Education – New Challenges for Professional Higher Education Institutions in Denmark

Dr. Gustav Kristensen

Abstract

This study is related to the Danish University College Programmes that have duration from 3 to 4 years as full time studies and Academy Profession (AP) Degree Programmes that takes from 1½ to 2½ year as full time study. Characteristic for both is that they combine theoretical studies with a practice-oriented approach. Both can thus be labelled as “professional higher educations”.

Student job, internships and bachelor thesis writing in cooperation with enterprises are the three challenges, which in the near future will meet the practice-oriented professional higher educations, which in Denmark from the summer of 2009 face the introduction of compulsory internships also for international students.

Based on a questionnaire, which resulted in answer from 222 international students from six educational institutions in Denmark, the actual matching between enterprises and bachelor students in professional higher education was investigated.

The article reveals great differences in performance of as well the institutions as of the students in pursuing the intentions of the law and show a challenging potential for the leaders in the field. Besides it underline the need to find the “model” for the professional higher education as distinguished from classical university education.

The article concludes that the strong coupling of the international students to (Danish) enterprises in the context of their studies as prescribed by the news laws is not realistic, and consequently there is a high need to find alternative models for the international students internships and bachelor thesis writing as well as to increase the efforts on information as well in relation to the international students as in relation to local enterprises.

Key words

Internship, cooperation with business, international students

Author

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1 Introduction

This project is nationwide and made through cooperation between University Colleges and Institutes of Professional Higher Educations from all regions in Denmark. The analysis is supported by the Danish Ministry of Education.

The professional higher educations are going to introduce compulsory internships also for international students, enrolled at Danish professional higher educations. Likewise there has been an increased demand for bachelor thesis written in cooperation with enterprises.

The Danish HEIs first experiences show that:

- the international students have difficulties in obtaining internship agreements and partner enterprises for bachelor thesis in Denmark due to linguistic and cultural barriers. The time to create network with the respective branches has been too short.
- the possibilities for agreement between enterprise and students differ across regions
- there is no systematic collection of know-how or evaluations in that field

Besides it is expected that a compulsory internship – often unpaid – will become a problem for many of the international students, who are economically dependent of student job.

This paper will contribute to the mapping of present practice at selected HEIs in the field of:

- Cooperation with enterprises: internships and bachelor thesis for international students
- International students own experiences in obtaining student jobs.

Based on the answers from the students the paper will analyse whether the first experiences are correct. Besides it will discuss to which degree internships – most often unpaid – will become a problem for the international students, who are dependent on student jobs.

The applied questionnaire is based on studies conducted by The Danish Agency for International Education and FUHU, Denmark. In the present analyse the questionnaire has been extended also to include internship and bachelor thesis exclusively described for professional higher educations.

In this paper the students are international exchange students and "Full Degree" students at the institutions shown in TABLE 1.

Institution		Answers
Region North-Jutland: North-Jutland's University College, NOEA	NOEA	47
Region Mid-Jutland: University College VIA,	VIA	18
Region South-Denmark: Academy of Professional Higher Education Lillebaelt, TietgenSkolen	Tietgen	41
Region Sealand: University College Sjælland	UCS	6
The Capital Region: Academy of Professional Higher Technical Education Copenhagen, KEA	KEA	80
The Capital Region: Academy of Professional Higher Business Education, Niels Brock	NB	30
Total		222

Table 1. *The Participating Institutions*

The small number of answers from some education institutions implies that a separate evaluation is not possible.

2 Data

As internships are compulsory for all professional higher education in Denmark starting autumn 2009, this study is concentrated around the international students' first entrance to the Danish (labour-) market in relation to student jobs, internships and enterprise based bachelor thesis.

The questionnaire gives answers from 222 international students. Unanswered questions imply that there is not full accordance between the numbers of answers from figure to figure.

Students Geographical Distribution

The international students were distributed on four geographical main groups:

- **EU East** includes the 10 new EU members in East Europe.
- **EU17** includes the 17 member states before the expansion towards East. **Iceland** is as member of the European Economic Area included under this group.

The two first groups are thus member of the EU, but nevertheless with clear differences in needs.

The two last groups are countries outside the EU:

- **Asia** is East Asia and Nepal.
- **Other countries** are 17 countries in North- and South America, Africa and Asia. There are only few students from each country.

The distribution of answers on four geographical areas is shown in Figure 1 and Table 2.

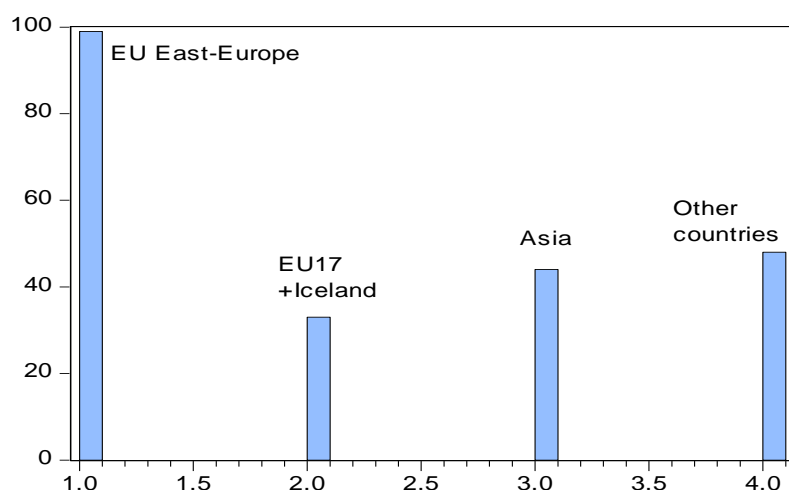


Figure 1 Answers distributed on countries.

Gender did not have a significant impact on the results in this study and are therefore excluded from the discussion.

Institution	Tietgen	VIA	NB	UCS	KEA	NOEA	Total
EU East	30	12	3	2	15	37	99
EU17+Icel	4	4	3	3	19	0	33
Asia	3	1	21	0	23	1	49
Others	4	1	3	1	23	9	41
Total	41	18	30	6	80	47	222

Table 2. Distribution of students, at the individual institutions, after geographical origin.

Table 2 shows that Niels Brock has many students from Asia. KEA has a relative equal distribution of students from all four areas. The remaining institutions have few from Asia.

Tietgen (TietgenSkolen) has relative few Full-degree students and relative many Exchange students (65.8 – 44.2). KEA (Academy of Professional Higher Technical Education Copenhagen, KEA) has relative many Full-degree students and relatively few Exchange students (95.9 – 4.1).

Subjects of study

"Multimedia design", was dominating on KEA (Academy of Professional Higher Technical Education Copenhagen, KEA). Business and Administrative Studies together with a number of partly untraditional (specialised) studies containing the word "marketing" dominates the remaining institutions. The included subjects are:

1. Architecture, Building and Construction
- 2. Business and Administrative Studies inclusive Marketing**
3. Computer Sciences
4. Creative Arts and Design
5. Education
6. Engineering
7. Mass Communications (including Media Studies and film)

- 8. Social Sciences (e.g. Economics and Political Sciences)
- 9. Technologies
- 10. Multimedia design**
- 11. Multi - subject degree

The distribution is shown graphically in Figure 2.

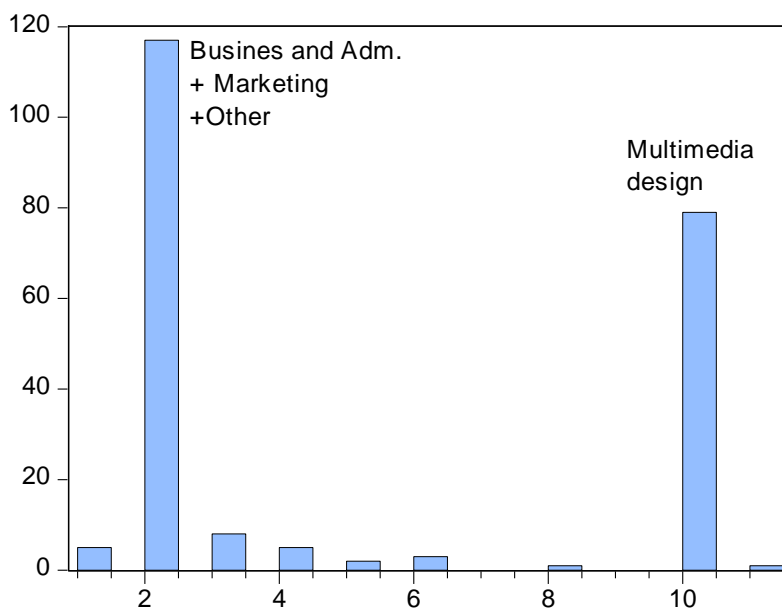


Figure 2 Students distributed after subjects. Two subjects are dominating. The numbers on the axis refer to subject indicated above.

3 Student Job

An important reason for including student job in this analysis has been the ambition to investigate the possibilities for new combinations of job-internship-bachelor thesis projects as well as to trace new types of student jobs, which can be converted to internships and create better integration between student jobs and the study-process.

A. The Need for Student Job

Students from countries outside the EU can only legally work for 15 hours a week in Denmark.

In contrast students from the East European EU member countries, like Danish students and all students from EU can work unlimited. But their need for student jobs is the same.

A Danish analysis showed that 48% of Danish students had job during their study period which is an important entrance to later employment. In this study 41.4 % of the foreign students have student jobs.

Nationality	EU East	EU17 and Iceland	Asia	Other	Total
No need	29	18	13	19	79
Need for job	68	13	34	21	136
Total	97	31	46	40	215
Need for job %	70.1	41.9	72.3	52.5	63.3
Have a job %	38.1	38.7	54.2	35.8	41.4
Miss a job %	32.0	3.2	18.1	16.7	21.9

Table 3. Students need for student job after geographical origin

Students from EU17 countries and Iceland have the lowest need for student job. Students from Asia have the highest. The need for matching is far larger for Full-degree students (175 in the sample) than for Exchange students (38 in the sample), but 63,3% of the students feels that they need to have a student job. Exchange students have the smallest need (31.5%) for student jobs, Full degree students the highest (70.3%).

B. Student jobs

The Asian students are the most successful in finding student jobs, but the success level is highest at KEA.

Students from	KEA	Other edu. Inst.
Asia	62.7%	46,7 %
All other	33.6 %	29.3 %

Table 4. The probability for having a student job – after simple selection criteria.

Table 4 shows in a slight simplified form: "the geographical effect" and "the institutions effect":

- Students from Asia have highest probability for having student job.
- Students from Academy of Professional Higher Technical Education Copenhagen, KEA have highest probability for having student job.

Conclusion: Student jobs

The discussion around student job shows, that there is a significant difference between international students with respect to handle the Danish labour market here mentioned as the *geographical effect*.

The Asian students are clearly the most motivated and efficient to find a job.

The section likewise shows a clear *institutions effect* as Academy of Professional Higher Technical Education Copenhagen, KEA clearly appears as the best to support the international students in finding student jobs.

This is an indication of a potential possibility for the other student groups and institutions, but also an indication of a gap that might be impossible to fill out.

4 Internship

As mentioned above internship will become a compulsory part of all the discussed studies. However, it is a big problem for the international students to find these internships.

The study shows that 25.7% of the Exchange students would like to find an internship, and 56.8% of the Full-degree students would like to find an internship in Denmark.

106 of the international students were looking for an internship, but only 15 in total had found internships.

4.1 The Search Process

The students who had found internships could not give a clear picture of suitable methods in the search process. A possible interpretation of the sporadic answers is that students first hear about internship on “career fairs”, but actually find the job through their student/career counsellor.

4.2 Looking for Internship

Table 5 shows the number of students, who know where to look for internship.

Comparison can be made by calculations based on probit models, however due to the small number of observations and the fact that there are dummy variables on both side of the equations the calculations are supplemented by more simple and robust analyses.

After correction for “Type/Full-degree” and “Asia”.

Institution	Tietgen	VIA	NB	KEA	NOEA	Total
Know how %	27.7	11.8	21.4	35.1	34.1	29.3
Calculated in %	27.9	30.9	22.8	29.6	32.6	
Difference	-0,2	-19,1	-1,4	+5,5	+1,5	

Table 5: The Institution effect: knowledge about where to find internship.

Students from KEA are the best informed about where to look for internships while students from VIA seem to have a problem.

In all institutions the Asian students are most in doubt about where to find internships. The Asian students at KEA are more in doubt than the Asian students at the other HEIs.

Students from	KEA	Other edu. Inst.
Asia	27.3	15.4
All other	38.2	28.4

Table 6. The knowledge in finding internships – more simple method

Conflict between student job and internship

The study shows that a large share of the international students experiences a conflict between the need to have a student job and the need to have an internship to finish their studies. The conflict is described in the following international student statements from:

EU East	EU 17	Asia	Other countries
Hungary * If you take an internship you work for free about 8 hours a day. This in reality exclude that you can have a student job. It is therefore difficult to cover your costs. It is of course not possible to work 8 hours as intern and after that work 4-8 hours as cleaning assistant, dish washer etc, so you will not have time to sleep or live a little. In addition ... as foreigner it is very tough to get an internship as well as a paid job. I do not understand why they do not want unpaid labour. *I work as part time cleaning assistant for a firm. In an internship I have	Denmark. No time for both. Italy. *The timing. Sweden *No payment in internship. UK * In most cases you are not paid for an internship and I must earn money to live in Copenhagen.	China. *My parents' think that internship will have a bad influence on my study, and I cannot persuade them although I think it will have a good influence on me; occasionally I feel that I cannot focus on my study. So that is really a paradox. *I believe that internship would look like a full time job. However, I do not want to give up my student job. * Student job is paid, but internship is not paid. * It is easier to get a student job in Denmark than an internship because a student job usually is a	Russia. *Internship is a part of our education program – Student job is our own choice. It is paid and not always connected to your educational program. *It is very difficult to find a job without speaking Danish. Iraq. * I can only work 15 hours according to my work permit. That is a problem because I am offered a 37 hours job under my internship in next semester. Mexico. * I am not sure that I could contact enterprises and I

<p>to work with what I am studying and that is more difficult to find.</p> <p>Romania.</p> <p>*There can be a big time problem.</p> <p>*No time for both.</p> <p>Lithuania.</p> <p>*Just now it is all about money for me. So what will give the highest income?</p> <p>*Internship gives no money</p> <p>Slovakia</p> <p>* If you do not have time for your job you will be fired.</p> <p>*The time.</p> <p>Poland.</p> <p>*The enterprises do not pay students for an internship.</p> <p>*It would be wonderful if the business world was more open for foreigners, who do not speak Danish. It is difficult for non-Danish speaking immigrants to get internship in Denmark.</p> <p>*It is vital impossible to find student job in connection to the subject for my study.</p> <p>Estonia.</p> <p>*It is difficult to find any job, especially internship with</p>		<p>part-time job.</p>	<p>am afraid, that they do not have confidence in me, because I am from Mexico.</p>
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no knowledge to Danish. Bulgaria. *The conflict of finding time for both is obvious. Bulgaria. It is a problem, if the internship is unpaid. Bulgaria. There is a need for income to stay in Denmark.			
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Conclusion on Internships

The discussion on internships shows the necessity of a coordination of student jobs with internships is obvious from the answers from the students.

For Full-degree students' student jobs have a significant negative effect on the incentive to look for internship.

This section furthermore underline that a more intensive effort from the HEIs in finding internships for the international students is severely needed.

This section creates doubts about whether the HEIs are sufficiently prepared for the new challenges.

5 Bachelor Thesis Project

The students are searching for bachelor thesis enterprises. Exchange students, however, to a minor extent than Full-Degree students 20% versus 58%.

5.1 The Search Process

52% of the students are searching for an enterprise for their thesis. But only 27% of the students know how to search for it.

A possible interpretation of the sporadic answers is (as with internship) that the students first hear about contact with firms on "career fairs", but actually find the contact through the student/ career counsellor.

Most of the international students prefer to write their thesis in Denmark.

International students from countries *outside the* EU have significant higher probability to seek partnership with Danish enterprises than students from countries inside the EU.

The arguments of the students for not wanting to write thesis in Denmark were:

- Poland: Because I am a Erasmus student
- Bulgaria. It is cheaper to work on the project home and have the internship there. I would like to stay in Denmark but there is no job to be found and it will cost much more to stay in Denmark.
- Belgium. It is easier to find information at home; the Danish language will make it more difficult here.
- Czech Republic. Due to the language in relation to field research.
- Estonia. Because, home I can use Estonian libraries and have better contact with my advisor.
- Iceland. I have possibilities to get an internship in my own country.
- China. Due to my language.
- Vietnam. Because I need to feel at home and can ask my college for information.

Conclusion about bachelor thesis writing

The discussion about thesis writing show that Asian students - most probably the most ambitious – do not know how to find an enterprise for their thesis the same indication was given concerning internships.

The language barrier is indicated in connection to search for literature and consultation.

Towards a "Model" for Professional Higher Education.

The performance of five institutions can be summed up the as shown in table 7, 8 and 9:

	Know how to find internship %	Have a job %	Answers

KEA	35.1	51.9	80
NOEA	34.1	42.5	47
Tietgen	27.7	35.9	41
NB	21.4	37.7	30
VIA	11.8	23.5	18

Table 7. Overview: Institutional capacity in relation to students.

	Know how to find internship %	Have a job %	Answers
KEA	27.3	59.1	23
NB	14.3	52.4	21

Table 8. Overview: Institutional capacity in relation to Asian students.

Only KEA and NB have answers from more than three Asian students.

	Know how to find internship %	Have a job %	Answers
KEA	27.3	53.3	15
NOEA	40.6	45.9	37
Tietgen	29.6	37.9	30
VIA	0.0	8.3	12

Table 9. Overview: Institutional capacity in relation to East European students.

Only KEA, NOEA Tietgen and VIA had answers from more than 3 students.

Regarding the institutional capacity KEA and NOEA perform better than the other institutions and on all parameters KEA performs the best. From the tables 7 – 9 you can see that the institutions can be ranked in relation to those goals given for the HEIs in Denmark. The other HEIs ought to consider how to drift towards the KEA results.

Inspired by tables 7-9 we can consider the tentative model for the necessary drift towards the Professional Higher Education.

The drift is shown in a more abstract form in figure 3. The idea of figure 3 is that the professional higher education has its origin in the research university system that focuses on originality and multinationality. To develop, the professional higher education has to drift towards its own identity: innovation/ entrepreneurship and multicultural understanding. In figure 3:

- Entrepreneurship means that you compose well known factors in a new way,
- “Multicultural” means that you can give the students a service differentiated after their own cultural background,
- “Multinational” is here understood as the local culture of the institution who receives international students e.g. Erasmus students and consequently must have a multinational orientation

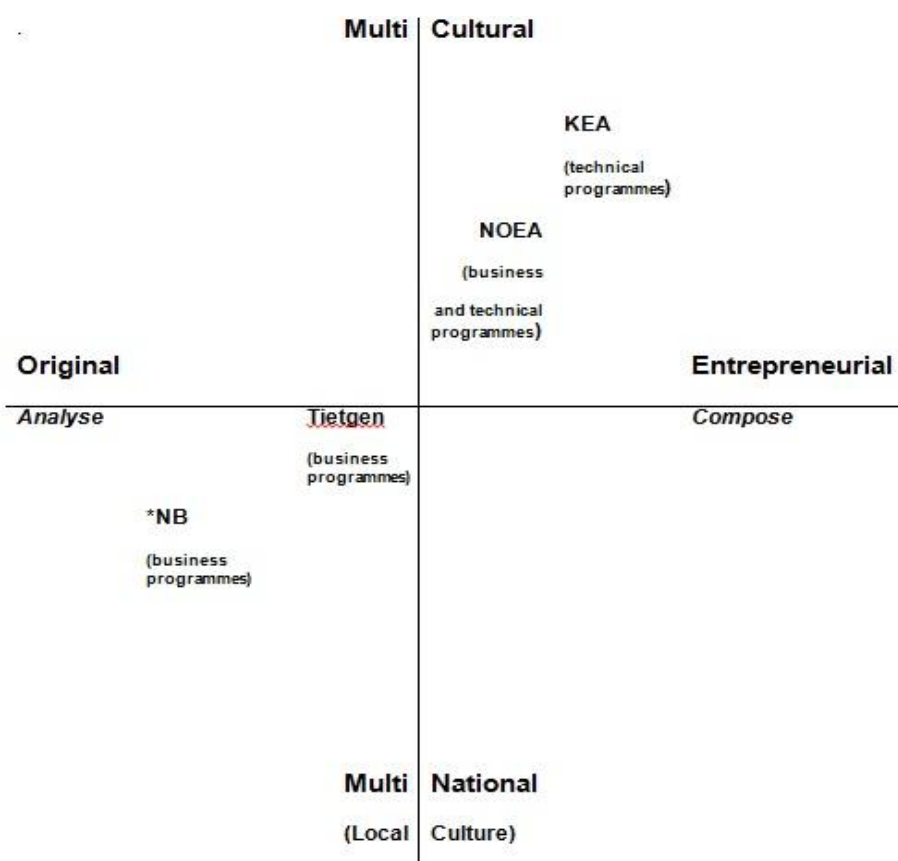


Figure 3. A tentative model for the direction of the Professional Higher Education.

6 Composed Conclusion

Matching

A. Student job

- Student job is a necessity for 70% of the international Full-degree students.
- In total 35.2% of the need for student jobs is uncovered at present (which is about 22% of the total population)
- The institutions are to a different degree ready to support the students in their search for student jobs. Academy of Professional Higher Technical Education Copenhagen, KEA is clearly in the lead. KEA-students are the most successful with respect to finding jobs, while VIA students are the less successful
- Asian students are the most successful in their search for student jobs.

B. Internships

The Conflict between the international student need for student job and the demand for having a 3 - 6 month unpaid internship is a great problem and mentioned by 44 students.

- The possibilities for finding internship for the students are not (especially in times of crises) good. Only very few have found internships.
- In total about 43.4% of the need for knowledge about where to apply for internship is uncovered.
- The study shows that Academy of Professional Higher Technical Education Copenhagen, KEA is in the lead in relation to inform about possibilities for internships, while VIA students are less informed.
- Asian students are the most insecure in relation to finding internships.

C. Bachelor thesis

- The bachelor thesis must be written in cooperation with an enterprise – and preferably Danish, but only very few have actually found an enterprise to cooperate with.
- About 50% of the need to know how to find an enterprise is uncovered on all institutions in the study.

The strong connecting between the international students and (Danish) enterprises seems to be unrealistic.

