

## „Intercultural Communication“

„Academic Network South East Europe“ [www.academicnetwork-see.net](http://www.academicnetwork-see.net)  
(Master of Peace and Security Studies, Hamburg/Germany)

### Objectives:

The participants should become more aware of their own cultural values and of their heterogeneity. Different exercises should lead to a positive view regarding other cultures. Through the internationally diverse group the intercultural understanding of the participants should be enhanced.

### Participants:

*Dipl. Päd. Stefanie Seewald, German*

*Dr. Patricia Schneider, German*

### *MPS students:*

- |                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| 1. Angeleska, Meri        | Mazedonian |
| 2. Bandov, Goran          | Croatian   |
| 3. Belshaku, Selma        | Albanian   |
| 4. Bittasi, Elena         | Italian    |
| 5. Buzogány, Csongor Aron | Rumanian   |
| 6. Klever, Jan Philip     | Dutch      |
| 7. Niggebrügge, Julia     | American   |
| 8. Parrott, Nicholas      | British    |
| 9. Rother, Tanja          | German     |
| 10. Sachs, Hans           | German     |

### *Others:*

- |                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 11. Badeva, Rajna          | Mazedonian        |
| 12. Coli, Arben            | Kosovar/Albanian  |
| 13. Hadžić, Ermin          | Bosnian/Herzegov. |
| 14. Gratz, Dennis          | Bosnian/Herzegov. |
| 15. Mehmedbegovic, Naida   | Bosnian/Herzegov. |
| 16. Zdravkovic, Aleksandra | Serbian           |
| 17. Tesler, Ralf           | German            |
| 18. Wagner, Sabine         | German            |

**Programm: Workshop VIII (412-Vsa) MPS/DAAD WS 2004/2005**

| <b>Thursday, October 28</b> |   |  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Time</b>                 | <b>Title</b>  | <b>Speakers</b>                          |
| 10.00-10.30                 | Welcome and introduction  | Stefanie Seewald /<br>Patricia Schneider |
| 10.30-12.20                 | Simulation-exercise: „Barnga“   | Stefanie Seewald                         |
| 12.20-12.30                 | Coffee break  | -  |
| 12.30-13.00                 | Intercultural Bingo/ Communication exercise   | Stefanie Seewald                         |
| 13.00-14.00                 | Lunch   | -  |
| 14.00-15.00                 | Credit-earning # 1:<br>Discussion exercise: „ Reaching Consensus“                         | Klever, Jan Philip<br>Bittasi, Elena     |
| 15.00-15.15                 | Pause   | -  |
| 15.15-16.15                 | Credit-earning # 2:<br>Association- and Interpretation exercise: „Awareness<br>of Values“ | Niggebrügge, Julia<br>Sachs, Hans        |
| 16.15-16.40                 | Seminar talk:<br>„What is culture?“   | Stefanie Seewald                         |
| 16.40-17.00                 | Conclusion:<br>Impressions of the day   | Stefanie Seewald /<br>Patricia Schneider |

| <b>Friday, October 29</b> |   |  |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Time</b>               | <b>Title</b>  | <b>Speakers</b>                          |
| 10.00-10.15               | Icebreaker  | Stefanie Seewald /<br>Patricia Schneider |
| 10.15-11.15               | Credit-earning # 3:<br>Cross-Cultural Value Cards   | Buzogány, C. Aron<br>Parrott, Nicholas   |
| 11.15-11.30               | Coffee break  | -  |
| 11.30-12.30               | Credit-earning # 4: „Typical German? -<br>Typical...?“ – Stereotypes and Prejudices                 | Angeleska, Meri<br>Rother, Tanja         |
| 12.30-13.00               | Conflict Resolution Exercise: Pyramid   | Stefanie Seewald                         |
| 13.00-14.00               | Lunch   | -  |
| 14.00-15.00               | Credit-earning # 5:<br>Phases of Cultural Adjustment/<br>Acquisition of Intercultural Effectiveness | Belshaku, Selma<br>Bandov, Goran         |
| 15.00 – 15.15             | Coffee break  | -  |
| 15.15 – 17.15             | Dealing with Minorities:<br>„About the challenge of dividing a pumpkin“                             | Stefanie Seewald                         |
| 17.15 – 18.00             | Seminar talk:<br>Cultural standards   | Stefanie Seewald                         |
| 18.00 – 19.00             | Conclusion: Feedback and Evaluation;<br>Arrangements for the field trip to Belgrad/ Novi-Sad        | Stefanie Seewald /<br>Patricia Schneider |