There is therefore a strong need for:

- finding alternative models for the international students internship and bachelor thesis program, as well as
- enhancing the efforts to inform the international students about the Danish labour market

The differences between performances of the students after geographical origin and between institutions nevertheless points out a potential for better matching on as well institutional as individual level.

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The Cohesion Approach of Culture and its Implications for the Training of Intercultural Competence

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Abstract

The paper argues that established training methods of intercultural competence often prove to be ineffective if not counterproductive because they build on an outdated paradigm of culture and intercultural communication. Based on a revised understanding of culture and intercultural competence the paper outlines how to develop innovative teaching approaches that effectively prepare students and managers for working in a global world.

Keywords

Culture, cohesion, coherence, intercultural competence, intercultural training

Author

Stefanie Rathje completed her PhD at the University of Arts (Berlin) and received an MBA from the University of Chicago. After a career in management consulting she joined University of Jena as assistant professor for intercultural communication. Since 2008, she is a full professor for leadership and communication at HTW Berlin.

1 The Challenges of Developing Intercultural Competence

1.1 Situation

Modern business education needs concepts how to prepare students and managers to effectively work in heterogeneous teams, manage co-operation between international companies and integrate diverse corporate cultures around the globe. In the past, the paradigm of intercultural competence has emerged to describe the skills necessary to successfully communicate and act in intercultural settings.

The American social psychologist Gardner was probably one of the first to address what we now commonly refer to as intercultural competence when he posed the question: “[...] to what degree is it actually possible, for an expert from one culture to communicate with, to get through to, persons of another culture?” (Gardner, 1962:241).

Research efforts on intercultural competence have mushroomed ever since promoting the development of concepts how to actually train this magical ability. The old theory of culture shock (Oberg, 1960) and subsequent phase models of intercultural adjustment (cf. Taft, 1977) have provided the basic frameworks for instruction. Dimensional models to describe cultural differences, like the works of Hall (1976) and Hofstede (1984), have delivered the contents to be taught. Specific training techniques like the culture assimilator (Fiedler/Mitchell/Triandis, 1971) have been developed to efficiently introduce participants to foreign cultures.

Overall, the invention of intercultural training has been a triumphant global success. Spectacular failures of intercultural co-operation and disturbing experiences of expatriates have fuelled the perceived need for intercultural education. A world-wide training industry represented by globally operating professional associations (e.g. SIETAR) has emerged, the profession of intercultural trainer has established itself as a specific occupational profile (Dahlen, 1997).

1.2 Problem

While the importance of intercultural training in student and management education seems undoubted, the question what intercultural competence really is and thus if and how it can be taught remains heavily debated (Rathje, 2007).

During the last decade, existing training methods of intercultural competence have been severely criticised: The usage of cultural dimension models has been accused of improper simplification and stereotyping (Bolten, 2001:130; Hansen, 2000:285). Traditional training approaches have been blamed to disseminate cultural essentialism, dictate cemented cultural identities and mask or belittle unequal power structures (Auernheimer, 2007:120f). The broadness and diversity of the critique has cast doubt on the overall effectiveness of intercultural training leading to a debate on quality assurance of intercultural trainings in the intercultural community (Kinast, 1998, Kammhuber, 2001:85f; Stellamanns, 2005; Rebensburg, 2007).

In contrast to ongoing quality discussions, this article offers a different explanation for the continuing criticism of intercultural training, hypothesising that classical training methods of

intercultural competence often prove to be ineffective, if not counterproductive, because they build on an outdated paradigm of culture and intercultural communication.

2 Objectives and Methodology

The objective of the paper is to present a revised understanding of culture as well as intercultural competence and outline how it can be put into action as a basis for innovative teaching approaches to effectively prepare students or managers for working in a global world.

In order to clarify the differences between the traditional and the revised understanding of culture and its respective implications for the concept of intercultural competence, the two approaches will first be contrasted along the fields of a matrix model of culture, as outlined in Rathje 2009, serving as a common reference for comparison.

This model attempts to map the complex nature of cultural phenomena by separating two different meta-dimensions of describing culture.

The first dimension addresses the common problem of mixing cultural and collective aspects when attempting to characterise cultural phenomena. Culture is often the first to blame, when things get rough between human groups, although the reasons for conflict are rarely to be found in different cultural habits like eating behaviour or dressing styles but rather in rivalry and power struggles. The model therefore broadens the cultural perspective to include a collective perspective. Collectivity in this sense refers to the „formal and structural“ aspects of human groups (Hansen, 2009, translation by author). The collective perspective of culture thus deals with questions of group affiliation and belonging, e.g. who has and who gives access to groups according to which criteria. The „cultural“ can then be self-consciously reduced to its content, to the „customs“ (or „habits“ as in Tylor, 1871:1) of human collectives.

The analytical separation of a cultural perspective dealing with cultural customs and a collective perspective referring to aspects of belonging proves analytically helpful because both do not develop in concert: On the one hand, cultural customs can influence collective affiliations, but they do not necessarily have to (Rathje 2009: 41). On the other hand, shared cultural practices are not a prerequisite for the development of group identity and the resulting phenomena of exclusion and devaluation of outsiders (Tajfel, 1982).

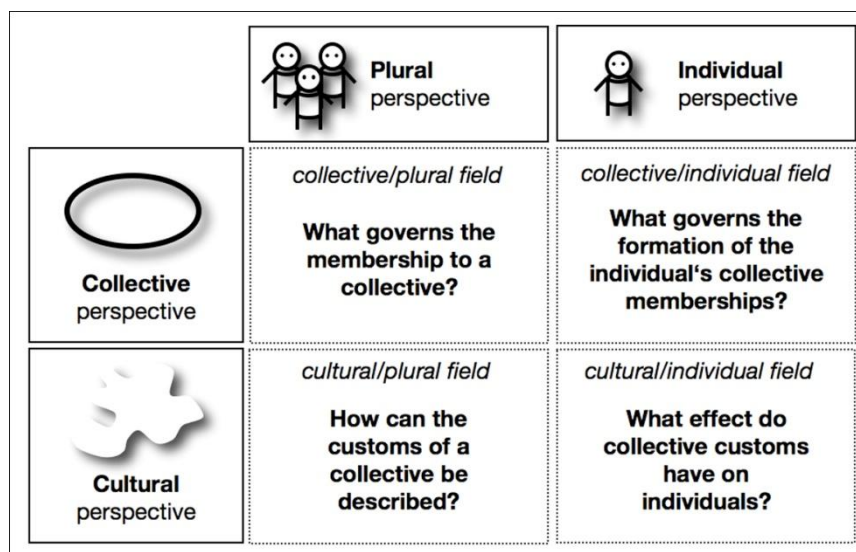


Figure 1: Matrix Model of Culture (adapted visualisation from Rathje, 2009)

The second dimension deals with the problem of mixing group and individual phenomena when talking about culture. In contrast to personal idiosyncrasies, cultural peculiarities are a plural phenomenon. Culture begins when people interact in groups, it ends with the characteristics of the individual. When talking about culture, this leads to the dilemma that on a group level the concreteness of cultural phenomena cannot be denied, while each individual member of a culture, however, is equipped with the freedom to process those cultural offers in a completely unique way. To adequately illustrate this dialectic of individual and group, the matrix model differentiates between a plural and an individual perspective on culture.

Culture as a complex holistic phenomenon can then be analysed through the use of a four-field matrix (see figure 1). Questions regarding the customs of certain collectives are addressed in the cultural/plural field. The collective/plural field can be used to investigate the rules of membership and participation in collectives. The cultural/individual field is dedicated to the interdependencies between individuals and culture, while the collective/individual field describes the individual's membership in different collectives.

Employing this tool allows for a much more accurate mapping of cultural phenomena and thus permits a more precise comparison of the traditional and revised approach to culture than a one-dimensional perspective.

To subsequently compare the traditional and revised understanding of intercultural competence the article refers to the tripartite classification of mental activities into cognition, affection, and conation as originated in the German psychology of the eighteenth century and extended into the twentieth

century through the writings of William McDougall (Hilgard, 1980). Although the three dimensions do not prove to be fully mutually exclusive, this model - frequently used in describing pedagogical training concepts - represents a helpful means to differentiate between the more cognitive, more emotional and more behavioural aspects related to intercultural competence.

3 Coherence

In earlier days, anthropologists' answers to the question of culture were quite simple: culture was mostly understood as the coherent, unifying aspects of countries, nations or ethnic groups, that set them apart from others. Esteemed scholars highlighted its essentialistic existence as something distinct from the individual (White, 1959), its consistency (Benedict, 1934:44), and its internal coherence (Kluckhohn, 1949:35). Even well-known, more recent research still speaks of culture as a consistent „collective programming of the mind“ (Hofstede, 1984:21) or a „universal and quite typical orientation system for a society, organisation or group“ (Thomas, 2003:52, translation by author).

In the following paragraphs, this traditional, coherence-oriented understanding of culture will be described in more detail using the four fields of the matrix model. Implications for the concept of intercultural competence will be outlined.

3.1 *The Traditional Coherence Approach of Culture*

Starting with the cultural/collective dimension, the traditional understanding of culture is characterised by a perceived congruence between these two levels and therefore does not differentiate between customs and membership. It assumes that, on the one hand, customs or traditions end where the collective ends, while, on the other hand, there is little or no overlap between collectives and therefore smaller collectives arise within larger ones.

Because of this assumed congruence, collectives and, by extension, cultures, are characterised by very clear and non-porous boundaries to other collectives/cultures. This will hereafter be referred to as border coherence. In the context of cultural customs, there is an expectation of homogeneity and assumed acceptance that will be referred to as internal coherence. According to these premises, it is not only absolutely clear who is e.g. French and who is not, who is a Berliner and who is not, who is a police officer and who is not, but it is also clear what values or behaviour each group will display.

Analysing the plural/individual dimension, it can be observed that the traditional understanding of culture is primarily focussed on the group perspective and rarely concerned with the role of the individual. Accordingly, its characterisations of the individual's perspective turn out to be quite simple.

At the level of the collective, the traditional perspective prefers a diagnosis of primary collectivity which can be imagined as the individual's main collective allegiance – normally understood as the membership in a national collective. This assumption is so deeply rooted in daily experience that it is rarely questioned. Management guidebooks offering intercultural advice, for example, typically describe the "Czechs" or the "Chinese" without considering other group memberships such as academics, blue-collar workers, philosophers, engineers, thirty-somethings, or retirees. Even theoretical approaches like multiculturalism (Taylor, 1991:52) are founded upon the same primary collective assumptions assigning an individual to one single collective (Bienfait, 2006:38).

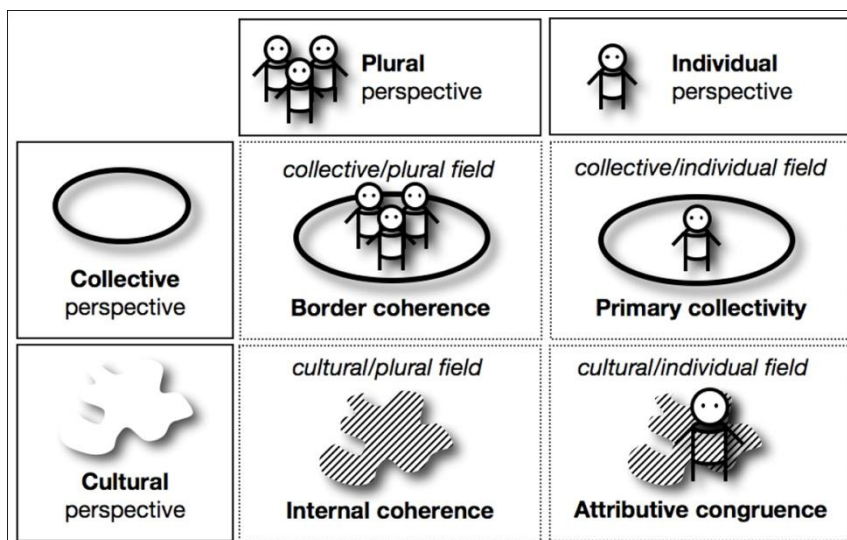


Figure 2: *The Coherence Approach to Culture*

At the cultural level, the traditional understanding presumes an observable attributive congruence in the individual. This is the assumption that since the characteristics within a collective are themselves coherent and furthermore, since an individual belongs primarily to one collective, it must follow that the characteristics of an individual are compatible with his or her primary collective. Therefore, knowing that someone has e.g. grown up in the tradition of the "Christian/European West", certain assumptions could be made regarding his or her opinions on parliamentary democracy or on the Ten Commandments.

3.2 Implications for the Traditional Concept of Intercultural Competence

In the following segment, the implications of the coherence approach for the traditional intercultural paradigm and the concept of intercultural competence will be outlined. It will be argued that the assumed characteristics of border coherence, internal coherence, primary collectivity and attributive congruence have a direct impact on the perceived challenges, the learning objectives and the training approaches connected to the traditional way of understanding intercultural competence.

Taking a closer look at the common understanding of intercultural communication, we discover that the traditional intercultural paradigm derives logically from the coherence oriented cultural paradigm as outlined above.

If our understanding of culture is dominated by the notions of border and internal coherence of each collective as well as primary collectivity and attributive congruence of the individual, then intercultural encounters must be characterised by the cross-over of different cultural territories including their embedded individuals that, having been well-separated before, start to overlap, thus producing an unstable, vulnerable intersection where codes, symbols, values or types of behaviour intercollide.

This „collision“ metaphor of intercultural communication, often depicted as two intersecting circles with „something in the middle“, is influenced by classic models of human communication postulating overlapping or shared pools of meaning as a prerequisite for understanding (Burkart, 2003:35). It has shaped the scientific as well as the practical discourse of intercultural communication during the last two decades, as exemplified in a well-known definition by Bolten:

„ [...] intercultural interaction can be described as a game of foreign cultural environments that permanently produces something „in-between“, an „interculture“, that can be characterised by completely different [...] conventions and behavioural routines than the communicative interaction within the original cultures.“ (Bolten, 2007:140, translation by author)

The „collision“ metaphor of intercultural communication has lead to the notion of intercultural interaction as „extreme“ situation, characterised by a specific difficulty compared to „normal“ social interaction. Although multiculturalists have tried to sell this experience as enriching, the image of „cultures colliding“ (Lewis, 2006) has influenced the common perception of intercultural encounters as rather stressful: It's no fun to clash!

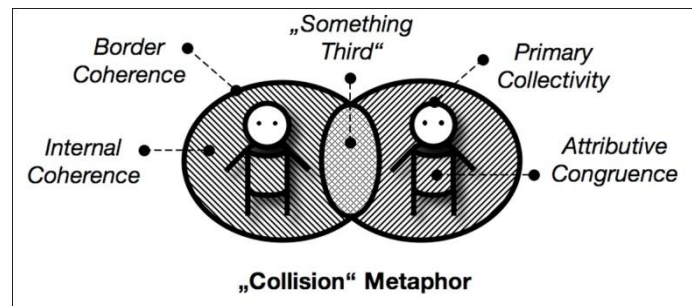


Figure 3: *The Coherence Paradigm of Intercultural Communication*

Intercultural competence has thus emerged as a means to successfully deal with the clash. It can be shown that existing educational concepts for a development of intercultural competence have derived their learning objectives and training approaches from the perceived challenges following the „collision“ paradigm:

If an intercultural encounter is compared to two formerly separate cultural islands suddenly getting in contact with each other, the biggest challenge for the involved individuals on the cognitive level is the mutual ignorance of their respective systems of codes, rules, values, behaviour etc. Intercultural training has therefore developed the cognitive learning objective to teach participants the systematic differences between the two „islands“. Assuming the internal coherence of culture, it should be possible to understand the whole pattern if either given the right key or decoding the right piece. This has led to the development of highly sophisticated compression techniques trying to convey the gist of a culture with minimum effort. Well-known training types of this kind build e.g. on the dimensional model of culture (Hofstede, 1984) that aims at capturing national cultures with the help of five bipolar scales or on the culture assimilator technique that presents critical incidents as pars pro toto in the form of commented multiple choice questions (Thomas, 1996).

On the affective level, the collision metaphor of two territories clashing evokes negative associations of destruction and the emotional stress of losing something valuable. The affective challenge of intercultural interactions is hence the threat of one's own identity as described in classic models of culture shock. Training of intercultural competence on the affective level has therefore focussed on teaching how to cope effectively with perceived threats and adjust to the exceptional situation. Common training approaches in this area are often based on psychological models of intercultural adjustment like e.g. the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) by Hammer/Bennett (1998) assuming a set of ascending stages in coping with the foreign. They frequently employ role playing techniques (e.g. BAFA BAFA) that create mock situations of extreme alienation to accustom participants to feelings of disorientation and loss of control.

On the conative level, the major challenge arising from the collision metaphor is the presumably limited consensus between the parties involved. When assuming internal coherence of cultures as well as attributive congruence of its members, it can be furthermore hypothesised that the attitudes, viewpoints, issues or objectives of the interculturally involved parties are likely to differ, thus posing problems for the efficiency and effectiveness of the interaction. The respective learning objective derived from this assumption has been to shape a temporary „middle-ground“, often metaphorically called „the third“ (Wierlacher, 2003), „third space“ (Bhabha/Rutherford, 1990), „third chair“ (Badavia, 2002) or plainly „interculture“. Trainings addressing this conative learning objective have thus focussed on developing culture-sensitive negotiation skills using simulation techniques that train participants in employing their interaction competencies in intercultural settings (e.g. InterAct by Bolten, 2002).

The intercultural collision paradigm with its challenges of mutual ignorance, threat of identity and limited consensus certainly has its value in that it describes accurately the common intercultural experience of confusion, defence and fear. A closer examination of its consequences reveals, however, that it tends to aggravate the problems without providing a path to solve them.

The cognitive training objective of understanding a different culture suggests that there actually is a coherent system that can be fully deciphered by simplification. As a consequence, stereotypes, particularly national stereotypes, are intensified. The initial relief of reduced complexity soon backfires as a shock when training participants later realise that they in fact do not understand.

The affective learning goal of coping with an exceptionally stressful situation enforces the notion of extraordinariness in intercultural encounters. This can superficially serve as a relief mechanism as well because emotional conflicts are purely attributed to the cultural. On a deeper level it cements the state of emergency and prevents the involved from ever establishing normality.

Finally, the conative objective to create a temporary „third“ space necessarily implies the notion that there is also something „first“ and something „second“. This metaphor can initially simplify communication between groups because it reduces complex interaction to a two-way street. In the long run, however, it reinforces collective borders increasing well-known in-group/out-group mechanisms like rivalry and discrimination.

Overall, it becomes obvious that intercultural training based on the notion of cultural coherence is short-term oriented. Serving as a tool to reduce complexity and provide relief for feelings of confusion, fear or personal failure it seems to make things better. Its effects, however, are not sustainable. Intercultural training building on the intercultural collision paradigm works, on the contrary, as a self-fulfilling prophecy for cultural clash.

4 Cohesion

Although the traditional concept of cultural coherence with its characteristics of border and internal coherence as well as primary collectivity and attributive congruence of the individuals still dominates our everyday understanding of culture, it is becoming more and more apparent that it contradicts ongoing social developments.

The following paragraphs explore a more contemporary understanding of culture using the four fields of the matrix. Based on these findings, the traditional intercultural paradigm will be revised and conclusions for the development of intercultural competence will be drawn.

4.1 The Cohesion Approach of Culture

While the traditional understanding of culture was characterised by a perceived congruence between cultures and collectives, there is already substantial evidence found, e.g. in the fields of Cultural and Post-colonial Studies, for the mutual influence and interpenetration of human customs irrespective of collective boundaries. The ever-increasing “transnational flow of information” (Bamyeh, 1993) necessitates the creation and re-creation of new cultural practices independent of national or other collective borders (Featherstone, 1990; Noller, 1999:90). Likewise, these practices are not exclusively attached to certain collectives, but instead permanently branch out, evolve, fray, and create hybrid forms. Cultural phenomena deterritorialize in trans-societal lifestyles or corporate cultures with individuals participating in shared conversations with shared symbols across nations (Holt/Quelch/Taylor, 2004:70). In this light, culture must be seen as capable of practically everything except for stopping at collective borders. The concepts of interculturality and transculturality (Welsch, 1995), which themselves were created in order to illustrate this processual nature of culture, are hence tautological terms since cultural processes always occur "between" or "through" others.

This finding leads to a revision of the internal coherence diagnosis in the cultural/plural field of the matrix. Societies differentiate into a greater number of smaller collectives with their own, sometimes conflicting habits, rituals and codes superimposed upon and interpenetrating each other (Winter, 2003). The idea of coherent cultures is gradually being replaced by a new paradigm of “heterotopia” (Willke, 2003) with its notion of culture characterised by inherent differences (Bhabha/Rutherford, 1990). Approaches that describe the development and perpetuation of culture - e.g. the concept of "cultural memory" (Assmann, 1992) - have demonstrated that members of a

culture have access to a heterogeneous pool of cultural resources. Depending on current needs they recall pieces of the past respectively. The content of a culture at any given moment can therefore never be categorised as coherent. It must, on the contrary, be characterised by fundamental differentiation.

The claim of differentiation as a characteristic of cultural customs is closely related to contemporary developments in the field of individual collective membership. While the traditional concept of culture understood this relationship between individuals and their collectives to be one marked by primary collectivity, the accelerating increase in the number of available collectives and their mutual influence demands a fundamental revision of this perspective. Today, it is increasingly difficult to predict to how many or precisely which collectives an individual has access. Hansen terms the rather simple observation that an individual belongs to many collectives at the same time "multicollectivity" (2000:196). The model of multicollectivity leads away from monolithic and essentialist views of individual identity that appears to be constantly endangered by variety and contradiction. Instead, multicollectivity offers an additive understanding of collective membership and cultural practices: Individuals are able to add collective memberships and cultural customs without having to sacrifice existing ones.

Adhering to the claims of cultural differentiation and multicollectivity, attachments to the traditional assumptions regarding individual attributive congruence must also be abandoned. The notion that individuals are simultaneously part of numerous collectives that produce divergent cultural practices results in a radically individual processing of cultural offers due to reciprocal interaction with their unique biological and biographical foundations. Knowing the collective memberships of an individual only allows for the conclusion which cultural practices or rational concepts that individual is familiar with. What that individual makes of this peculiar constellation of influences, however, remains an open question.

The traditional concept of culture postulated the existence of border coherence, that is the assumption that collective membership (but not cultural membership) is unambiguously regulated. Unfortunately, no modifications to this approach can be made. The diagnosis of cultural differentiation, multicollectivity, and radical individuality does not allow borders between collectives become blurrier, more porous or even non-existent. Groups attach quite varied requirements to the membership and acceptance of the individuals within them. The result, however, the granting of recognition, participation, and respect is always unambiguous: one is either part of the collective or one is not. Although the coherence paradigm is an obsolete tool in the understanding of culture it retains its usefulness in a collective context. Cultures overlap, intertwine, and influence one another, but the borders drawn by collectives are firm. In order to be part of a culture, it is thus

sufficient to be familiar with that culture's customs. In order to achieve membership in a collective, palpable criteria must be fulfilled.

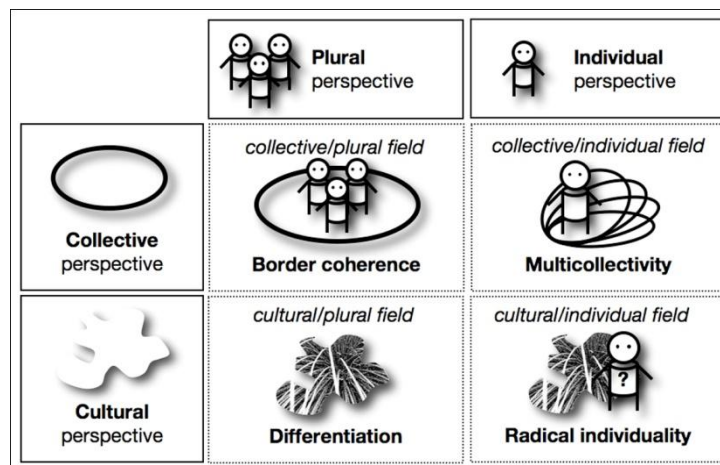


Figure 4: *The Cohesion Approach to Culture*

While the traditional concept of culture looks to coherence as a source of stability, a revised understanding of culture, which assumes differentiation among cultural customs and individual multicollectivity, must develop new desiderata to ensure the integrity of complex social collective like societies or companies.

The intuitive plausibility of the traditional perspective ("The more alike we are, the less likely there will be conflicts."), a familiar assumption easily gained from personal experiences in small groups like bowling clubs or work teams, certainly makes the exploration of new orientations for complex collectives be they businesses or nations very difficult indeed.

Nevertheless, closer consideration reveals that potential solutions are to be found precisely in the concepts of multicollectivity and differentiation themselves. Individual multicollectivity, through its very variety, provides a network-like stability of greater group connections (Hansen, 2000:196). Organisational science has furthermore been able to prove that familiarity with cultural differences rather than compliance with norms and rules forms a stable basis for organisational effectiveness (cf. Rathje, 2004). These findings indicate that it is not the internal coherence of customs that is vital for the continuity of collectives. On the contrary, the familiarity with the differences creates a framework of normality that alone is sufficient for identification: "We recognise [...] [the divergent] points of view, and when we hear them, we know that we are at home" (Hansen, 2000:232, translation by author).

In contrast to the traditional coherence paradigm this new orientation can be termed cohesion paradigm in that it aims at establishing cohesive links between individuals without assuming coherence as a prerequisite (Rathje, 2009:48f).

4.2 Implications for a Revised Concept of Intercultural Competence

The following paragraphs describe the implications of the cohesion approach for a revised intercultural paradigm and draw conclusions regarding a more effective development of intercultural competence. It will be argued that the identified concepts of differentiation, multicollectivity and radical individuality call for a fresh look at the challenges, learning objectives and training approaches necessary to develop intercultural competence.

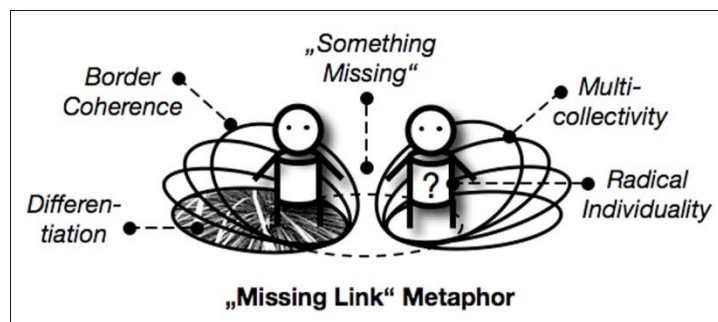


Figure 5: *The Cohesion Paradigm of Intercultural Communication*

In light of the cohesion concept of culture the intercultural collision paradigm cannot be sustained. Assuming differentiation, multicollectivity and radical individuality, intercultural interaction must be characterised by the encounter of individuals belonging to and being influenced by numerous collectives and their respective cultures, be they national, professional, social, religious, leisure-related or other at the same time. What makes a situation intercultural is hence not a collision of two worlds, because due to their multicollectivity individuals process and navigate through numerous worlds everyday. What makes a situation intercultural is rather the perceived missing link between the involved. An interaction can thus be labelled intercultural if the involved attribute their experience of foreignness to a lack of belonging to a shared collective.

Compared to the collision paradigm, this missing-link metaphor turns out to be much less threatening. Instead of provoking a win-lose-situation, the cohesion-based concept of

interculturality implies that something missing can be added, thus paving the way for continued communication.

The biggest cognitive challenge for the involved is hence not the complete mutual ignorance of a differing cultural system, but rather a partial unfamiliarity with the collective memberships of the other party. The more adequate learning objective following from that is to establish familiarity with the collective memberships relevant for interaction rather than engaging in the hopeless effort to chase the Chimaera of a coherent cultural system.

The concept of multicollectivity with its notion of additive identities moreover suggests that the affective challenge of intercultural interaction can never be a threat of one's identity as a whole. It rather has to be understood as a lack of sense of belonging to the other party involved. As has been argued above, a missing sense of belonging easily leads to in-group/out-group mechanisms of rivalry and discrimination. Instead of learning how to cope with a threatening situation, the skill to either stretch the borders of one's own collective memberships or to add a new collective to be shared with all involved should be developed as a primary learning objective.

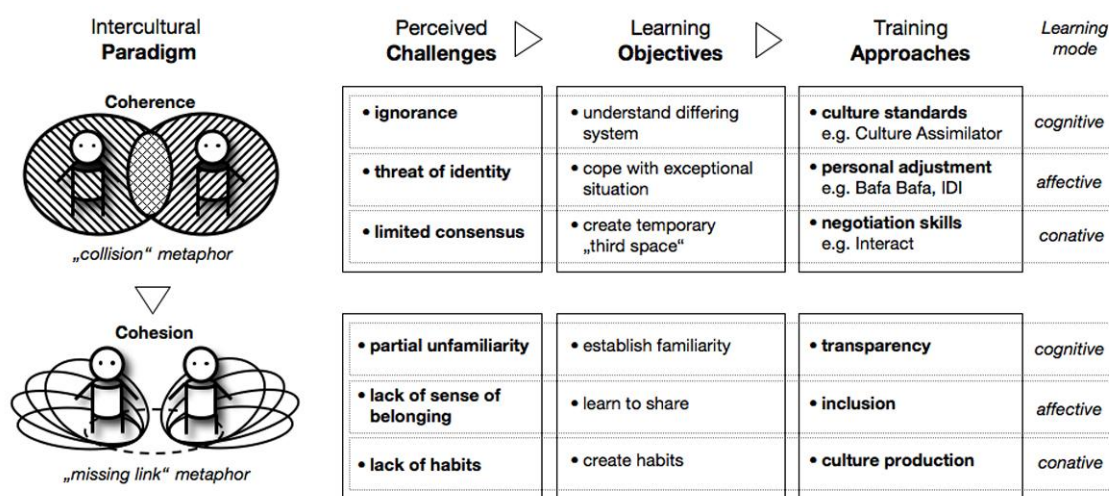


Figure 5: Comparison of the Coherence and Cohesion Paradigm of Intercultural Competence

On the conative level, the coherence paradigm had stressed the limited consensus in intercultural encounters as a major challenge to be addressed in trainings. In contrast, the idea of differentiation as a fundamental aspect of cultures underlines the presence of disagreement and conflict in any kind of social interaction. What is, however, specific about the intercultural situation is that, due to the missing collective link, the involved feel that they cannot rely on common habits that usually help them in dealing with and solving conflict. The adequate learning objective is hence not to work

on a fragile and temporary „third“ but to fill the new common collective with solid common habits. Instead of learning how to establish „interculture“, the objective is rather to learn how to produce culture.

Compared to the traditional collision paradigm, the new cohesion approach offers a perspective that is much more oriented towards the continuity and sustainability of human interaction. Intercultural competence, in this light, is the ability to build the missing link between the parties involved by cognitively establishing familiarity and normality, affectively adding and extending collective memberships, and conatively producing cultural habits with the aim to increase cohesion.

5 Implications for Global Education Training Concepts

The arguments above suggest a need for revised training concepts in the area of intercultural education. In the final paragraphs, implications for the further development of intercultural trainings will be outlined along the three dimensions of cognition, affection and conation. The ideas will mainly focus on the content of a general training for students or managers and exclude the discussion of training techniques since those heavily depend on the specific training conditions.

5.1 Cognitive Learning Approach: Transparency

On the cognitive level, an intercultural training should address the learning objective of establishing familiarity between individuals who experience foreignness due to a perceived missing collective link. Based on the finding that known differences can create as much cohesion as conformities, the training should focus on getting participants accustomed to differences and similarities within the training group, including the following aspects or elements:

Treatment of each training group as intercultural, independent of their potential ethnic or national homogeneity, to enable participants to practically experience interculturality on different levels by identifying differences in seemingly homogeneous groups and exploring similarities in seemingly heterogeneous groups.

Mapping and contrasting of the set of collectives that participants belong to (types of collectives include country of origin, but also e.g. profession of parents, field of own study, favourite kinds of music, sports or films, or behavioural collectives like planner or spontaneous person, detail-oriented or big picture person) to gain transparency about relevant collective affiliations and potential cultural differentiation

Exploration of differing influences of the collective affiliation on the individuals in order to understand the difference between collective membership and culture, to highlight the radical individuality of each participant and to reduce overbearing collective attributions (e.g. national attribution)

Mapping and strengthening of the network of shared collectives among participants (e.g. common professional fields, hobbies or family situation)

As a training result of working on collective transparency, participants should have gained awareness of the individuals' state of multicollectivity and increased their ability to differentiate between cultural habits and collective memberships on all levels. They should be able to transfer this competence to other intercultural settings.

5.2 Inclusion

On the affective level, intercultural trainings should address the learning objective of establishing a sense of belonging between the involved by acknowledging all participants as members of the group - a process that is often referred to as inclusion. Being strongly influenced by the individual's basic emotional resilience and self-discipline, the capacity to include appears to be hard to teach during a training. It seems however promising to shift the learning focus from aspects of coping to the formation of collectives, including the following aspects:

Guidance of the group through typical group formation processes (e.g. by managing difficult situations or establishing a common out-group) to foster the experience of dynamics of exclusion and inclusion

Conceptual familiarisation with team or community building techniques to allow for their purposeful application in intercultural settings

As a training result of learning about inclusion, participants should have understood in-group/out-group dynamics as generic collective phenomena. They should have recognised their own emotions of fear and defence as natural but temporary reactions to changes in collective membership structures independent of cultural differences.

5.3 Culture Production

On the conative level, intercultural trainings should address the learning objective of creating habits. According to the cohesion approach, this can be seen as producing culture within a collective. Intercultural training therefore has to familiarise participants with the techniques of symbolic management, including the following aspects:

Conceptual familiarisation with the principles of creating symbolic situations or manifestations and preserving them in the collective memory of the group

Practical identification and creation of specific collective manifestations (e.g. rituals, like the way of starting a meeting or a running gag, group logos, written documents or guiding values) to experience how representations charged with meaning start to become cultural symbols and evoke cohesive effects among the involved

As a training result of learning about symbolic management, participants should be able to proactively and purposefully support the development of new habits within groups.

6 Summary

Although all proposals made above remain introductory and subject to further validation by developing and testing actual training sessions, they represent a promising way of finally implementing contemporary concepts of culture in practical training and establishing a more adequate perspective on intercultural competence.

Despite all advancements in culture theory over the last decade, the image of the intercultural competent individual is still that of a culture clash manager living on the edge of „something third“. It is time to change that positioning. Instead of stirring up cultural catastrophes, students and managers should be trained to become normality makers and culture producers and develop a sober view of intercultural competence: In the end it's just the skill that allows for collective communication to be continued.

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Beyond Language

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Introduction

“The dilemma of the global age is that, while we have finally discovered that we are one people who must share one precarious world, we are profoundly divided by race, culture and belief and we have yet to find a tongue in which we speak our humanity to each other. To find that tongue must be our first and last endeavour, for the pursuit of peace, and freedom from pollution and poverty, are merely means to an end and that end is the celebration of our human possibilities”. (Young, 1996)

The authors of this paper invite you to imagine you are holding a kaleidoscope. As you put it against the light, an orderly pattern of pieces of glass creates a design pleasing to the eye; but when you give it a shake, the design changes completely. The colours are still the same but the design has reconfigured itself into a different pattern. In the same way, at strategic points in time, history shakes up the world and our perceptions of it. The evolution of globalisation and the rapid growth of computer technology have created precisely one of those strategic points and the world of education is no less shaken-up than any other aspect of our lives. (Thurlow, Lengel and Tomic, 2004) Perhaps there is a need to remind ourselves, every now and then, that the world our students inhabit is very different to the one lived in by previous generations.

Some key epistemological questions

In the face of these changes, those of us involved in teaching languages are faced with some critical epistemological issues. As we know, epistemology focuses on the critical exploration of the nature of knowledge. It asks deceptively simple questions such as:

What is knowledge?

How is knowledge acquired?

What do we know?

How do we know what we know?

Relating specifically to language education we might add:

In what context is this body of knowledge negotiated between teacher and learner?

In what context will this knowledge be used?

What social or intellectual capital is gained by this knowledge?

Language teachers might also ask: is a foreign language a body of knowledge or something more? Or something less? What does it mean to be 'competent' in a language? What is the relevance of what we teach to our students' future lives? Do we want our students merely to 'survive', to 'operate' in the language, or do we want them to 'enter' somehow into another's culture and to make their contact with others in that culture more meaningful and effective?

Or, in contrast, do we hope, by teaching another language to enlarge and refine our students' worldview (and maybe our own) in a quest for more connection, more interdependence, in today's divided world?

On a practical level, how can what we teach ensure a higher level of shared meanings between, say, a Europe-based Hungarian manager in a multinational company and the Indian supervisor in Mumbai providing a crucial service to that multinational? Both are speaking English, but may not have very much else in common. How will they reach proper understanding?

1 The Impact of Globalisation and the Structure of Cultural Identities

Let us place these key questions in the context of globalisation,

Anthony Giddens (1999) the internationally acclaimed sociologist who for several years was Director of the London School of Economics, has described globalization "emerging in an anarchic, haphazard fashion, carried along by a mixture of economic, technological and cultural imperatives". It is no coincidence that Giddens' celebrated BBC Reith Lectures in 1999 were entitled *The Runaway World*.

He has also reminded us that globalisation is not only an "out there" phenomenon but also an "in here" one, inside our heads. "We continue to talk about the nation, the family, work, tradition, nature, as if they were all the same as in the past. They are not". (Giddens, 1999)

Eva Hoffman, in her compelling book *Lost in Translation*, describing the evolution of her own cultural identities as a Polish exile in the States, writes:

The weight of the world used to be vertical: it used to come from the past, or from the hierarchy of heaven and earth and hell; now it's horizontal, made up of the endless multiplicity of events going on at once and pressing at each moment on our minds and our living rooms. Dislocation is the norm rather than the aberration in our time. (Hoffman, 1989)

In other words, the cultural identities of our students are no longer regarded as 'fixed' or solely defined on a vertical axis (nation, history, family, religion, etc.) but rather on a horizontal one, as the media bombards us with images from around the world, one minute Kabul, the next (gender, socioeconomic class, education, family values, perceived place in the world etc Michael Jackson's funeral in the United States. Their sense of self/their cultural identities.) are, as a result, relatively fluid and complex, one might say in constant flux. As language teachers, we can capitalise on this.

Among those influences operating on this horizontal axis and feeding into our cultural identities, is the dramatic proliferation of online communications and collaborations. (Thurlow, Lengel and Tomic, 2004) These add a new dimension to social interaction - especially in business ventures. These activities require a specific range of cognitive and affective skills if those ventures are not to collapse before they have even taken off. If it is difficult to find shared meanings when we are face to face, how much more difficult it is when we cannot see the other person and pick up the clues of body language.

2 The Need for "Cultural Re-Thinking"

Professor Ron Barnett of the University of London, who has a strong voice in debates surrounding future developments in university education in the UK, has described life today not only as 'complex' but as 'supercomplex' (Barnett, 2000) and it is against this reconfigured background - 'dislocated', 'anarchic', 'haphazard', 'supercomplex' - that our paper will propose we do some 'cultural re-thinking' (Swanton, 1998) as individuals as well as language teachers. This 're-thinking' is particularly relevant in the context of teaching languages for business in a globalised world.

The concept of 'cultural re-thinking' is appropriate because it encourages all of us engaged in language teaching and learning to re-examine our own cultural standpoint, the goals of our work, the nature of our students and the quality of the education we offer them and its relevance to their futures. It also helps us to appraise, ever more closely, how all these fit into the wider socio-political picture.

3 Our Students as Future “Shape Shifters”

Never before has there been such a strong imperative for education to prepare students for interaction with people who are different to them, not only in language but also in their world-view and value systems. “Post-modern survivors will learn to become ‘shape-shifters’ with multiple identities as a source of strength.” (Lifton quoted by Pedersen, 1996) In their future careers our students will consistently be required to move between cultures, (whether geographically and physically or online) constantly “learning from” other cultures rather than “learning about” them.

However, this process of becoming ‘shape-shifters’ cannot be left to chance. Students can either acquire these life skills of cultural flexibility, resilience and reflexivity by default or through bitter experience (from the failed business venture, for example,) or we can stimulate their development in the education we offer. It is entirely appropriate, therefore, that a central theme of the critical pedagogy proposed in this paper is precisely the concept of multiple identities and their cultural re-inscription and re-location which becomes more and more relevant in direct proportion to the speed of the changes around us.

Reflecting this sense of flux in the world around us, therefore, and emphasising the need for reflexivity, (one of the key characteristics of a modern society, according to Giddens,) our argument will be that we serve our students’ interests best by exploring new conceptual frameworks in order to meet the evolving needs of our students and the world in which they will be operating. The main thrust of our argument is to put less emphasis on ‘language competence’ and more on those factors ***beyond language***, issues of Intercultural Communication. Far more business deals have failed because of ignorance of intercultural communication and resultant socio-pragmatic failure than from using the wrong word or phrase or grammatical construction in the new language.

Rather than focussing on discrete aspects of the language acquisition process, it is much more likely in our view that we need to address first and foremost the extent to which our students show a willingness to understand and to make themselves understood in another language and in another culture. In other words, we need to be able to demonstrate the authenticity and the advantage to their future lives of engaging in a particular intellectual process, ***beyond language competence***. This process constitutes the critical pedagogy we are about to describe in greater detail.

4 The Indivisibility of Language and Culture: Agar's "Languaculture"

As language teachers we are familiar with the rigours of teaching grammar and pronunciation but if we focus exclusively on the 'mechanics' of a language, unconsciously reducing language to a 'science'; (which it clearly isn't) we are sending out the wrong signals to our students.

Agar (1994) argued that foreign languages are too often taught and learned as 'technical competencies' only, a mechanistic and systematic acquisition of the grammar and vocabulary of a different linguistic system. Agar's point was that many language teachers separate language from culture, rather than having them intersecting or overlapping. This, he claimed, conceptualises language as a mere tool to communication rather than central to it. His notion of 'Languaculture', the necessary tie between language and culture, is at the heart of this paper in which the undeniable significance of the target language is never underestimated, but which will argue for the overriding importance of something *beyond language*, placing intercultural awareness at the heart of language education.

5 Critical Pedagogy: "An Unexamined Life is Not Worth Living"

Socrates' well-known saying serves to introduce a description of critical pedagogy. Emerging from the work of several educationalists, notably Freire and Giroux, has been an approach which strives to encourage students to regard their learning less as passive consumers of knowledge, more as constructors of knowledge, as those engaged in creative cultural process. This is a crucial part of a critical pedagogy.

In his seminal book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, coming out of his work with the disenfranchised sections of society in Brazil, Freire describes the limitations of the "banking" concept of education where the teacher (who is the all-knowing purveyor of "knowledge") fills the "containers" or "receptacles" represented by the students who, in turn, "patiently receive, memorise and repeat" what they are taught.

The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world." (Freire, 1993)

He offers as an alternative what he calls a "humanist revolutionary" education, what Giroux later developed into the concept of a critical pedagogy, where the teacher's

efforts must coincide with those of the students to engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanisation. His/her efforts must be imbued with a profound trust in people and their creative power. To achieve this they must be partners of the students in their relations with them (ibid.).

A critical pedagogy encourages the kind of critical analysis which is one of the qualities most sought by employers of the graduates of our programmes. This critical thinking asks us to question “the ostensibly unquestionable premises of our way of life” (Baumann, 1998) by inviting both teacher and learner to explore the transparency of their “common sense” perceptions and assumptions, to critique the power structures under which they have been raised and the ideologies underlying their education up to this point “as arguably the most urgent of the services we owe our fellow humans and ourselves”. (Baumann, 1998.)

Included in the questions which a critical pedagogy asks are precisely those with which we started out at the beginning of this paper: *who are we, the teachers? Who are those we teach? What do we want to teach them? And for what sort of world? Whose voices are heard in the class?* In seeking to find answers to these and other questions, a critical pedagogy moves away from the concept of Knowledge as an “I/It” phenomenon (I teach it, you learn it) to a teaching method which problematises the very concepts under scrutiny: in language teaching, for example, we might ask what is “culture”? what is “cultural identity”? “What part does language play as a carrier of culture?”

In the context of language education, Henri Giroux’s concept of a ‘pedagogy of difference’ is strikingly appropriate. A pedagogy of difference, he wrote, enables students

to cross over into diverse cultural zones that offer a critical resource for re-thinking how the relations between dominant and subordinate groups are organised, how they are implicated and often structured in dominance, and how such relations might be transformed....**Difference in this case does not become a marker for deficit**, inferiority, chauvinism or inequality; on the contrary it opens the possibilities for constructing pedagogical practices that deepen forms of cultural democracy that serve to enlarge **our moral vision**. (Giroux, 1993) (authors’ own emphasis)

In other words, a critical pedagogy sees ‘difference’ not as problematic but as a resource. It sees each individual as containing multiple identities with multiple subjectivities and multiple discourses. In simple terms, we change our ‘shape’ and we change our ‘voice’ and our ‘language’ depending on the cultural context within which we find ourselves.

6 “Moral Vision”, Issues of Power and the Classroom as an Ethical Site

When we use critical pedagogy in our teaching we are able to increase not only the technical skills and competences of our students but also raise their sensitivity and awareness about ethical dilemmas and help them to develop a positive and responsible sense of morality. This can provide a challenging and exciting opportunity for educators. Tangible knowledge can be taught by applying only our intellect, however if we want to inspire our students to bring the best out of themselves and find the courage to speak the truth and stand by their values and principles, first we need to bring out the best qualities in ourselves.

The global turmoil in the financial markets shows very clearly that without the right morality knowledge, talent and effort can cause a lot of harm to society. It is easy to appreciate that someone who has a talent for languages, who puts in a lot of effort in perfecting the knowledge and understanding of foreign languages but chooses to use this talent for creating conflicts, and deceiving people will cause harm to society.

Sandor Kopatsy, the Hungarian economist argues that the most important asset of any society is its intellectual capital. He argues that intellectual wealth cannot be treated like any other resources. Intellectual Capital cannot be purchased or acquired by someone else. It can only be employed or rented and used effectively when there is a common interest for the owner of the Intellectual Capital and the individual or organisation that employ it.

Intellectual Capital = Knowledge X Morality X Talent X Effort

Kopatsy claims that each of these components is equally important and when all four are present with a positive sign they can magnify and multiply each other. If any of these components is missing the total intellectual capital will be zero. He claims that only the multiplication and not the sum of the components will show us the size of the Intellectual Capital. In accordance with the law of multiplication when one factor is zero the product will also be zero. In our case it means that when there is zero knowledge, zero talent or zero effort the Intellectual Capital is also zero. But it is also zero when there is zero moral intent.

Kopatsy explains the four components in the following way:

- a. *Knowledge* is only valuable for society when it appears with the right morality. With the wrong morality knowledge causes only harm to society. When there is no talent knowledge on its own is meaningless. Without effort one cannot achieve a lot even though there is

knowledge, the right morality and talent. So knowledge in itself is not a value. It is made valuable by the other three components of the equation.

- b. *Morality (Moral intent).* Morality is considered to be valuable for society only when it comes with knowledge, talent and effort. The wrong intent causes damage to society. The higher the talent, the knowledge and the effort the bigger the damage when it is combined with bad moral intent.
- c. *Talent* is only valuable when the owner of the talent is able to guide it by knowledge and combines it with good moral intent and effort. A society loses most when its talents are not developed properly and are not equipped with the right morality and effort.
- d. *Effort has become the main virtue in modern society. Effort also includes ambition, initiative and enterprise. In modern societies the majority of the lower strata consist of people who lack effort. It is easy to accept that without effort, for example, it is not possible for the talent to show outstanding results. (Kopatsy, 1999)*

It is even more important to point out that three of the four factors can only be positive as their starting point is zero. On the other hand morality can be negative as well as positive. Consequently Intellectual Capital can only be positive and add value to society when it is accompanied by good moral intent. On the other hand the more educated the more talented and more diligent the individual is, if lacking moral intent, the bigger the damage to society (Illes and Laáb, 2007).

Kopatsy's economic model of Intellectual Capital resonates closely with the ideas we discussed earlier in the paper. By opening up language teaching and by using critical pedagogy we can start an exciting new chapter in education. We can benefit from the insights of other disciplines and provide a rich and thought provoking context for classroom discussions and individual reflections. Integration of Intercultural Communication theory can provide an additional ethical dimension to language education and increase social, intellectual, and arguably moral capital of our students and ourselves. There are striking resonances of Freire's references to "effort" and of Giroux's concept of "a moral vision" with the work of Sandor Kopatsy.

When we talk about "moral vision" we must include an understanding of where power lies which, in turn, must be a central concern in any Intercultural Communication. The argument of Giroux and other critical pedagogy theorists is that you cannot teach without exploring issues of power. In all human communication there are issues of power at work and in an intercultural communication it would be naive to ignore them. If you look back at the case mentioned at the beginning of this

paper between the Hungarian manager of the multinational and the Indian supervisor in Mumbai, it might be asked where the power lies and why?

No classroom is ideologically neutral. In referring to both the process and the outcome of formal education, Giroux dislodges the classroom from the locus of “a neutral or transparent process antiseptically removed from the concepts of power, politics, history and content.” (Giroux, 1995) For Giroux and other critical scholars including feminist theorists like bell hooks, it is unethical to reduce the classroom to a mere instructional site. There are issues of power at work in the classroom which need to be critiqued and understood.

Rather than the ‘sage on the stage’ style of teaching, this pedagogy requires teachers to take a back seat, not to teach from the front but to encourage debate and the exchange of views within the classroom and, where appropriate, to participate in those activities. It is the students’ voices which are more important in this context rather than the teacher’s.

7 Intercultural Communications Theory as Part of a Critical Pedagogy in Teaching Language

If we return to Agar’s concept of ‘Languaculture’, the study of a foreign language must imply the study of another culture, or the study of the Other. This term, commonly used by anthropologists and critical theorists, necessitates the location of oneself before one can locate the Other. To locate oneself ‘on the map’ so to speak, requires reflection and commitment but is a task that students find authentic and rewarding.

When illustrating Agar’s concept of Languaculture, it is useful to use the metaphor of an iceberg. If the part of the iceberg above water-level represents what we see and hear (in other words, what we can ‘read’ not only from the language of the foreign culture but also the prompts and clues to meaning offered by body language) then the underwater mass of the iceberg (reputedly seven eighths of the whole,) represents the hidden beliefs and value systems of that other culture.

Using the tools of IC theory critically the exploration each individual student undertakes into his or her own cultural identity is an activity resonant with self-discovery, intellectual stimulus and a shared experience of learning which can re-vitalise the language classroom. The relative egocentrism of the young can be exploited to great effect and it is rare to find a student who is not keen to put themselves under such close scrutiny.

Whatever the age group, students welcome the opportunity to reflect on who they are, where they come from, where they are hoping to go, what it means to be part of the world as it is today. The

result is that a staggering range of difference emerges but the activity also reveals a range of unexpected and unpredictable similarities. The students learn that to generalise is dangerous since it becomes increasingly difficult to say with any conviction “All Hungarians are such-and-such” which may make them more cautious about starting sentences with such phrases as “Germans always do such and such” or “The Japanese are very.....’ The students look at each other with new eyes, with more interest, with more empathy and a new understanding. It is this ‘looking with new eyes’ that can be used reflectively in approaching a new language and a new culture.

Emerging out of this serious exploration of their own lives and cultural identities is a complex picture of what it means to be someone entering a career at the start of a new millennium against the shambolic socio-political backdrop already described.

The skill of the teacher lies in creating an environment based on trust in which self-disclosure is paramount, mutual respect a given, confidence respected. The place of trust is at the heart of critical pedagogy. The authors define trust as action (Illes, 2009.; Illes and Harris, 2008). Trusting is a key component of human life. It emerges in response to consistent action and behaviour demonstrating good intent. We need and rely on trust in different forms in all areas of life. We need to trust ourselves and others to make choices that will have an impact on our lives and on the lives of others today and in the future. There are ample examples of trust as a scarce resource and it is often noticed and defined by its absence. We easily pick up signals of suspicion and are acutely aware of the contractual limitations of trust in organisations. Without trust the workplace and the classroom is a group of individuals who focus on personal survival rather than creation and contribution. Trust is strong or it is weak in human relationships. It is not quantifiable because its quantities and qualities are in continuous motion. It is a basic human need like love without which life can be bleak, meaningless and insufferable. The ability to translate good will into actions that embody the intention is an ability - a virtue - that we can cultivate and share and use as a guiding principle in life. When this becomes embedded as a way of behaving and is reciprocated, trust emerges and can be recognised as present. But in this context, the word is a descriptor of the result of a process being lived.

It is a truism to point out that the best way to learn a language is to form a close, trusting relationship with someone who can only speak that language. The learner is so highly motivated that ‘language’ and ‘culture’ remain indivisible in the struggle to reach understanding at a deep level. It is no accident that, under schemes like ERASMUS, language students sojourning in the culture of the language they are learning are increasingly being invited to look ethnographically at

their experience, to observe and record the interaction of their multiple identities with those of members of the host culture (Jordan, 2001).

We propose the expansion of ways for students to enter another culture with that 'willingness' and 'mindfulness' already mentioned, by using all aspects of that culture as windows. Whereas the history of a culture can tell us a great deal, watching a feature film or reading a novel from the culture can tell us even more about 'social realities': relationships, familial structures, issues of gender, education, issues of class or socio-economics, interpretations of history, hopes and ambitions, even dreams. Such insights act as a counterbalance to the would-be scientific theory that currently informs much of the Intercultural Communications literature.

The authors of this paper suggest that applying a critical pedagogy to the very discipline of Intercultural Communications is a fruitful enterprise for students *and* teachers to pursue. A critical review of two well-known texts illustrates this point.

It is important of course to synthesise, as Helen Spencer-Oatey and Peter Franklin's recent book does, all the ideas that have built up in this academic discipline, of longstanding in the United States but much more recently explored in Europe. But what is striking about their book (which does precisely that, collate exhaustively the 'knowledge' that has been gathered over recent decades,) is that there is no 'heart' to the book; the reader has no sense of why this information might be important to us, how it can be applied, why there is a moral imperative to take this 'knowledge' further.

In contrast, Maureen Guirdham's book *Communicating Across Cultures at Work* (2005) manages to introduce Intercultural Communications theory while showing its application to 'real-life situations', case studies which do not shy away from the cultural complexity of human interaction. Her book includes, for example, an interesting description of a native English speaker confronting an audience of Hungarian business people where a level of cultural knowledge would have been very helpful. (Guirdham, 2005. p.20)

Time and space do not allow for a critical and comprehensive review of the current theory in Intercultural Communications scholarship except to point out the growing literature from African American scholars challenging the mainstream teachings of a scholarship from a cultural viewpoint which is not their own.¹ Equally there is a groundswell of publishing from Hong Kong of the work of scholars from China and the Pacific Rim subverting predominantly Western scholarship. Both

these cases demonstrate the flux in power relations in and between nations and cultures that are such a critical part of globalisation.

8 The new Discourse

If teachers are going to apply some of the theory and practice of Intercultural Communications in foreign language classes, are we equipped with the 'language' to do it?

Gee (1997) has distinguished between two types of discourse: "discourse" ("just stretches of language") and "Discourse" ("a way of being together in the world".) In entering a new discursive space to explore cultural aspects of language learning, those of us engaged in the task of introducing some of these ideas to our students move in and out of other disciplines such as anthropology, literature, cross-cultural psychology, cultural studies, and psycholinguistics, to try and make sense of our explorations. Students can participate in a new Discourse which is meaningful and can be a richly rewarding educational experience.

For educators as well this interdisciplinary approach is enriching as the authors of this paper have discovered: one coming originally from a background in Humanities and now working in Management Education, the other coming from an English Language and Literature education and a professional academic life embracing the design of an undergraduate degree in Communications. When discussing the idea of a joint paper the authors benefitted from their broad understanding of education in different disciplines. By sharing their knowledge freely they created an interesting learning opportunity for each other and broadened the discussion in this paper way beyond the technical challenges of language teaching.

In his research into higher education, Phillips (1999) has emphasised the challenges involved in discourse dynamics but has also pointed out the richness of the results: in addressing certain realities by means of the Discourse, students have their voices validated and they acquire a particular kind of social and intellectual, even, we would suggest, moral capital. Above all, using the particular Discourse of exploring cultural identity, whether one's own or someone else's, teaches perhaps the most important lesson of all – that we are only truly educated when we know the limits of our knowledge; when we are aware of what Bakhtin has called "the unfinalisable" in ourselves. (Morris, 1994)

However, the most substantial claim that can be made for this Discourse in language education is the dynamic it creates which, ideally, becomes part of each student's life-long learning pattern. In asking language learners to locate themselves culturally and ideologically on the map, the mental

activity involved seems to coincide with an appropriate episode in their cognitive and affective development. Students are engaged in a process of “deep” rather than “surface” learning. (Brockbank and McGill, 1988) Our argument is that they are motivated to respond actively when they:

are challenged by deep human issues which can shake up identities and values, and set off some ontological alarms. Equally, they discover constraints and freedoms in their subject, and savour its epistemology as they come up against limitations on knowing, as well as new ways of expressing themselves. (Phillips, 1999)

9 Conclusion: “a Way of Being Together in the World”

This paper has attempted to answer some of the epistemological questions posed at its start. It has also, against the backdrop of a complex and shifting world, raised concerns around the concept of ‘language competence’ as an adequate goal for language teaching. Offered in its place is the opportunity for a critical pedagogy incorporating the discipline of Intercultural Communications. What this requires from the students, and perhaps from us, are critical thinking, creativity, and involvement in a cultural process- activities which can re-vitalise a language class.

Humans relate to their world by responding to the challenges of the environment...they begin to dynamise, and to humanise reality. **They add to it something of their own making.** (Freire quoted in Lankshear, 1997) (Authors’ own emphasis).

This paper looks for something beyond language and beyond ‘competence’ for our students. It strives ambitiously towards the goal of “life world becoming” (Barnett, 1994) or “planetary humanism” (Gilroy, 2000), and perhaps it takes us a little way nearer to finding a tongue with which we can communicate with the rest of the world.

Endnotes:

Willingness” as a key factor in Intercultural Communication is convincingly described by Shi-Xu (2001). This Chinese scholar spent several years studying and teaching in Europe and then returned to China to become its first Professor of Intercultural Communications. He also launched The Journal of Multicultural Discourse “Mindfulness” appears in Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009). The key qualities of a ‘mindful state’ are (a) the creation of new categories, (b) openness to new information(c) awareness of more than one perspective. ii. For more about power relations in Intercultural Communications see Young (1996), Shi-Xu and John Wilson (2001) and Roy and Starosta (2001).

* This module was replaced with 20-credit Principles of Economics in academic year 2008/09.

iii. An undergraduate class, taught by one of the authors, was studying an American text in Intercultural Communications. Suddenly a Thai student rose to his feet. Jabbing with his finger at the book, he said “This ‘we’ they keep talking about, I am not this ‘we’”.

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Insights into Language Proficiency Development and Intercultural Learning during the Year Abroad

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Abstract

This paper will present preliminary data on the influences of the L3 (German) on developments in learners' self-knowledge and in their linguistic and intercultural development during the year/semester abroad in German-speaking countries. A possible combination/inter-relationship of factors (linguistic, inter-cultural, personal and socio-cultural) is considered following a quantitative and qualitative study carried with Irish students from six universities in Ireland who undertook study or work placement (Erasmus programme) in Germany/Austria in 2007 as part of their undergraduate studies in German.

The role and influence that the Irish language which was studied by most students had on the intercultural development of informants will be systematically examined. The role and influence of the German language and culture on the native language (Irish) and native culture is also analysed, which demonstrates aspects of intercultural learning.

Previous research indicates that symbiotic language skill development and intercultural learning do not automatically happen during the residence abroad but need deliberate activation. Drawing on a preliminary analysis of data, this paper will examine cultural learning during the residence abroad.

It will:

- 1) outline the research questions and their emergence from previous research in the area;*
- 2) describe the methodologies deployed;*
- 3) point to the significance of findings in relation to earlier studies in the area and compare to the preliminary findings of this study;*
- 4) summarize the results of questionnaires, language tests, interviews and emails of this study;*

- 5) *highlight any recommendations for mobility coordinators and students who are preparing for the residence abroad.*

Keywords

Language learning, intercultural learning, personal development, preparation for the residence abroad.

Authors

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1 Introduction

The potential for students to develop proficiency and advance their competence in the target language (TL) is particularly strong during any sustained period of residence or study abroad (SA) programme. In fact, a commonly held belief persisted until recently that language learning would occur more or less automatically in the speech community during the SA programme. The classroom and the SA period were often mistakenly understood to be polar opposites from a language acquisition perspective; the former deemed as flawed and faltering while the latter was understood to be perpetually successful. However, while research on the overall efficacy effects of the year spent abroad, for example, studies by Coleman (1995), Freed (1995) Walsh (1995) and Colletine (2004) asserts that linguistic gain is real, they also show that further research is necessary in order to establish which components of proficiency advance most, and which individual and situational factors most influence outcomes. [Coleman, 1995:90]. Unrealistic expectations on the part of the learners themselves can diminish the benefits (Parker et al, 1995:

43) and the exposure to the TL culture may not always prove productive and conducive to intercultural learning.

This paper gives brief insights in to how a cohort of Irish university students fared during a SA programme in Germany, yielding data on their gains or otherwise in proficiency and their intercultural learning.

2 A Brief Overview of Research on the SA

Early studies of the SA period endeavoured to understand the overall effects of a sustained period of immersion in the TL on language proficiency development. Using broad measurement instruments like standardised language tests, pre and post the SA period, these studies focused particularly on the gains learners made. Thus, Carroll's (1967) study examined the gains in proficiency across the language skills and asserted that even a short period spent abroad impacted favourably on proficiency development. Macro studies conducted in a similar vein like that of Willis, Doble, Sankarayya and Smithers (1977) showed similar findings. A more micro-oriented study of skills like that of Dyson (1988) reported gains in listening and speaking and corroborated further general support for residency abroad. By the late 1980s, studies such as these had begun to isolate particular gains in skill development and correlated benefit with learners' attested ability. Research by Möhle and Raupach (1983), for example, pointed to significant gains by learners in fluency, syntax and morphology. A study by Oppen et al (1990) concluded significantly that the SA period benefited learners with lower levels of proficiency the most.

Freed's (1995) study of L2 acquisition in a study abroad context situated SA research solidly within SLA theory and focused researchers' attention in particular on the optimal effects of immersion contexts on acquisition. Her research was seminal in that it was the first to question the assumption that the SA period automatically resulted in gain and benefits for learners. Regan (1995) comparing the classroom and SA contexts, concluded that linguistic benefits might accrue only within a certain proficiency threshold, i.e., learners could only improve only if they had already attained a certain standard in the TL amenable to amelioration in a SA situation the (threshold hypothesis [TH]). Further more critical studies, e.g. Colletine and Freed (2004); Du Fon and Churchill (2006) continue to work out of the TH paradigm, showing repeatedly that specific skill development requires a particular developmental threshold for overall gains to occur and materialise.

These later studies raise questions therefore, concerning what is practically achievable during the SA and shatter the shibboleth that SA programmes resulted in immediate and automatic fluency

and proficiency. A study by Cohen and Shively (2007) compared SA students with their peers who stayed at home and found in fact, that the latter cohort outperformed them.

Research to date has focused almost entirely on linguistic gain during the SA period. Little if any study has been conducted, however, on the contribution that intercultural learning might make to advancement of language proficiency. This dearth of research on how intercultural learning might impact on or influence language proficiency development is surprising since learners find that they come to terms with the new and the unprecedented culturally during their period abroad. Trying to advance their linguistic skills is just challenge for students in any SA programme. Often greater challenges than mastering language skills arise when students have to confront aspects of the target language culture and questions about self-identity, otherness and change. Confronting such change may lead to transformations in identity. In fact, as Parker *et al* (1995) point out, to be able to work or study well in a foreign language may actually requires such a transformation and restructuring of the self (Parker *et al*, 1995:10).

In an effort to bridge the gap, the present paper reports on a study of the SA programme which includes a focus on intercultural as well as linguistic transformation of Irish university students in Germany.

3 Background to Research: FL Study in Ireland

Ireland has two official languages, Irish (*Gaeilge*) and English Irish is the first official language. In practice, however, English is the mother tongue and the language of daily use of the vast majority of the population. Ireland does not have an explicit national language education policy (Ó Laoire, 2003). However, the current practice is that both Irish and English are compulsory subjects for all primary and secondary students up to the terminal secondary school examination, the Leaving Certificate. In the junior cycle of secondary school, students are entitled to have access to a modern European language, typically French, German and Spanish (Italian, Japanese to a lesser extent) but are not obliged to study any language other than Irish and English. While there is no obligation on secondary students to study a foreign language, in practice the majority of them take a language (typically French, German or Spanish) to Leaving Certificate. The languages most commonly offered at tertiary level (university and college) are those available at second level: Irish, French, German, Spanish and Italian. There are many options available to undergraduates in FL in language majors (e.g., BA in French and German, Irish and French), interdisciplinary majors (e.g., Law and French, German and Music), with language modules being offered over a course of three

to four years. Students are encouraged to spend at least six months abroad in the TL country using EU funding (Erasmus/ Leonardo de Vinci) placements.

4 Research Questions

The study presented here examined and analysed the comparative development of the components of proficiency during the SA. Specifically the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. Which factors positively influence advanced language acquisition during the SA programme?
2. How does identity transformation and a newly gained sociolinguistic awareness impact on language proficiency development?

5 Methodology

One hundred and forty-six learner informants in total participated in this study. They were English speaking students specialising in German as part of their undergraduate degree programme in Ireland who agreed to undertake study or work placement (Erasmus programme) in Germany/Austria in 2007. The majority availed of the Erasmus year abroad programme, with fewer students on Leonardo da Vinci (LdV) work placements.

Prior to the SA programme, participants undertook a series of aural and oral language tests to gauge their general language proficiency in German. The potential of well attested language tests e.g. [OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) and MLAT (Modern Language Aptitude Test)] was investigated for appropriate adaptation. These, however, were not deemed as suitable since they tested the language proficiency/aptitude in general, and a specific measurement instrument for German was needed. The *Zertifikat Deutsch* met all these requirements since the instrument was internationally. It was based on B1 level CEFR (Common European Framework) and was detailed in its marking scheme.

The German oral assessment was a mixture of a conversation in German between the researcher and the student(s) and included a role play based on the *Zertifikat Deutsch*. The duration of the oral assessment was about 10 minutes; 5 minutes for general conversation in German and 5 minutes for the role play.

Qualitative and quantitative instruments were used to measure the extent intercultural learning contributed or otherwise to advancement in language proficiency. The quantitative instrument consisted of a questionnaire, divided into four sections: background information, language learning, intercultural competence and identity. As the extracted data of the questionnaires was limited, an additional source of data had to be applied. Individual interviews with students gave the opportunity to reflect on certain topics and explore the topic at a deeper level. The same topics were discussed in volunteer semi-structured interviews as the ones targeted in the questionnaires, i.e., language learning, intercultural competence and identity.

During the interviews volunteers were invited to have an informal chat in English about their expectations on their residence abroad. The semi-structured interview content was changed for the students who participated in this research when they had returned to Ireland. More emphasis was placed on experience and reflection.

Ongoing data during the residence abroad was collected through regular email contact with students, with a view to elicit information on how they were coping with their new environment and perceived changes in self-identity and discoveries in intercultural learning.

6 Discussion of Preliminary Data

6.1 *Advancement in Proficiency*

Using tests (Chi-Square, Wilcoxon and McNamear) to compare data prior and post SA, it became clear that students were not at all clear about their gains and advancement in skill proficiency. The results relaying on students' self-perception and self-report are somewhat contradictory. Participants were asked the question "Are you a bilingual?" prior to and post SA. The comparative data that this question yielded indicated that there was no significant increase in the rate of bilingual declaration after the period abroad. It was expected that students would record themselves as being bilingual as a result of gains in proficiency. An awareness of such gain might be expected to give them a confidence and ease in German empowering them to consider themselves as bilinguals. However, this did not occur to any significant extent. Prior to the SA programme 32% of students replied positively to the question "Are you bilingual?" in comparison to 41% of students who replied positively to the same question on their return.

N=53	Students who answered YES post SA	Students who answered NO post SA	TOTAL
Students who answered YES prior SA	13 76.5%	4 23.5%	17 100.0%
Students who answered NO prior SA	9 25.0%	27 75.0%	36 100.0%
TOTAL	22 41.5%	31 58.5%	53 100.0%

Table 1 – Students' reply to the question: "Are you bilingual?"

Only nine students out of thirty-six changed their opinion and felt that they would see themselves as bilingual compared with their previous response. This increased the number of positive replies to twenty-two after the SA.

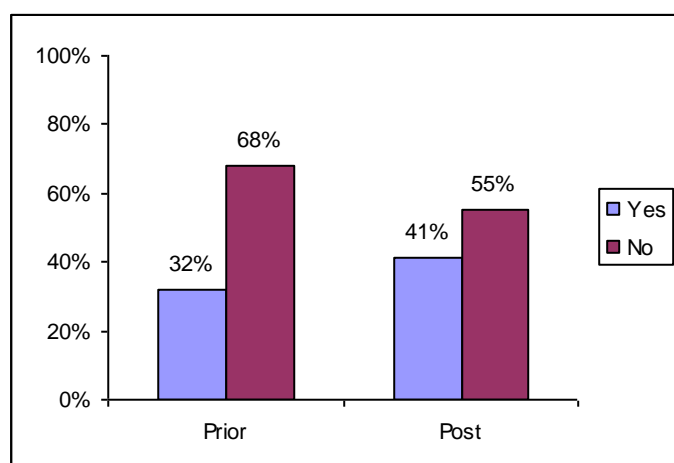


Table 2 – Students' reply to the question: "Are you bilingual?"

While there was a small increase in self-declaration as bilingual, nevertheless, this finding reflects the overall impressions gleaned from the interviews. Very often students mentioned that they had great difficulties in speaking German while in a German speaking country. This often depended on

their extent of integration into German speaking society and on their choice of study course (in some cases, students were able to study in English) or motivation. Advancing their skills was also somewhat curtailed by the native German speakers who would like to practice their English whenever possible and by the *Erasmus-trap*. The *Erasmus-trap* is explained here as students being part of the international cohort, where English is the dominant language and staying in this group to form significant social networks. This in turn may mean that students have less than optimal contact with native speakers.

On the other hand, students in general reported advancements in proficiency when asked to rate their language skills comparatively prior and post SA. Students rated their language skills in speaking from being *neither better nor worse* to *well*, with an increase from 45.5% to 66%. They also rated their listening skills from *neither better nor worse* to *well*, with an increase from 45% to 78%. Their reading skills were rated as *well* and increase from 50% to 59%. Also their writing skills were rated as *well* and increase from 41% to 51%.

Marks	Percentage	Skills
From <i>neither nor</i> to <i>well</i>	45.5% → 66%	Speaking
From <i>neither nor</i> to <i>well</i>	45.5 % → 78%	Listening
From <i>well</i> to <i>well</i>	50% → 59%	Reading
From <i>well</i> to <i>well</i>	41% → 51%	Writing

Table 3: Students' self- reporting on their language skills

However the results of the aural and oral tests show that not all students improved, e.g. only 63% of students made gains in the aural test; with a greater number, (but still surprisingly low percentage) 77% improving their oral skills. As studies from the 1990s have shown, advancement in language proficiency does not appear to be automatic, in the case of these students. While certain gains were found, students were ambivalent as to their nature and extent.

6.2 Confidence in Speaking German

Even though significant gains in language proficiency were not detected in this study, nonetheless, there were significant increases in students' self-reported confidence rates in speaking German: 29 students in comparison to 5 answered the question "I feel confident when I speak German" in a positive way. The percentage of students who agreed with the statement that they felt confident speaking German after the SA increased by 20%. See table 4, 5 and 6. The median also changed from the value 3 [neither agree or disagree] to the value 2 [agree]. See table 5.

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Speak German and feel confident post -Speak German & feel confident			
Negative Ranks	29(a)	18.53	537.50
Positive Ranks	5(b)	11.50	57.50
Ties	21(c)		
Total	55		

a Speak German & feel confident post < Speak German & feel confident

b Speak German & feel confident post > Speak German & feel confident

c Speak German & feel confident post = Speak German & feel confident

Table 4: Students' self-reported confidence in speaking German prior and post SA

Prior SA		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	2	3.6
	Agree	16	29.1
	Neither nor	13	23.6
	Disagree	16	29.1
	Strongly Disagree	8	14.5
	Total	55	100.0

Table 5: Students' replies regarding confidence speaking German prior SA

Post SA		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	8	14.5
	Agree	28	50.9
	Neither nor	7	12.7
	Disagree	8	14.5
	Strongly Disagree	4	7.3
	Total	55	100.0

Table 6: Students' replies regarding confidence speaking German post SA

		Speak German & feel confident - prior to SA	Speak German & feel confident - post SA
N	Valid	55	55
	Missing	0	0
Mean		3.22	2.49
Median		3.00	2.00

Table 7: Students' replies regarding confidence speaking German prior and post SA – Change in the median

Most questions posed to students regarding aspects of German culture seem to show an increase of knowledge/awareness. When students were asked, post SA if they felt more familiar with aspects of German culture and the German way of life, familiarity with the following increased significantly

- food
- appearance
- geography,
- religion,
- mentality,
- the educational system,

- TV, movies,
- radio,
- housing,
- climate,
- diversity,
- social institutions,
- festivals,
- lifestyle,
- sport,
- leisure,
- famous people,
- music.

There were less familiar with family life, work, art, literature, architecture, history, politics, industries and theatre. There is a significant p-value of .000 and 36 students in comparison to 4 students state that they feel familiar with German culture, while 13 remain unchanged in their opinion. This is also reflected in a series of specific questions on German culture and how familiar the students are with these. The percentage of students who strongly agreed with the statement that they felt familiar with German culture after the SA increased by 28%. See table 8, 9 and 10. The median also changed from the value 2 [agree] to the value 1 [strongly agree]. See table 11.

	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Familiar with German culture post SA - familiar with German culture prior	36(a)	20.22	728.00
Negative Ranks	4(b)	23.00	92.00
Positive Ranks	14(c)		
Ties			
Total	54		

a Familiar with German culture - post SA < Familiar with German culture prior SA

b Familiar with German culture - post SA > Familiar with German culture prior SA

c Familiar with German culture - post SA = Familiar with German culture prior SA

Table 8: Students' replies regarding familiarity with German culture prior and post SA

Prior SA		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	10	18.5
	Agree	34	63.0
	Neither nor	8	14.8
	Disagree	2	3.7
	Total	54	100.0
Missing	System	2	
Total		56	

Table 9: Students' replies regarding familiarity with German culture prior to SA

Post SA		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	38	67.9
	Agree	16	28.6
	Neither nor	1	1.8
	Disagree	1	1.8
	Total	56	100.0

Table 10: Students' replies regarding familiarity with German culture after SA

		Familiar with German culture - prior to SA	Familiar with Ger culture - post SA
N	Valid	54	56
	Missing	2	0
Mean		2.04	1.38
Median		2.00	1.00

Table 11: Students' replies regarding familiarity with German culture prior and post SA – Change in the median

6.3 Intercultural Learning

Students generally emphasised “self-discovery” during the SA. This might be surprising if we take into consideration the fact that many Irish students are still very young when they enter third level and have perhaps never lived away from home. Due to the international environment, intercultural learning appears to have taken place, often reflected in students' comments regarding discoveries made about other cultures and about unprecedented understandings of Irish culture itself. Students, for example, became more aware about Irish humour, Irish indirect communication style and Irish drinking culture. Some students reported culture shock in reverse. They concluded that they were better able to understand Erasmus students at their own university; even the word empathy was mentioned. After their return home some students contacted their International Office and made suggestions to introduce a “buddy” system.

Looking more closely at some of the findings on linguistic gain, the nomination of Irish as a L2 language decreased as students regarded German as their new L2. When students were asked to rate their language skills, almost 60% nominated Irish and almost 40% nominated German as their L2. This was reversed after the year abroad: almost 60% nominated German & almost 40% nominated Irish as their L2. Please see table 12. Also out of the cohort of students who declared themselves bilingual, 87% mentioned German as their L2 with 87%, which is a 26% increase from their reply prior to the SA. See table 13.

The self-reports by students on their language skills show a clear decrease in proficiency in Irish in the writing/listening/speaking and writing skills.

	2nd language prior SA	2nd language post SA
English	1,8%	1,8%
Irish	58,9%	33,9%
German	39,3%	57,1%
Missing	0%	7,1%
Total	100%	100%

Table 12: Nomination of L2 by students

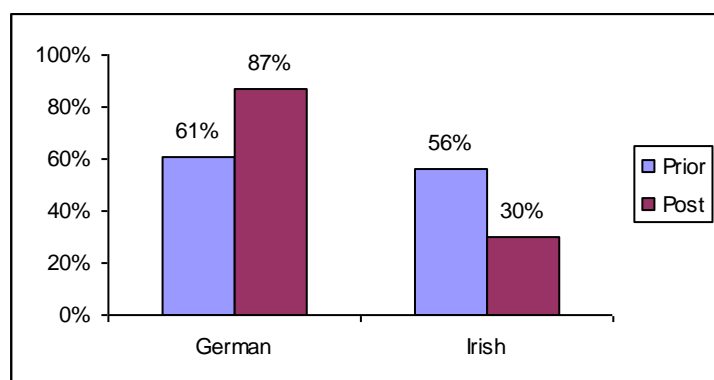


Table 13: Nomination of languages by students who declared themselves as bilingual

Irish seems to play no mayor role on the L2 acquisition of the students. In fact, the language does not really feature in reference to language learning and Irish culture. Irish takes the role of being a “magic code” and the fact was reported that a lot of the non-Irish students didn’t know that Ireland had its own language. In the interviews it was mentioned on numerous locations that Irishness was perceived as something very positive with the German students. This was beneficial to the identity of the Irish students while being abroad. One student put this succinctly:

You find yourself opening yourself up and you’re listening to their [Germans’] opinions of Ireland and they didn’t know that we speak Irish here, they just thought that we spoke English with an Irish accent so I explained that we have another language and I spoke it,

they were amazed. You're giving them a part of your culture and you're kind of accepting their culture. When I hear German I feel like that's me, I am German, I feel like I'm part German.

Another student stated:

It was nice to use Irish between three of us it was like a secret code. We wouldn't have gotten away speaking English but Irish was like a magic code.

7 Recommendations

From this study, we would like to make the following recommendations:

International placement officers in international offices should ensure that students don't share accommodation abroad with other Erasmus students, but with native/mix students instead. Coordinators for the year abroad should encourage their students to prepare themselves prior to departure [e.g. there are lot of good websites as for example: www.vocalproject.eu which will minimize the culture shock. Also the possibilities of joining clubs/societies abroad should be discussed prior to departure.

A "buddy" system can make a considerable difference, when students are being welcomed by native students who are speaking the target language and might have been also on a year abroad programme. Language lecturers should alert students to the fact that unless they have a strong motivation in speaking the host language, it will be difficult to escape the English speaking aspect of the Erasmus-trap. Language lecturers should not be surprised if their students do not increase their proficiency in their target language; however it could be the case that they will have increased their knowledge about the target culture, other cultures and their own culture.

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Track 4

Facing “Black Swan” Event in Academia: Responding to Change and Hardship....Creatively!

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“The longevity of the university is not a result of never changing – but rather a credit to its ability to evolve, adapt, and change over time”

“Changing a university is difficult. It is like moving a cemetery; hard work and there is no internal support.”

Clark Kerr (1st Chancellor of University of California, Berkley)

Abstract

Many people did not believe that the 2008-09 economic recession of such severity was possible, just like people in Europe and elsewhere did not believe, until the 18th Century, that black swans existed, because they never saw one. Though higher education was traditionally thought to be recession-proof, it seems that this time around higher education institutions were not immune to the downturn, with many suspending faculty hirings and cutting budgets, at a time that enrolments are rising. It will be argued in this workshop that the crisis highlighted the fact that change is constant, that HEIs are faced with some challenges, but also that they are provided with opportunities to become more entrepreneurial, more creative and more innovative. In this narrative of the workshop introduction, I present a number of ideas in the areas of, among others, programme development, student and faculty recruiting, finding (and funding) research opportunities, finding jobs for graduates, and maintaining the relevance of programmes for the business community. They are not meant to be “take home” panacea, but more as food for thought and discussion.

Keywords

Financial crisis, higher education, managing change, creativity

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1 Introduction

Since 2008, consumption and growth have declined significantly, unemployment has grown, property values have fallen, and investor confidence has hit rock bottom levels. The mismanagement of economies and businesses, and the personal and communal responsibilities of individuals and institutions (especially of the financial and banking community), has been widely debated. In many ways, the majority, if not all, of the people at the helm of governments, businesses (including banks), international agencies, and higher education institutions, may have read about, but have never lived an economic downturn of such severity. Effectively, they are leading their institutions during these hard times in uncharted, for them, territories. It is also safe to assume, that for many, the exact course to chart to get them out of this recessionary conundrum may not exactly be known. Yet, it need not be all bad news.

Few people (if any) saw this severe economic recession coming. Like people in Europe and elsewhere did not believe, until the 18th Century, that black swans existed (because they never saw one), economists, central bankers, international agencies, politicians, researchers (e.g., econometricians), and others did not believe that it was even possible for such contagion to occur (or re-occur) in our modern times, given their knowledge of markets and the significant theoretical and modeling innovations amassed over the last years. Yet, this economic recession has provided, in an oxymorous way, excellent teaching and learning opportunities for faculty and students. Especially for business school faculty (especially in economics, finance, accounting), the last couple of years has also been a time for introspection and soul-searching to identify the share of

responsibility in the financial crisis, not only the failure to see things coming, but more importantly their responsibility in creating the new business culture through the business values and business practices they teach their graduates. Have they failed to teach students to be principled leaders? Have they simply cranked out accountants, bankers and derivatives traders?

But, as significant innovations in science and business in the past have emerged during difficult times, we certainly need to take stock of the severity of the current situation, but we can at the same time look for opportunities. We need to try new ideas and new initiatives, we need to become more entrepreneurial (in running our institutions as well as in our teaching), we need to be more creative and innovative in, among others, programme development, in student and faculty recruiting, in finding (and funding) research opportunities, in finding jobs for our graduates, and in maintaining the relevance of our programmes for the business community.

2 The Higher Education Context: A Long-term View

Over the past two-three decades, higher education has been undergoing global transformations reflecting demographic and social changes. Figure 1 presents projections in 2025 of the young population (aged 18-24).

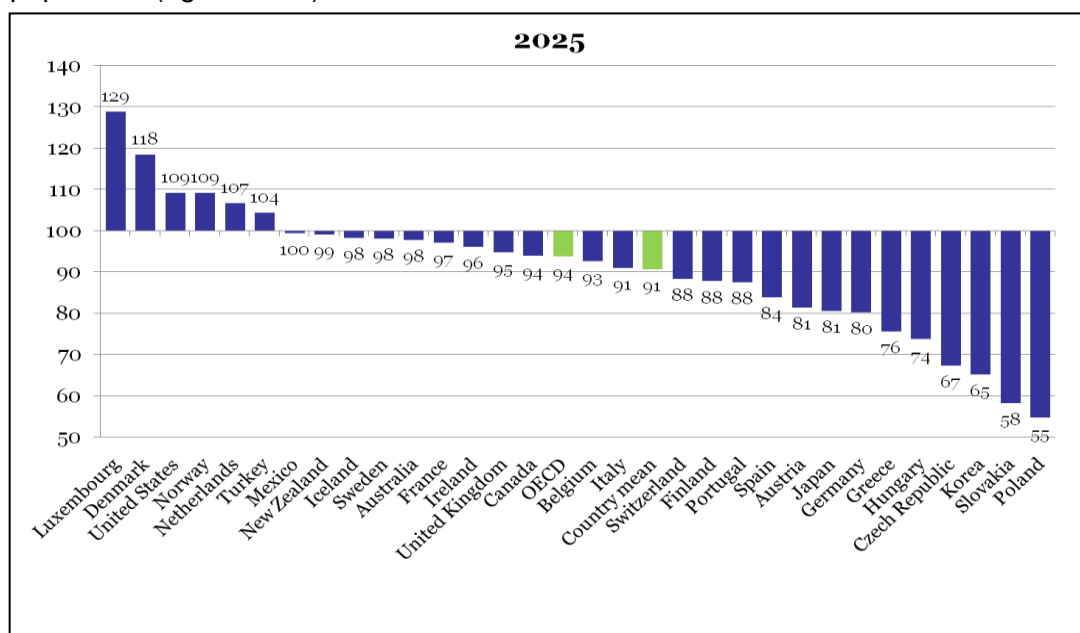


Figure 1 : Population Projections for 2025 of the 18-24 Age Group (2005=100) Source: United Nations, Population division (revision 2006).

Higher education has shifted from an exclusively elite domain to the mass market with more (though not equal) access and opportunities to previously excluded groups of students. The trends also reflect the declining per institution support by governments, and the shifts in the epistemic and

organizational architecture of HEIs. There is also the controversial side of the movement of tertiary education towards vocational, professional or entrepreneurial schools as responses to the needs of the business community and society in general, though it may be argued that still the relevance and the fit of higher education to the needs of the labour market may be low. This latter movement, of course, poses a new challenge for HEIs because it seems that it has upset the people in favour of the more traditional university, arguing that this movement undermines the role of higher education institutions as important centers of knowledge production, dissemination and application for social progress in the modern knowledge-based and knowledge-driven societies.

On a global scale there has been a significant growth of private institutions, a *commercialization of learning* and a sort of *corporatization of the management* with the adoption of business models more familiar to be seen in traditional business organizations. In addition, knowledge has become a commodity with closer cooperation between universities and business in research and innovation, as universities increasingly rely less on government funding and actively seek funds on their own. The globalization of economies and the massive movement of students across countries have facilitated the internationalization of higher education. Figure 2 shows the expected dramatic increase in enrolment projected for 2025 in the OECD countries.

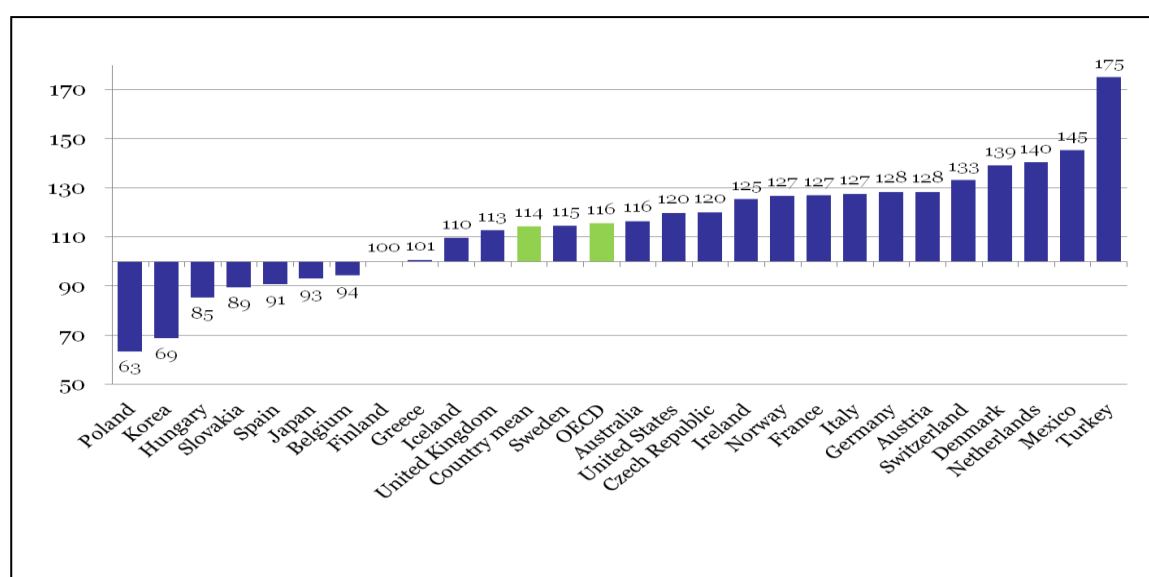


Figure 2 : Projected Enrolments in HEIs in 2025 (2005=100). *Source:* OECD, *Higher Education 2030*, Vol. 1 Demography. Available online at:

http://www.oecd.org/document/11/0,3343,en_2649_39263238_41788555_1_1_1_1,00.html

Traditionally, the fact that higher education is countercyclical, gave the notion for some to think that higher education is recession-proof. Indeed, as Figure 3 indicates, enrollment grows more rapidly during a recession and during the year after the recession, while the largest dips occur in boom years.

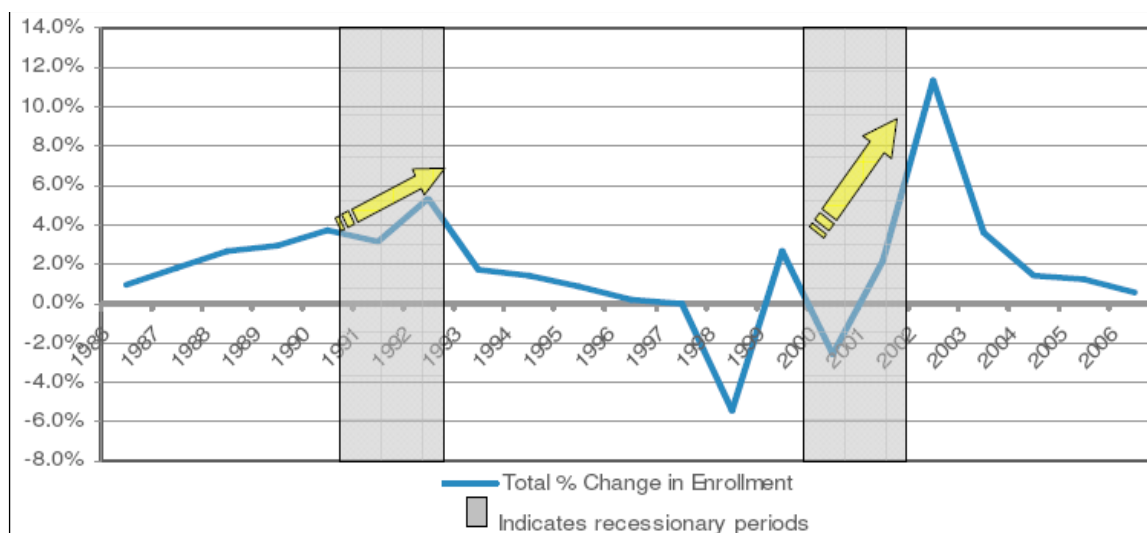


Figure 3: Trends in Enrollment, 1986-2006. *Source:* OECD Education at a Glance for Canada, France, Italy, Spain, UK and US (Note: These are the only countries with complete since 1986).

This fact and notion are based largely on two assumptions: (1) that universities around the world are heavily dependent on government funding, though research universities do get an increasing portion of the funds from research grants and consultancy money; and (2) student enrollments are countercyclical, in the sense that there is a tendency for people to resume or extend their studies during recessions. This may be explained by the fact that during recessions (when presumably many young people are unemployed), the *opportunity cost* of attending university decreases. In an economic sense, the opportunity cost is what people “lose” or forego for the time they spent at school, such as the potential salaries they would have earned if they were employed and/or the alternative use of the money they spend to attend university. But, there are a number of other factors that account for this trend: (a) Young people decide to postpone their entry into the labour market, since it may be regarded as a competitive disadvantage to enter the labour market during a recession; (b) young people, but also matured people, seek to improve and upgrade their skills and qualifications, either taking the opportunity of being unemployed or being employed in sectors that are vulnerable and are keen to acquire new skills; (c) people enroll in lifelong learning programmes to cope with technology and innovation.

Looking at things from a more short-term perspective, it may be argued that as governments around the world attempt to pull back and consolidate from the massive fiscal stimulus packages during 2008-09, which resulted in skyrocketing fiscal deficits and public debts, it is likely that the general budgets for 2010-12 will be lean, and the share of education may be in jeopardy, as education has to compete with other socially-pressing issues such as health, pensions and other age-related matters, as well as the environment. Meanwhile, the unemployment rates among young people has risen dramatically, especially in some countries as seen in Figure 4, and will likely take a long time to fall to pre-crisis levels

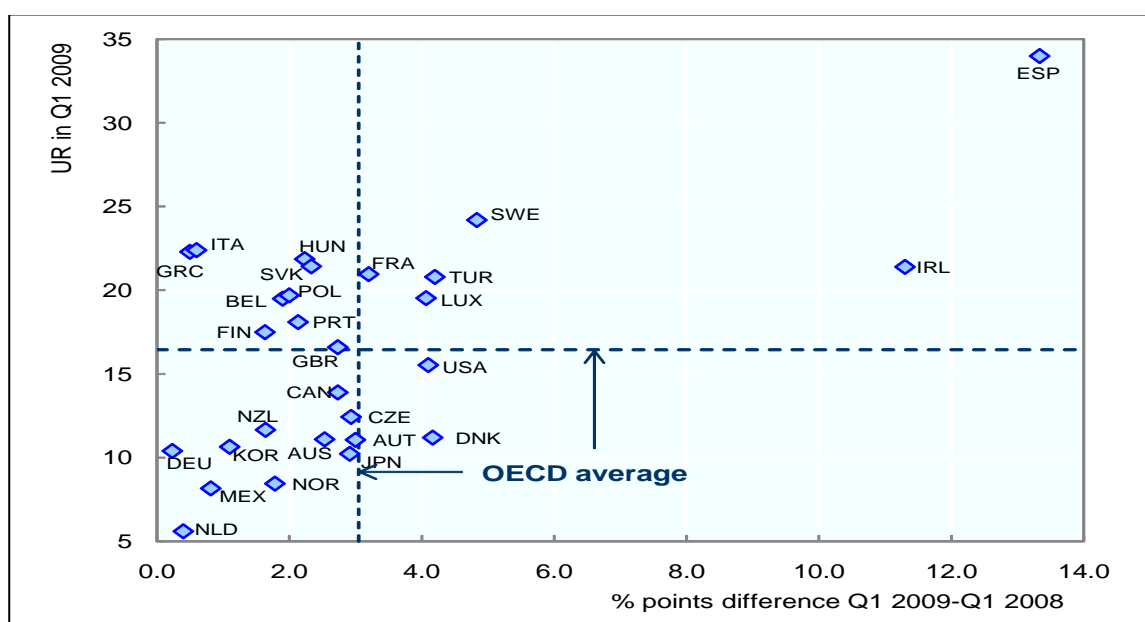


Figure 4: Youth Unemployment. *Source:* OECD

3 The Effects of the Crisis on Academia

Historically, HEIs have exhibited a remarkable resiliency to economic downturns. It seems that this time around higher education institutions are not immune to the current volatile economic environment. The reality is that though this financial crisis affected most countries in a synchronised manner, it has had or will have very diversified impacts on the higher education sectors in different countries. Though as of the end of 2009, there are some signs of stabilization and/or reversal the situation remains fluid and its impact on HEIs will likely require many more quarters, if not years, to fully show its impacts.

In the United States, over half of the states have announced funding cuts to their universities (ranging from 5% to 15%), while private universities, even the wealthiest ones, are experiencing

huge losses in their endowments and other revenue sources. This is happening at a time when many young and adult students, unable to find jobs or having lost their jobs, choose to return to universities. The surging enrollment means tougher admission standards, bigger class sizes, greater difficulty for students to get into popular or required courses and in some cases, not enough advisors, dorm space or parking space. From the students' perspective, their ability to pay tuition is weakening as their sources for funding their education are drying up since: (a) student-loan finance companies are tightening credit facilities, (b) parents' ability to help out is weakening due to the massive home equity losses, and (c) universities' financial aid package per student is shrinking as they try to spread fewer funds to a bigger number of eligible applicants.

Many higher education institutions are suspending faculty searches and are cutting budgets. In a survey of close to 900 colleges and universities in the United States, the Chronicle of Higher Education and Moody's Investors Service, found that though few HEIs expect to lay off faculty, many are adopting hiring freezes and holding off on salary increases. Specifically, over one-third of the HEIs that responded said that they already froze the salaries or postponed giving salary increases, while 50% of the remaining HEIs said they were planning to do so. These survey results are shown in Figure 5

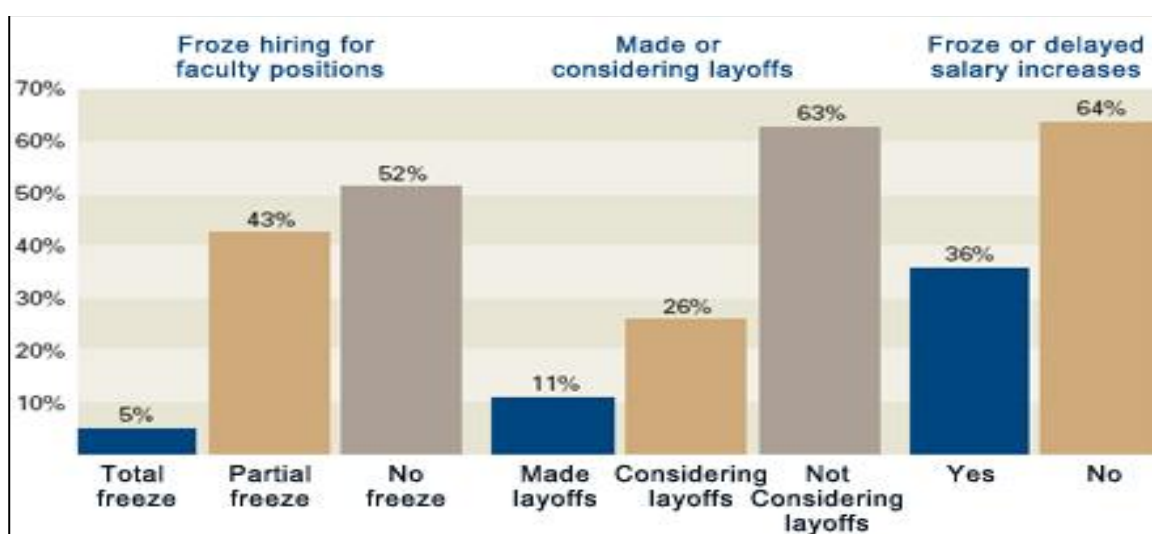


Figure 5: Survey Results of HEIs' Responses to the Financial Crisis. Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education and Moody's Investors Service (2009).

http://chronicle.com/weekly/v55/i18/18a00102.htm?utm_source=wb&utm_medium=en#survey.

In Europe, the crisis has not impacted uniformly or elicited uniform responses from the different countries. Universities in some countries have not felt any direct impact, yet expect more difficult

times ahead and have sometimes engaged into proactive approaches (European University Association, 2009). Governments have reacted in different ways, either announcing budget cuts for higher education (Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland), or discarded earlier announced increases in investment in Higher Education (Austria) while others have increased the level of public funding (Denmark, France), especially in expenditure on infrastructure (Germany, Switzerland), as part of national stimulus packages. It also appears that some countries are in the process of implementing reforms, which makes it more difficult to announce new measures (Finland, Switzerland). Finally, there is a general concern over the degree of commitment of the business sector in their financial cooperation with universities, and a view that the economic downturn may decrease the funding coming from private sources (European University Association, 2009).

The main impact of the crisis on HEIs is still to come. Though there are signs that the economic recession has hit bottom and a reversal began, or is in sight, the nature and strength of the recovery is dubious. Will it be a strong v-shaped recovery or a jig-saw w-shaped one? Psychologically, of course, any non-sliding direction of the economy is positive. Accordingly, there may be tail-ends of the crisis that we haven't seen yet.

Some things are certain. One is that change is constant. Another is that it is likely that the effects of the crisis will be many and complex and will endure for the medium term. A third is that this crisis poses challenges for HEIs, but also provides opportunities. Institutions have to deal with these facts and individually and collectively manage change and adapt to it and capitalize on the opportunities...creatively. And, of course, it is certain that since globalization and internationalization is present in higher education as well, there will be winners and losers. In the UK, for example, it is estimated that UK HEIs receive over 20% of their tuition income from international students. In some cases the share of international students in the overall student body reaches as much as 80%.

4 Responding to Change and Hard Times ... Creatively

During these difficult times university administrators and faculty need to confront these challenges as effectively as possible without compromising their core missions of providing and promoting excellence in teaching, research, and service. Moments of crisis offer both challenges and opportunities. The challenging financial environment has provided HEIs a window to rethink curricula as well as business practices and educational policy changes. Whatever the case, there is no denying that we live in a world of significant change and stress. The financial crisis will not affect HEIs evenly. In some countries, institutions may perhaps be more fortunate as regards state

funding and their spending budgets. Public universities in some larger countries may be able to weather the financial turmoil and may even improve their standing (e.g., Germany), but other small, private institutions which depend almost entirely on tuition and universities in countries that have been more severely affected by the global recession will likely struggle with maintaining salary levels and faculty numbers.

It is certain that as in all walks of life, there will be winners and losers. According to Wilson et al., (2009) writing in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2008) the winners and losers are:

Winners

- Institutions with big endowments, low debt, and strong name brands
- Community colleges and professional university colleges (Hogescholen) that can handle the demand, and distance-education programmes
- Institutions with significant funds that can expand programmes and attract faculty
- Institutions that specialize in few programmes rather being comprehensive
- Institutions with diverse donors

Losers

- Middle-class families
- Institutions that rely on donor money for student aid
- High-priced, tuition-dependent private universities
- Institutions that are behind schedule on projects and maintenance

Amid the economic downturn and the gloom of hiring freezes across much of academia, even at the wealthiest of universities, some HEIs are going on a hiring spree, seizing on the opportunity to attract bright researchers to bolster their faculty ranks and gain ground on their competition. They're able to do that by cutting back in other areas such as postponing construction projects or by limiting travel expenses. This is a way that some HEIs are looking at the financial challenge creatively, seeing opportunities in the grim environment. In many ways, this is a strategic option that may provide some HEIs with a competitive advantage. The path to riches, according to financial guru Warren Buffet "*...is to be fearful when others are greedy, and be greedy when others are fearful.*" Of course, the riches that HEIs seek and value most are "excellence in student learning" achieved through excellence in teaching, research and service to the community. Undoubtedly, such measures will likely stiffen competition in an already cut-throat field.

But it is precisely in these times that faculty should be a central part of the decision making processes in HEIs. It is precisely in these times that faculty should have access to the sort of financial information that makes such shared governance meaningful. And it is precisely in these hard financial times that faculty must take the lead in helping to define the future of HEIs.

In the following sections I undertake to enumerate a number of ideas in the key areas of interest to academic administrators and faculty members, namely, among others: managing change and thinking strategically, programme development, student enrolment and faculty recruiting, finding (and funding) research opportunities, finding jobs for graduates (student placements), and maintaining the relevance of programmes and research for the business community. They are not meant to be “take home” panacea, but more as food for thought and discussion.

4.1 Coping with Change

Change theory has been studied primarily by social scientists, not business scientists. According to Kurt Lewin (1947, *Frontiers in Group Dynamics*), the way to manage change is to engage in a three-stage process of:

- *Unfreezing*: This involves overcoming inertia and dismantling the existing "mind set". Defense mechanisms have to be bypassed.
- *Changing*: In this stage, where change occurs, there is confusion and transition. Old ways are being challenged, yet what is appropriate to replace them is not always clear.
- *Freezing* (or Re-freezing): Finally, the new mindset becomes clear and organizations' comfort levels return to previous levels.

Of course, when change occurs, people find that dealing with it is a lot harder than these three simple steps. People may become paralyzed in their thinking due to the rapidly changing environment. In the current environment, change is occurring at a rate at which we cannot control. Higher education institutions are rather conservative, not well tuned to change. As academic leaders, we either stay up-to-date with changes or we get pushed to the side as our competitors comply.

Suggestions to Cope with Change

1. Understand and anticipate change by knowing the available options, so the transition is smooth. Always have a contingency plan.
2. Have a positive attitude about change. This may be the opportunity to re-evaluate processes, to innovate, to introduce new, more successful practices.

3. Utilize technology since it is usually brought on by change.
4. Consider that a recession can create a perfect opportunity to emerge as a stronger, leaner organization

4.2 Thinking Strategically

Out of the soul-searching and debates that have been going on at business schools around the world, the most frequent suggestions, which unsurprisingly have to do with programme development and structure, are: (a) to emphasise business ethics, environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR); and (b) to incorporate in their curricula entrepreneurship education and coach students to become entrepreneurs by starting their own business or to become more entrepreneurial in their business environment. These, of course, are not the only ideas that are coming out of discussions at HEIs. They simply point to the spirit of thinking strategically. And, of course, this strategic thinking will continue well beyond this economic cycle, as the higher education space, in Europe and beyond, will continue to be characterised by rapid, often unpredictable, change.

Focusing on the mission and the objectives becomes more difficult in hard and stressful times, when we are forced to deviate from our normal routine. Uncertainty can make us feel overwhelmed and worried. As a result, we often resort to what we are comfortable with—which is likely outdated experiences or competencies. However, when uncertainty strikes, we must be able to focus on the future, our goals, and how we can strategically meet our needs. There is an increasing need to focus and prioritise the missions of our institutions. There are opportunities to get close to the business community and society in general by supporting the local economy, innovative start-up business, technology transfer, etc.

Ideas of Thinking Strategically

1. Create time for thinking to review the institution's mission to be sure it is well-defined and differentiated from other schools. Then focus on this mission.
2. Use team approaches to challenges and utilize faculty/staff talent to plan strategically. Faculty should not simply be the recipients of top-determined policies, but rather be part of the decision-making process so that there are negotiated policies. That is how mutual trust develops. Essentially, it is argued here that there is a need for a collective '*sense of urgency*'.
3. Utilize available resources in the Institution's areas of strength, without wasting resources on less important areas.

4. Seek diversified sources of income and seek to develop financial autonomy.
5. Plan according to the financial resources that are actually available.
6. Develop interdisciplinary responses to current business and government conditions.
7. Identify new growth areas and market opportunities, such as sustainability, change management, entrepreneurship, innovation, healthcare.
8. Recruit new faculty who are knowledgeable in the changing areas.
9. Learn from this financial crisis, your failures and the failures of your peers.
10. For private HEIs: Partner up with other private or public institutions to achieve synergies in programmes and to economize on costs.

4.3 Enrolment Management

As we mentioned above, at times of reduced budgets, as in the current cycle, funds are being reduced across all areas of academia. There is less financial aid for students; there are fewer opportunities to raise funds from traditional sources; and money may be reallocated between different schools or faculties or for other university activities. But as we said above, student enrolment behaves counter-cyclically, which means that many HEIs are experiencing increases in the demand for tertiary education. For example, in the UK the tougher labour market prompted many young and mature people to submit applications to university. But, pressures on public spending limited the expansion of student numbers, leaving an estimated 40,000 well-qualified applicants without places. In the US, enrollments at Community colleges rose by 300,000 in the academic year 2007-2008.

Ideas for Enrolment Management

1. Evaluate the viability of each academic programme you offer to reduce or eliminate non-essential programmes, activities, or services
2. Develop differentiated degree programmes and use Internet technology and distance learning mode.
3. Manage the size of your degree programme's enrollment at the undergraduate and post-graduate level.
4. Offer classes in the evenings and on weekends to maximize campus efficiency.
5. Hire more part-time instructors instead of tenure-track faculty members.
6. Use the less-frequent, but higher quality seminar format

4.4 Student Placement

Over the last two years, many businesses have resorted to reducing their workforce in order to survive. This is bad news for HEI graduates. The opportunities for student placements are decreasing, and students may not have the experience to get themselves the job they are trained for.

Ideas for Student Placement in Recession

1. Focus on the future employment of graduating students. After all, gaining employment after graduation is one of the reasons why students chose to attend your school.
2. Develop and support unique programmes based on your school's strengths.
3. Determine the fields for tomorrow's jobs and develop new programmes in these fields.
4. Provide students with employable skills so that they are more valuable than others in the marketplace (e.g., networking, team-building, and communications skills).
5. Develop partnerships with your student's prospective employers.
6. Invite guest speakers from the business community.
7. Develop mentoring programmes with employers. For instance, at the thesis or project stage. This is a Win-Win proposition: Students gain experience and sponsors get a job done or achieve insights and new ideas.

4.5 Attracting and Recruiting Faculty

In many countries (Europe, USA) HEIs are facing a shortage of qualified faculty. According to AACSB, this is especially so in business schools where it is anticipated that the supply of academically qualified (AQ) faculty (doctoral degree holders) will be reduced due to budget restrictions that will slow the production of new doctoral graduates. The supply of professionally qualified (PQ) faculty (non- doctoral holders, but with significant professional qualifications and experience) is expected to increase as businesses are downsizing and the population as a whole is aging. With budget cuts, schools will find it increasingly difficult to adequately compensate highly-qualified faculty. There may even be some "cannibalization" from HEIs that are not experiencing budget cuts, by recruit top faculty from other schools

HEIs in many countries are facing some serious challenges regarding their situation with faculty members and the relevant policies. For instance, some senior staff who were perhaps thinking of withdrawing from the ranks and perhaps devote more time to consultancy or retire altogether, may postpone retirement due to the loss of their net worth (loss of value of pension systems and private

pension funds). There may be situations where institutions may let go of qualified staff, often junior and more productive (in class teaching and research outputs). This will probably put downward pressure on faculty salaries, while at the same time it will increase the class size and the workload for (remaining) staff.

Ideas for Attracting and Recruiting Faculty

1. Recruit and select faculty that can teach interdisciplinary courses.
2. Consider additional training for current faculty or require that your new faculty is trained to be effective in the classroom.
3. Select visiting faculty since there is no long-term commitment.
4. Create an overall more favourable work environment.
5. Reconsider selective faculty retention salary adjustments.

4.6 Maintaining Programmatic / Teaching Relevance

Is teaching in a traditional format with the use of discipline-based, theoretical research still relevant? Many faculty members may not be adequately preparing students for the current workplace environment due to their traditional training and experience. In many instances, faculty is teaching what they always have been teaching or what they are personally researching. With the rapidly changing business environment, the information may no longer be practically applicable in the workplace. Because of this, business courses are becoming static and business programmes generic. The public is questioning relevancy, and other university programmes are able to replicate business curriculum.

Ideas for Maintaining Teaching Relevance

1. Focus on greater relevance in the classroom.
2. Select and train faculty based on their ability to teach interdisciplinary courses and programmes.
3. Reward faculty for researching relevant issues.
4. Develop closer relationships with businesses.
5. Develop 'knowledge communities (cities/regions)'
6. For purely academic institutions: Develop more vocational, flexible and practical programmes
7. Require additional faculty training in business and government environments

8. Use evolving economic, and international business topics to demonstrate business principles and world economic systems. Provide enhanced skills for business students (financial education, business ethics, communication skills, etc)
9. Focus on developing critical-thinking skills.
10. Expand student experiential learning opportunities.

4.7 Maintaining Research Relevance

A wealth of new research opportunities are emerging. For instance, businesses may ask your faculty to explore why their practices have failed. One problem is that many faculty members are researching topics that already have been explored or they are focusing solely on discipline-based fields. Secondly, faculty sometimes are more concerned with publishing in top-rated journals versus addressing challenging business dilemmas.

Ideas for Maintaining Research Relevance

1. Interact with businesses and governments to determine emerging issues.
2. Assist faculty in developing new research paradigms.
3. Recruit faculty with relevant research interests.
4. Influence journal editors to value more applied research.
5. Use current economic conditions as opportunities for research

4.8 Delivering Service during Hard Times

New industry demands are creating a need for new educational services. Existing educational programmes will eventually be curtailed by the changing environment. This trend will provide schools with a prime opportunity to emerge with new offerings. For instance, programmes that focus on economic development and impact will become increasingly important for businesses and governments. There may also be room for courses or programmes that focus on generating surplus revenue

Ideas for Delivering Service

1. Determine market potential for new or expanded programmes.
2. Develop or expand supportive infrastructures for programme delivery.
3. Develop or expand non-credit programmes that build on the unique skill sets of your faculty in order to generate additional revenue.

4. Develop or expand grants and contract activities in areas where needs are present.
5. Increase your focus on economic development and impact activities.
6. Expand activities that support innovation and entrepreneurship programmes.
7. Encourage greater faculty participation in service delivery.

5 Concluding Comments

I have presented a number of data to show the extent of the impact of the 2008-09 financial crisis on higher education and have argued that undoubtedly the severity of the crisis has tested the limits of many higher education institutions. Yet, I have tried to demonstrate also that the recovery phase from the crisis presents a number of opportunities for academic administrators and faculty alike to put our money where our mouths are: to be more entrepreneurial in our thinking and actions, think more creatively, to be more innovative.

There is no question that significant innovations in science and business in the past have emerged during difficult times. So we need to look beyond the current grim situation and look for opportunities. I provided a number of ideas of how to think “outside of the box” to become more entrepreneurial (in running our institutions as well as in our teaching), to be more creative and innovative in, among others, programme development, in student and faculty recruiting, in finding (and funding) research opportunities, in finding jobs for our graduates, and in maintaining the relevance of our programmes for the business community. As HEIs we need to show our ability to manage change in an increasingly difficult, demanding and competitive environment. It is, of course, recognized that not all the ideas would be applicable to all institutions in all the countries due to differences in institutional structure and cultural differences.

It is time we think hard about some age-old questions and through brainstorming to provide answers:

- Do we provide to our students the right knowledge and skills?
- Are our programmes and research relevant to the needs of the market and the community?
- Do we adequately teach our students to be socially responsible business leaders and citizens?
- Are we as institutions investing in the knowledge society (in facilities, in programmes, etc)?

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Creative personalities as leaders and how to support them

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Abstract

Former research has demonstrated that tacit knowledge about managing self and others, as well as managing tasks and career are of vital importance to top level business managers. Often top level managers are individuals with higher than average creative abilities. Do individuals of high creativity have tacit knowledge required for successful leadership and management? What kind of tacit knowledge is to be favoured most in the support of leadership development in case the leader has higher than average creativity?

The research's theoretical basis is the theory of practical intelligence by Robert J. Sternberg and creativity theory by Hans J. Eysenck.

Within the present research we observed the relations between tacit knowledge and creativity as personality trait. The research transpired that individuals with higher than average creativity are better managers of others and career whereas being worse managers of self and tasks. Therefore top managers of higher than average creativity need more knowledge and skills in managing self and tasks.

Keywords

Creativity, leadership, tacit knowledge

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1 Introduction

In order to be a successful leader one needs practical intelligence that is the ability to adjust to, design and choose the everyday environment. People with practical intelligence have highly developed competence to succeed in one particular field. Practical intelligence is something that allows successful leaders to respond effectively to emerging issues, act promptly, and adjust their plans according to changing demands. Practical intelligence is closely related to the success of problem solving. Successful are not simply those who know a great deal about a particular field but those who can flexibly apply their knowledge to real life situations.

Robert J. Sternberg and his colleagues (Wagner & Sternberg 1985; Wagner & Sternberg 1986; Sternberg & Wagner 1986; Sternberg 2000; Sternberg et al., 2000) have treated practical intelligence with knowledge based approach. As a result of their research they have come to the conclusion that in order to achieve something tacit knowledge is required. Tacit knowledge, that is, knowledge based on experience of solving practical issues, is one aspect of practical intelligence (Busch 2008). Research (Chi, Glaser & Farr 1988) has indicated that discussion and problem solving depend on procedural skills and schematically organised knowledge neither of which people may be aware of in their daily activities. Former research of business managers (Wagner & Sternberg 1985; Wagner & Sternberg 1990) has indicated that tacit knowledge about managing self, others, career, and tasks are all essential in being successful as organisation leaders. It was discovered that leaders who have tacit knowledge in the above mentioned areas and can apply it

in everyday situations, are more effective in their field. The mentioned tacit knowledge reflect one of the leaders' principle ability – practical intelligence of leadership, and these categories meet the knowledge that functions on intrapersonal, interpersonal and organisational levels.

Leaders of today come across more and more complicated and dynamic environments. The development of new technologies, growth of information quantity, shorter time for decision making, and the support from a smaller number of people is the environment in which leaders have to cope. Solving management issues is non-linear, intertwined and action-oriented process (Mintzberg et al., 1976; McCall & Kaplan 1985). If better entrepreneur or chief executive officer is looked for the person is expected to be creative. Today chief executive officers are not chosen for their pleasant personalities (it is hard to be perceived as pleasant in a situation which requires firing 20% of the staff or lowering 30% of salaries) or their learning capacity or excellent memory (for those functions there are computers and subordinates) but for their creative vision of how to turn a company round.

Creativity is the ability to produce work which is novel and appropriate (McLeod & Cropley 1989). Creativity is a wide topic that is important at both individual and societal levels for a wide range of task domains. At an individual level creativity is needed for solving problems in work and everyday situations. At the societal level creativity leads to new scientific findings, new movements in art and philosophy. The economic importance of creativity is clear because new products and services create jobs. Furthermore, individuals, organisations and societies have to adjust existing means and resources to changing needs and at the same time maintain their competitive advantage.

According to the study by Robert J. Sternberg and Todd I. Lubard (1996) creative people are able to recognise ideas that are unknown or not accepted at a particular moment, but contain potential for growth; they are also able to utilise these ideas. Individuals of high creativity can work tenaciously on specific ideas despite external opposition until they can persuade others to see their point. In addition to knowledge, intellectual capacity (synthesising skill to perceive problems in novel ways and avoid conventional thinking; analysing skill to differentiate between the valuable and non-valuable part in an idea), motivation, social environment and verbal skills (to persuade people in the value of the idea) creative people also have tacit knowledge and special personality traits.

The creativity concept of Hans J. Eysenck (1993, 1995, 1996) departs from the notion that creative thinking is making new connections between old items rather than inventing totally new objects. In his theory Hans J. Eysenck differentiates creativity as achievement and creativity as personality trait. According to the Eysenck theory creativity as achievement is a product of several factors (cognitive, environmental and personality ones), therefore there are quite a number of those who

are potentially creative but few of those who are able to work out something totally new. Proceeding from the logarithmic curve of creativity we note that the factors affecting creativity as achievement do not sum up but act multiplicatively. The latter explains why there are few recognised creative individuals and how even one unfavourable condition can rule out the possibility of creativity as achievement. On the other hand, the expression of creativity as achievement can be treated by Pierre Bourdieu's notion (1986) according to which achievement means work with oneself, expecting first of all time, but in which cultural environment and institutional recognition are needed as well, providing the creative individual a certain value in a specific cultural space. In his disquisition of creativity, however, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1999) emphasises that the feature is not the result of one individual's activities but rather a decision made by the social system about a product of an individual. The social system – experts or organisations – decide and select by certain criteria the so-called creative results. Acceptance of new production is affected by the sign system recognised by the experts of the field that allows the new idea to become a part of the field. Ideas outside the field's sign system are not approved. Despite good education and great work experience of the creative individual the production of the new is limited if the individual has no access to certain information. Thus – in addition to innate abilities, divergent thinking, and contradictory personality traits in which the dominance of polarities depends on the phase of the creative process – openness to the occurrences in the surrounding environment is necessary at the social level. Implementation of innovations also depends on the high social and economic position of an individual since this enables the person to have better access to information, to experimentation in the chosen field, and to social networks (personal contacts) that can contribute to the esteem of the suggested innovations by the field's experts.

According to the theory of Hans J. Eysenck (1996) creativity as personality trait is one of the individual's characteristics that affects creativity as achievement. In addition to creativity as personality trait creativity as achievement is affected by the group of features composed of internal motivation, self-confidence and non-conformity. Creativity as personality trait is called originality by Hans J. Eysenck (1995), who discusses that individuals with higher than usual toughmindedness (a complex of different intertwined personality traits) have more unusual associations in thinking process than people of average toughmindedness level. In his theory Hans J. Eysenck (1996) treats creativity as follows: creativity as a personality trait (originality in the given context) meets normal division, that is, creative individuals on the average is the biggest group whereas creativity as achievement is much less common.

The most common features presented in research on creative people (Helson 1999, Cropley 1999, 2001) take originality as the most important characteristic feature not only at the level of bringing

forth an original idea, but also at the level of its final elaboration and presentation. The aim of creative thinking is bringing out something new, application of original solutions on the basis of existing knowledge and skills (Guilford 1979; Feldhusen 1999; Cropley & Urban 2000).

The focus of the present study is tacit knowledge in managing self, others, tasks, and career, as well as creativity as personality trait.

Our basic for appraisal is the notion that creativity is a contributing factor in successful leadership and that individuals of high creativity manage better in the present complicated economic situation when finding solutions to leadership issues and enterprise promotion than individuals of low creativity. To be a successful leader both creativity and corresponding tacit knowledge is needed.

Our research questions are: do individuals of high creativity have tacit knowledge required for successful leadership and management? What kind of tacit knowledge is to be favoured most in the support of leadership development in case the leader has higher than average creativity?

2 Method

The present study investigates the connections between tacit knowledge and creativity as personality trait in order to find functional relation between tacit knowledge required for leadership (managing self, others, tasks, and career) and creativity as personality trait. Theoretically we take off from Robert J. Sternberg (Sternberg et al., 2000) theory on practical intelligence and Hans J. Eysencki (1996) theory of creativity.

There were 483 individuals engaged in the study, all being high or middle level managers with both secondary and higher education, of varying experience and track record.

With psychometric method we found out the extent of both creativity and tacit knowledge. We used the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ; Eysenck & Eysenck 1975) adjusted for Estonian conditions to measure creativity as personality trait; in order to determine tacit knowledge for leadership (managing self, others, tasks, and career) we used „Tacit Knowledge Inventory for Managers“ (TKIM; Wagner & Sternberg 1991). These questionnaires gave us data about the creativity as personal trait of the tested people and about tacit knowledge for leadership (managing self, others, tasks, and career). Both mentioned tests were translated, approved and standardised by the authors of the present article.

We used TKIM in order to measure the individuals' competence on business management in four categories of tacit knowledge (managing self, others, tasks, and career) which are defined as follows.

Managing self is knowledge about how to cope with oneself in everyday work situation in order to enhance work productivity and maximise work results; understanding how to rank tasks by priority; knowledge about how to motivate oneself to develop one's abilities, skills and the level of self-realisation in order to achieve more; comprehension of how to overcome the tendency to postpone tasks and change one's work habits if necessary. Managing self is self motivation and organisation in work situations and skill to evaluate one's work.

Managing others is knowledge about how to organise social relations. This is work-related interaction with superiors, subordinates and peers; perception of group consciousness, ability to influence others. Managing others also includes understanding about how to allocate and adjust tasks so that people's strengths are used and weaknesses downplayed; how to praise or reward in a way as to maximise work efficiency and satisfaction and co-operate with others.

Managing tasks is knowledge about how to perform a certain work-related task quickly and well. Managing tasks includes day-to-day work strategies and organisation. It is also a skill to order daily tasks well, ability to write a business letter so that it was brief, business-like and convincing, or the way to dig out reliable information.

Managing career is the understanding of how a career is built and which activities enhance reputation needed for a good career. This is a vision about how to persuade one's superiors to see the value of one's ideas or products. Managing career is knowledge about the extent of personal priorities reflecting the values of the organisation or the specific field; it is a notion of how to become respected and trusted by the people who evaluate the work and on whose word promotions take place; it is a skill to persuade others that the work is as good as it is (or even better).

TKIM (Tacit Knowledge Inventory for Managers; Wagner & Sternberg 1991) consists of 9 work-related situations and after 8 situations 10 possible solutions are given to each described situation. After the 9th situation 11 solutions are given. Each response version should be evaluated on a 7-grade scale: "1" - extremely bad, "4" - neither good nor bad, "7" - extremely good. Respondents had to evaluate each solution by evaluating solutions in work-related situations. TKIM measures four categories of tacit knowledge (managing self, others, tasks, and career).

EPQ (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire; Eysenck & Eysenck 1975) consists of 90 statements that measure personality traits (extroversion, emotional instability and toughmindedness with sub-category of creativity) and 21 statements helping to assess social conformity - Lie scale. In order to measure creativity we made a sub-scale on the basis of the factor analysis of the EPQ toughmindedness questions. Since our aim was to find connections between creativity as personality trait and tacit knowledge we calculated (in addition to personality traits) a score of creativity as personality trait for each individual who had taken part in the inquiry.

3 Results

Proceeding from the research question we had to explain what kind of tacit knowledge is linked to creativity as personality trait. The method used was psychometric approach allowing to identify both creativity and the extent of tacit knowledge.

The tested individuals filled in TKIM and EPQ questionnaires. On the basis of TKIM test scores of tacit knowledge and on the basis of EPQ the score of personality trait were calculated.

The results indicated that higher creativity was linked to better tacit knowledge in the managing others ($r = 0,16$; $p < 0,003$) and managing career ($r = 0,10$; $p < 0,05$). Individuals with higher creativity had less tacit knowledge in managing self ($r = -0,11$; $p < 0,04$) and managing tasks ($r = -0,15$; $p < 0,005$). Thus the results of our study based on psychometric approach allow us to expect that leaders of high creativity have tacit knowledge on managing others and career but have little tacit knowledge on managing tasks and self.

Since in addition to four categories of tacit knowledge R. K. Wagner and R. J. Sternberg (1986) differentiate also two orientations of tacit knowledge (local or short-term orientation and global or long-term orientation), we also observed their link to creativity. We calculated the scores of tacit knowledge needed for local and global level management. Our results indicated that at global level leaders of high creativity have necessary tacit knowledge in managing others and career. When individuals with high and low creativity were compared, it turned out that there are no differences in tacit knowledge for local level management. This means that leaders of high creativity have tacit knowledge on managing others and career, allowing them to be successful in the long perspective. Since there is no link between creativity and local orientation, the existence of creativity in leaders would not add betterment in activities of local orientation, but would be useful in activities targeting future. Global orientation means understanding how to set up priorities for, *per exemplum*, the next

eight months; how a handy situation would appear after some time; how to get promoted, etc. Global orientation characterises leaders of high creativity who are good managers of others and career, they are not stuck into present and know how to work in the future.

T-test helped to find significant differences ($p < .05$) in the tested individuals depending on the high or low score of creativity. Grounded on results we constructed a description of tacit knowledge that characterise leaders of high creativity.

Leaders of high creativity prefer employees to discuss and solve their problems with their direct superior and do not favour the disregard of chain of command. They do not compose a list of targets based on their priorities for each day; they reward themselves for fulfilling the tasks set for the day; they do not grab every chance to get feedback on their work's first versions; they do not make additional deadlines in addition to the company ones; in business letters they prefer a non-formal style to a formal one. The tasks connected with work are performed by leaders of high creativity themselves, they prefer not to form working groups for sharing responsibilities and are not worried about meeting the deadlines. Leaders of high creativity use opportunities to reduce the power of those not supporting them in their department as far as it remains unnoticed. These leaders do not aim at perfection in every situation since they consider this aspiration an unnecessary waste of time. They have no interim deadlines nor do they manage work by stages; they prefer concrete distribution of tasks and responsibilities. If some of their colleagues turn out to be drags in some activity the leaders of this type prefer to point this out in polite but certain terms. They have no problems to acknowledge their colleagues and if the team succeeds they are willing to foot the bill.

4 Discussion and Conclusion

In our study we focused on creativity as personality trait and tried to find out if creativity as an individual feature distinguishes leaders by their tacit knowledge that was essential in being successful in their leadership position.

We aimed at discovering what kind of tacit knowledge necessary for leadership was obtained by business managers whose creativity as personality trait is higher than average. In our study of business managers we found out that individuals of high creativity do have tacit knowledge for leadership in managing others and shaping their careers. Their type of tacit knowledge provides

them with success in the future, but leaves them indiscernible from less creative leaders in issues providing success in the present.

Due to their tacit knowledge on managing others creative leaders find it easier to manage work related relationships, interact with and persuade others as well as motivate, develop, and acknowledge their colleagues and win their trust. Tacit knowledge in managing others provides them with success potential in influencing, controlling and collaborating with others.

The study indicated that if a leader has higher than average creativity more attention should be paid on developing their tacit knowledge on managing self (e.g. time planning) and managing tasks.

These results enable us to centre our efforts on developing tacit knowledge in leaders of high creativity. This means that we can focus on enhancing the success of people's activities by increasing the amount of tacit knowledge within their grasp. The present study gave us an understanding that enables us to support the development of leaders of creativity as personality trait in the direction that would help them to be successful also in the areas which are not their strengths at the given moment – to manage themselves and tasks. The results of the study demonstrate that in the latter areas creative leaders need some support. If creative leaders would have more tacit knowledge in managing self they would have better premises for self-motivation in everyday work situation so they would achieve more and organise themselves better for higher work productivity. Tacit knowledge in managing self would also help them to overcome the tendency to postpone things.

Tacit knowledge in managing tasks would change creative leaders into people who can solve particular tasks fast and well, and organise well daily tasks. Today we are in a situation in which this kind of tacit knowledge is missing in creative leaders.

Some individuals have talent for obtaining required tacit leadership knowledge faster than others. We assume that creativity as personality trait is a necessary ability that enables one to acquire some type of tacit knowledge faster than other types.

Development of tacit knowledge can take place in multiple ways. Robert J. Sternberg (1985, 1997) has presented three cognitive processes upon which acquiring tacit knowledge is based. These are selective coding (looking for and recognising relevant information that has been formerly unnoticed), selective combining (a way of conjoining information), and selective comparison (connections between former knowledge and the problem situation). Tacit knowledge is acquired in

situations in which leaders have to cope with a certain situation, to react promptly and in a suitable way.

If tacit knowledge has not been acquired by learning via experience these can be passed on to leaders in a structured form by a supervisor or a manual. This kind of knowledge is usually pre-processed for the learner and shaped into a form that makes their mediation easy. In order to pass on tacit knowledge new information should be connected to the person's former one, and relevant and concrete examples are to be used; people should be helped to interpret their former experience in the light of new one, and give feedback on their progress. In other way tacit knowledge can be taught so that learners themselves dip information out of the environment and process it further for themselves, e.g. by using self-assessment tools or applying simulations. In order to obtain tacit knowledge individuals are placed in a situation that would assist them in acquiring tacit knowledge. Since tacit knowledge is characterised as a context specific knowledge which contains information about certain situational aspects and behavioural modes it can be passed on by recounted stories. Often it is not necessary to learn tacit knowledge as such, but rather knowledge and skills needed for leaders to study from their experience more efficiently.

However, the actual first hand work experience is, probably, more effective for enhancing tacit knowledge than any other method. As our study demonstrates, first hand work experience has not shaped creative leaders tacit knowledge on managing self and tasks. On the other hand, leaders of high creativity have via personal experience obtained the majority of knowledge what to do actually in their jobs. Learning from experience is one of the defining features of tacit knowledge; it is efficient if situations are varied, challenging and offering enough feedback. Learning from experience is facilitated by formal supervision and systematic reviewing after activities. The study allows us to conclude that so far creative leaders have not paid enough attention to acquiring skills for managing self and tasks via experience, since they have not perceived the importance of this kind of tacit knowledge. Neither have they had relevant supervision and feedback that could have revealed them the need for such tacit knowledge. Experience obtained by one own is more often tied to one's personal targets. Often leaders are not aware that in order to be successful in addition to managing others and career one needs some knowledge that would help one to also manage oneself and one's tasks. It is not always fitting to think that those who solve issues well should be subordinates, and it is the leader's job to be „nasty“.

In addition to ascertaining leaders of high creativity we could also specify the level of their tacit knowledge. Our results enable us to focus all our efforts on creative leaders for developing such kind of tacit knowledge which they have not acquired by former experience. This means that we

can concentrate on enhancing activity success of creative leaders by enhancing the tacit knowledge at his disposal.

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After Bologna: Does the shift in Structure Bring Forth a Shift in Attitude? - Contribution of a Portuguese Case-study

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Abstract

With this case-study, we (i) intend to show how a semester project on creating a Multimedia CV could, to some extent, help Portuguese final-year students develop some generic competences, change their attitude towards the challenge of “How to Apply for a Job” and increase their self-marketing strategies, creativity and entrepreneurship; (ii) cannot answer the question of the paper, but (ii) intend only to raise it for further and better studies now that the Bologna design is implemented in almost all HEIs in Europe.

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1 Introduction

Ten years after the signature of the Bologna Declaration, 98% of all degrees offered in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Portugal are already structured according to its principles.

Therefore, these last 4/5 years have been really demanding for Portuguese HEIs, namely ISCAP – Institute of Accounting and Administration of Oporto, where all 5 Bachelor Programmes and 5 Master Programmes have been (re)designed, as far curricula, workloads, ECTS and other structural Bologna requirements are concerned.

One of the many objectives of the Bologna process was to “prepare students for their future careers and for life as active citizens in democratic societies, and support their personal development” (in *The official Bologna Process website 2007-2010*). Therefore, new curricula and new approaches were developed in order to switch from a teacher-centred teaching process into a student-centred learning process, focusing on acquiring competences instead of achieving learning outcomes, that would prepare graduates well for their future role in society in terms of employability and citizenship. This society is, as we know, global and in constant change, and therefore students need to develop both generic and specific competences which allow them to succeed in the labour market, as recent graduates, and allow them to go on adapting in a life-long-learning process.

2 Case-Study

2.1 Introduction

This case-study refers to a project carried out by final-year students of the Business Communication programme in ISCAP. Having been adapted after the Bolonha declaration, this is a 3-year Programme and students are to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to work in various communication and marketing fields.

Since three years now, I teach them Translation and New Technologies I and II, in English, in the 5th and 6th semesters, where they are presented to and use several language and translation tools and acquire intercultural knowledge, in order to improve their communication skills and proficiency.

Although they are final-year communication students, one of the main issues I often encounter when addressing them and presenting the syllabus and the goals they must achieve is lack of motivation and self-confidence and fear of the “difficulties” of the “unknown”. Moreover, maybe the

fact that the language of instruction is English, a foreign language, although they are already advanced students, creates also an extra strangeness factor, apart from being more demanding for them as well, both to process, understand and produce messages, which also doesn't help...

Being last-year students, one of the questions that I inevitably ask them is: "What do you expect to be/find after you graduate?". And the answer is generally revealing fear of not being hired for a job, of not being prepared for the work market (always perceived at a regional and national level), e.g, them still seem to be expecting to being offered a proposal they would like to accept but that they fear not to be possible also due to the national and international economic crisis.

This is, actually, not to be considered a fear, since it is a fact. According to the last statistics concerning the unemployment rate in Portugal, I had access to before writing this paper, the percentage of unemployed graduates had increased 27,6% between July and September 2009. Apart from the high unemployment rate amongst young graduates there is another sociological phenomenon, which was first identified in Spain, but that is also to be found in Portugal: the "mileuristas" - the thousand-euro generation: highly educated (graduates, masters, foreign languages diplomas), in their thirties, who struggle to accomplish their high expectations with low wages. But low salaries, an oversupply of graduates and social changes have forced them into low-paid jobs. In Spain, they share apartments, don't own a car or a home, and have realised their future is not going to be as bright as they thought. In Portugal, this is happening too, with a highly qualified generation earning less than 1000€ and living at their parents', most of the times.

2.2 The Problem

These facts can understandably raise some lack of hope and despair in the next generation, who is now finishing their graduate studies and will probably invest in a post-graduated programme, because they also don't know what else to do, apart from graduating, in order to have an independent life and a career.

However, this higher education qualifications should not be hindering students perspectives but helping them achieving what the Bologna declaration has stated:

"In the decade up to 2020 European higher education has a vital contribution to make in realising a Europe of knowledge that is highly creative and innovative... Europe can only succeed in this endeavour if it maximises the talents and capacities of all its citizens and fully engages in lifelong learning as well as in widening participation in higher education." (Ministers

responsible for Higher Education in the countries participating in the Bologna Process, Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué, April 2009)

Also, in the Bologna work plan 2009-2012, one of the education priorities for the next decade is, precisely, employability, here defined as *the ability to gain initial employment, to maintain employment, and to be able to move around within the labour market.*

In order to achieve this goal, the role of higher education is considered *to equip students with skills and attributes (knowledge, attitudes and behaviours) that individuals need in the workplace and that employers require, and to ensure that people have the opportunities to maintain or renew those skills and attributes throughout their working lives. At the end of a course, students will thus have an in-depth knowledge of their subject as well as generic employability skills.*

Although employability seems to be one of the main concerns of Europe and HEIs seen as one of the vehicles to achieve it, providing them with the necessary generic skills, the last unemployment rates and sociological studies on this issue, concerning young graduates, show as that there seems still to be a long way to go to accomplish the goals, namely, I would say, as far as *attitudes and behaviours* are concerned. In fact, the Bologna process has brought a shift in the learning structure, with a more student-centred and life-long approach. Nevertheless, and if the structure was hard to change and implement, it seems not to be so easy to change students' attitude and behaviour, namely before the labour market, albeit all the goals and efforts of the Bologna process in creating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

2.3 The Project

Aware of this and of the role of the HEI as a “test tube” for life, I realised that these students, always so concerned about and trained in developing effective communication and marketing plans and strategies for corporations, were lacking plans and strategies for themselves. They were absolutely not concerned about working out self-marketing strategies (to apply for a job, for instance) and were relying on a standard job application and résumé to find the first job.

Although the EHEA intends to create a common background and *easily readable and comparable degrees and fair recognition of foreign degrees and other higher education qualifications* and, therefore, has developed common tools and forms to achieve this goal, like, for instance, the Europass Curriculum Vitae, this should not be seen as a standardisation of everything. These tools

and forms can and should be used (as it is said in the Europass website), but customisation, creativity and innovation are never to be overseen.

Bearing this in mind, and aware that this would only be a small contribution to help them succeeding, I decided to challenge their self-marketing strategies, creativity and above all their attitude before the application for the first job, as a training for other situation in their future life. With this purpose, they were assigned an Individual Semester Project which consisted in the creation of a Multimedia CV in Portuguese and English (see Appendice no 1). They could develop it almost completely freely, being the only requirements to be:

- a. Video file
- b. Audio in Portuguese and subtitling in English (or vice-versa)
- c. No longer than 3/4 min.

All the contents and design were to be decided freely by the students, according to their preferences and target employers. Moreover, the Multimedia CV should be delivered in a CD, together with a brief report (2 A4 pages max.) explaining their options, selection of contents, formats, etc.

The day the assignment was presented in class, the first day of classes in the Summer Semester 2008-2009, most of the students showed lack of enthusiasm and, above all, some alarm because they didn't know what exactly they should do and how, since the instructions were very few and them though, so that they could have some idea of what they could do, but every format was allowed, as long as it respected the requisites above and could really be used in a job application.

They were given 11 weeks to develop the project, since some of the skills (namely in subtitling) had yet to be acquired and during more than half of that time anxiety and lack of enthusiasm were still in the air and they kept on trying to get more guidance on the way they should present themselves in a multimedia CV. Nevertheless, it was also always repeatedly said to them that one of the point of the assignment was exactly leading them to reflect and find the best way to advertise themselves, according to everything they had learned, trained and that could now be shown as a product to sell to future employers. But, honestly, it seemed to me that this was exactly what frightened them most at this stage: no to be able to see themselves as a "product" that needed to be advertised as an added value to a company.

So, 15 students carried out the project and presented it in class. Some really good projects have come up and overall everyone showed to have invested a lot of time in developing it and some

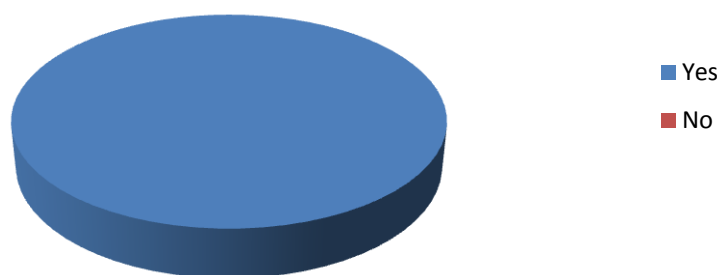
enthusiasm and self-confidence could finally be perceived in the classroom. Every student was paying attention to their classmates' CV's and expressing their opinion on the projects.

In order to assess if this task could help them finding developing new skills and change their attitude towards life and the job market, students were asked to answer a small survey, 5 months after their graduation. Ten students have answered it and results can be somewhat confusing...

3 Data Analysis

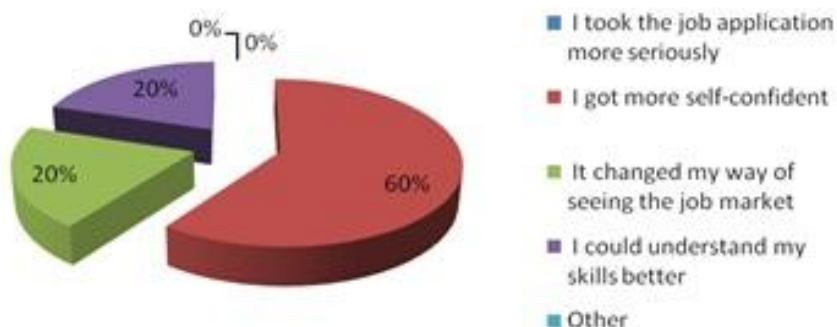
All students seemed to recognise that this assignment had made them face the job search and application in a different way, which was actually the main purpose of the task, aiming at a shift in attitude.

1. Do you think that the task "Multimedia CV" changed your attitude towards the challenge of "How to Apply for a Job"?



This was also confirmed by their answers justifying this result, since 60% declared to have increased their self-confidence and changed their perspective about the job market.

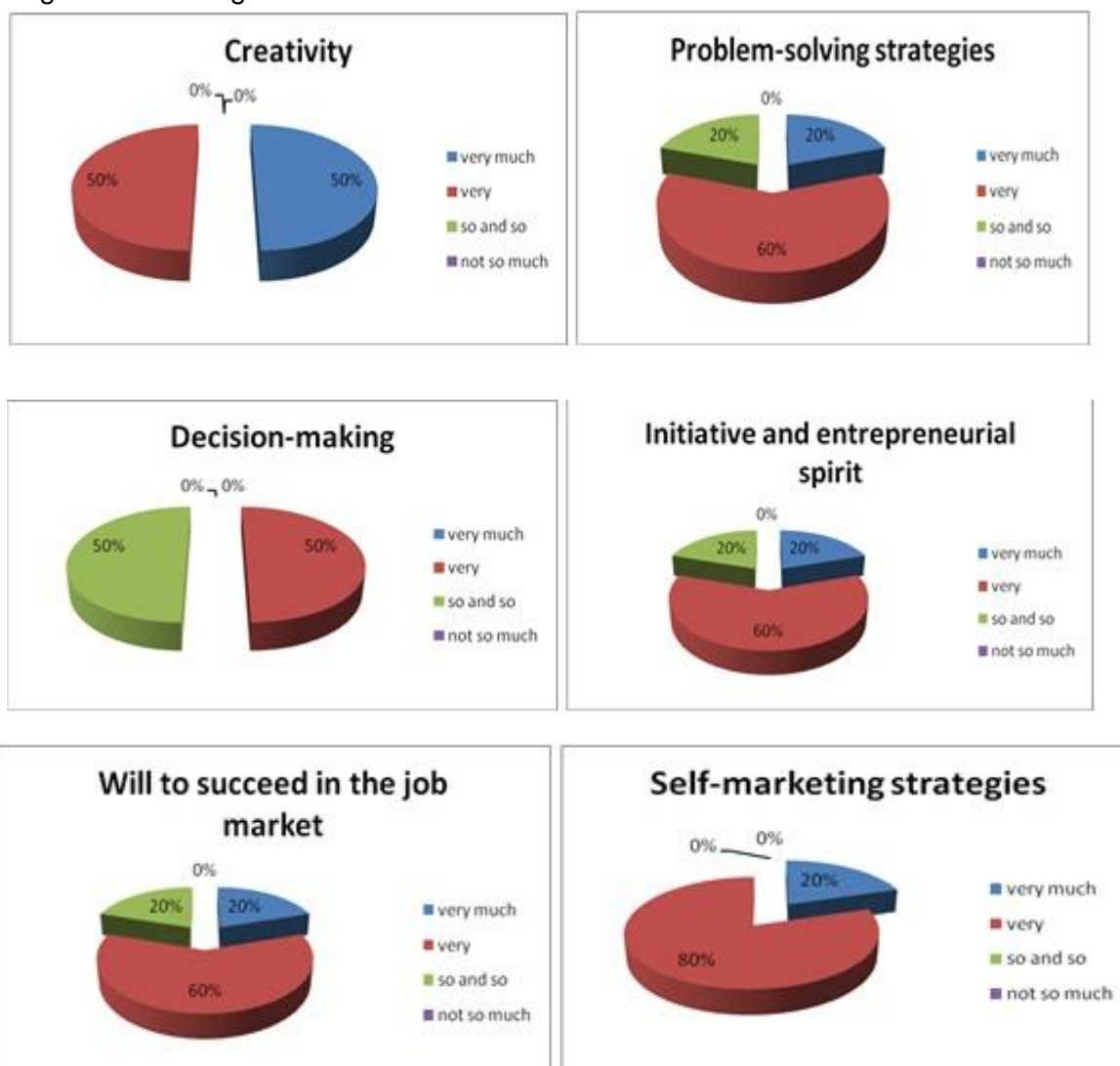
1.2 If you answered YES: To what extent?



Because no perspective or attitude can be in fact changed if you don't acquire the right skills to put it into practice, we wanted to know if the task had helped the students to get general transversal skills, such as creativity or entrepreneurship, for example. So, to the question:

2. Did the development of the Assignment “Multimedia CV” help you improve some of the following skills? To what extent?

We got the following results:

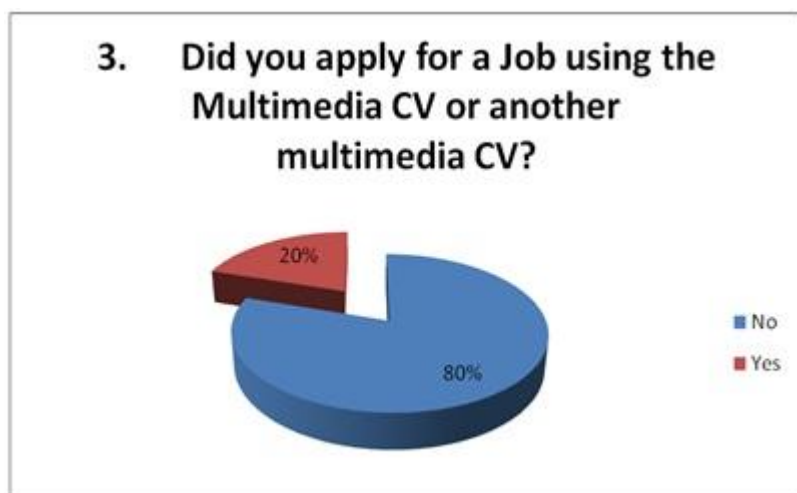


As we can see by the results, more than 50% of the students admitted to have increased their generic skills, at least the ones mentioned. When they state the reasons why they thought so, we understand that the main reason was the need to “think”ⁱ of the best strategy of promoting themselves in a serious, innovative and effective way. In fact, their answers show that after they

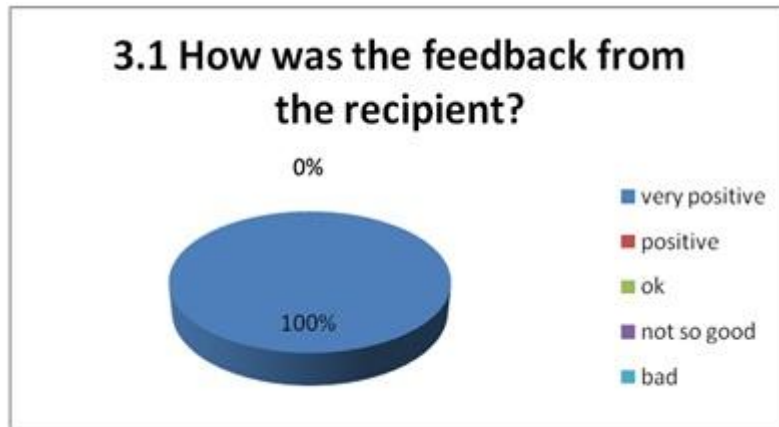
had overcome the barrier of the format (multimedia), it was in fact the demand of reflexivity and selection of the contents and information about themselves that turned the assignment in a challenging experience.

According to this data, we could conclude that the assignment had in fact accomplished its goals and that the shift in structure had, in fact, brought forth a shift in attitude, since the respondent students admitted to have changed their perspective towards a job application and the need for self-marketing and generic transversal skills, when elaborating the Multimedia CV. This CV was moreover even considered “a great help to search work in marketing and publicity”, that “could make a difference”, “a good way of distinguishing and affirming me in the labour market” and a “different way to distinguish ourselves from others and stand out in the middle of millions of CV’s”, only to give some examples.

However, when we analyse the results of the last question of the survey – “Did you apply for a job using the Multimedia CV or another multimedia CV?”-, since the survey was sent to the students 5 months after their graduation, we can conclude exactly the contrary, since only 20% were confident and entrepreneur enough to search for a job using a different form of CV, as we can see below.



However, and also maybe because the target labour market is in the communication and marketing fields, the ones who dared be different got a very good feedback and actually managed to find a job in the communication field.



4 Conclusions

This was only a trial experience - a Semester Project - which, has stated before, aimed at stimulating final-year students of communication to face the job market with a more self-assured and positive feeling.

After the presentation of the case-study, we can conclude that what at the moment of the project presentation by the lecturer caused some stress and anxiety in the students, turned out to be, in some cases, a surprisingly way of how creative and innovative students can be and brought some self-confidence and motivation to most students. Moreover, some of these students (although very few) used, as suggested, the Multimedia CVs in their job applications with success, which will certainly be a motivating element for the lecturer to go on proposing such kind of assignment.

In fact, it is my conviction that although universities role is mainly providing students a formal education, our role as educators and learning facilitating mentors is also to aid students understand the need of acquiring non-formal skills (the so-called *soft skills*), but which, together with the knowledge acquired (*hard-skills*) can enhance an applicant's or employee's profile.

Thus, the *in Bologna* HEIs and the different courses of the various Programmes need also to stimulate in students generic transversal skills – such as creativity, problem solving, decision-making, initiative and entrepreneurial spirit, and will to succeed, amongst others - that can be useful in finding the first or ideal job or in being a better European citizen and professional.

In other words, the shift in structure brought in by the Bologna Declaration, together with the particular economic and sociological moment we are now facing, must be followed by a shift in attitude and bring forth more creative and entrepreneur students able to apply to the labour market

with the attitude of a negotiator, showing what s/he has to offer, rather than of a claimant, requesting and hoping for an answer.

Nevertheless, as the results of the survey have showed, even though when students admit to have changed their attitude and acquired these skills, they tend to be cautious and less entrepreneur than they state to be. Therefore, I believe we can conclude that if the shift in structure towards the Bologna model was a hard task to do, the shift in attitude seems to be equally (or even more) difficult to accomplish, specially because it depends entirely on people...

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Appendices

1. Assignment description
2. Survey

Pan European Curriculum Development – A Challenge for Both Management and Faculty

CD MMA: the case

Max. number of participants: 20

Objective:

To share experiences from Pan European curriculum development with special focus on:

- The role of the decision makers versus teaching professors in curriculum development
- How to deal with cultural differences in joint degrees
- How to avoid protectionism of each partner when working with joint degrees?
- Realistic approaches and advices
- The role of coordinator and project manager
- EU versus national legislation – do we have any best practice in this field?

Authors

Inge Verhaegen and Luc Broes

CV

Inge Verhaegen

Education

1990-1994 Master in Modern History (KUL) - distinction

1994-1995 Complementary Studies in Management (UFSIA)

(Micro- & Macroeconomics, Mathematics, Statistics, Managerial Economics,
Marketing, Accounting, Financial Management, Organization and Management,
Computer Information Systems, MBA-seminar)

1995 Financial Sciences (UFSIA)

Work experience

- 2004- Plantijnhogeschool – Antwerpen: Professor Sales and Marketing
- 2000- Hoger Instituut der Kempen – Geel: Professor in pedagogical sciences
- 09/02- 09/03 Frontrange Account & Project Manager ITIL
- 07/96- 08/02 EVO-Soft NV Key Account Manager .

CV**Luc Broes****Education**

- 1968-1970 Bachelor in Chemistry
- 1970-1974 Master in Applied Economic Sciences
- 1974-1975 Master in Diplomatic Sciences
- 1990-1994 Diploma of librarian
- 1998-2000 Master in International Law and Relations
- 1974-1975 Assistant Social Law -university of Antwerp
- 1982-2003 Part time lecturer European Law, Labour Law and Economics: Plantijn University
College
- 2003-2005 International coordinator of the Business Management Department (Option Law,
Hotel management and Office management) Plantijn University
College

Work experience

- 1980-1990 Bell Company, Mercator Insurances, Sast Equipment
- 1990- Manager /Owner of Tref-Zeker CVBA, a marketing company
- 1999- Manager/Owner of De Wegvinder BVBA, a consultancy company
- 2000- President of FIAC, Flanders Adoption Care Centre NGO

Project experience of the authors

- 2003 Organisation of the congress in Antwerp on "Flexibility on the labour market"- "Flexicurity" In cooperation with Linklaters - Counsel and lawyer office Antwerp, Scandinavian Group Belgium and professors of 14 universities from 8 EU member and 3 non EU member countries.

Expertise in Sokrates/ERASMUS projects:

- 2004-2007 Coordinator of the intensive program: Flexem (Flexibility of employees) (involved: 6 academic + 3 professional universities)
- 2004-2005 Leonardo da Vinci: Imago.com
- 2005-2008 Coordinator of the intensive program Massme (Marketing strategies for small and medium sized enterprises) (involved 4 academic + 3 professional universities)
- 2005-2007 Initiator and co-coordinator Curriculum Development projects: lebus (Master program for International business in the EU) (involved: 5 professional universities) + Laesso(European Module program: Law and social security) (involved: 2 academic + 2 professional universities)
- 2006-2007 Leonardo da Vinci: Commas
- 2007-2010 Coordinator Curriculum Development project: MMA (Master program in Administration Management) (involved:3 academic and 2 professional universities)
- 2007-2010 Initiator and co-coordinator of the intensive programs: MnM's (Marketing and Management strategies for small and medium sized hotels) project with 4 academic and 4 professional universities) + Waspolss (Tracking new Ways for social policies and social security systems.)project with 2 academic and 2 professional universities)
- 2008-2010 Leonardo da Vinci: Partnership : Album (Active leaning in business management)

2008-2010 Initiator Curriculum Development project Espiew (European Module program: Entrepreneurial spirit in European Welfare) (involved: 6 professional universities)

Summarized Abstract

In 2007 on the initiative of the Plantijn University College in Antwerp (Belgium) a strong partnership of university colleges and academic universities started with the development of a new master program. Now almost two years later we can conclude that it was and still is quite an experience.

The new EU funded pan-European Master course (MMA) is for today's Network' professionals, who facilitate the organised creation of intellectual capital value, from innovations, problem solving and entrepreneurship. The heart of the MMA is the education to build and to co-ordinate self-directed teams and knowledge networks, which are capable of producing truly innovative products and services, to sell and to supply to the rest of the world.

The development process has been A journey with ups and downs, with light and darkness, with laughter and tears. A real challenge to be an active part of this educational process and in this workshop we will discuss our experiences with the participants

Outcome: *Participants will gain an understanding of some of the challenges you will meet when working in Pan European curriculum development projects .*

Approach

We will offer the audience a walk through our CD MMA project:

1. The project framework: an overview of its gates and stages
2. Who does what? The players
3. The proposal
4. The approval by the EACEA
5. The development
6. The trial stage: a strategy for implementation
7. The post-implementation stage

The following problems will be included in the list above: EU versus national legislation, protectionism of each partner, decision makers versus teaching professors, cultural differences

Each of these issues will start with a brief introduction followed by small group activity and a plenary discussion.

¹ This verb can be found in 70% of the statements