## Minutes of the workshop „Intercultural Communication“

*Minute taker: Nicholas Parrott (MPS)*

**Day One, 10/28/04**

1. To begin each participant introduced themselves. The first activity was then the simulation “Barnga”. Different smaller groups each played a card game with slightly different rules, each group not knowing that to be the case. Verbal communication was forbidden. Both the winner and loser of each game would then move to another group where they would encounter new rules, without knowing that was the case. The aim of the exercise was to make the participants aware of their behaviour in such a situation and raise the question of different values in different societies and efforts to impose one’s own values. The exercise was entertaining and surprisingly enlightening.
2. After a further round of general introductions Philip Klever and Elena Bittasi led the discussion exercise, “Reaching Consensus”. The aim was to make the participants aware of subconscious ethnocentrism in everyday life and the difficulty of formulating prejudice-free statements.



With this in mind the 16 participants were split into smaller groups of four people. The aim was to modify given statements so that all the group could unconditionally agree with what they said. It was the case that participants became aware of an inherent ethnocentricity in the statements. Two of the statements came from leading politicians. Therefore, it became clear that ethnocentricity and stereotypes are common in public discussion as a populist instrument.

The modified statements were assembled on the board and results of the exercise discussed. Through this, the purpose of the exercise, to bring out ethnocentricity was fulfilled. As a conclusion, a brief animated cartoon illustrating prejudice was shown. This made the concept of stereotypes clearer still and was a funny interlude in the seminar.

3. Later in the afternoon Julia Niggebrügge and Hans Sachs organised the activity “Werte Entdecken” (Awareness of values). A collection of German proverbs were assembled on the board and the values behind them (typical German?) were determined. A discussion was then had over whether or not they do represent typical German characteristics or if they can be more generally applied. All the participants were then asked in turn what roll these values played in their own lives and cultures. Finally, the question of whether similar proverbs exist in the different cultures of the participants was discussed.

In the course of the exercise it became clear that many of the proverbs originally came from Latin, the Bible or ancient China and so therefore can not only be typically German. In addition, the values behind them were determined to be present in all societies. Further idiomatic expressions were found that demonstrated the heterogeneity of

German culture. The aim of the exercise was to become more aware of one's own culture and its predominant values. Differences and overlaps in these should then have become more evident to all. The heterogeneity of each culture should then have also been made more apparent.

4. At the end of the first day there was a short period of reflections and results from the activities brought together.

### *Day Two, 10/29/04*

1. The second day began with an exercise, "Cross Cultural Value Cards. This activity was organised by Nicholas Parrott and Aron Buzogány with the aim of ascertaining the possibility of finding consensus in a non-homogenous group, and to become aware of problems to that end. Initially, each participant was given eight 'value cards' which were statements equating to broad values. Everyone then had to exchange those with others to attain values with which they were in broad agreement, as far as possible. One problem was perhaps inevitably that there were some cards noone agreed with. Once this section was complete the large group was split into three smaller groups and chose that statement with which they most, and least, agreed. This was an opportunity for discussion in small groups. As someone had requested the previous day, we then had a period of discussion as the whole group.  
The statements that each smaller group had decided upon as most and least agreeing with were put forward to the group at large. It was striking how most of the statements were agreed with by the whole group, perhaps reflecting the broad nature of the values and the relative similarities of the group. However, at least two of the statements led to fierce debate. This then served to illustrate how in a larger group it becomes ever more difficult to agree on specifics. Overall this activity was both fun and illuminating as to what represent cross cultural values and what less so.
2. The exercise "Typisch Deutsch? Typisch Ausländer? – Stereotyp und Vorurteil" (Typical German? Typical foreigner? – stereotypes and prejudices) was organised by Tanja Rother and Meri Angeleska. Stereotypes over both groups were first determined and then put on the board. This brainstorm session resulted in a picture of Germans as: boring, organised, environmentally concerned, disciplined, uptight, unhappy, inflexible, well built cars, industrious, beer, poorly dressed. The image of foreigners was: lazy, laid-back, family orientated, taking jobs, proud, often late, ill educated, dirty, anti-social, criminal. Due to these expressions Tanja and Meri gave a definition of stereotypes and prejudices.  
In a final part of the activity the participants moved with each statement to the part of the room representing the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements. During this game, what came out of the activities was discussed and then the results as determined were written on the Flipchart.  
Finally, suggestions were made about overcoming prejudices. Travel, personal experience, meeting individuals, exchange programmes, integration and similar were suggested.
3. After the lunch break Selma Belshaku and Goran Bandov organised a session about adjusting to new cultures and acquiring cultural competence. The participants were split into two groups. One group were "Polianers", the native population of two islands in the Pacific who had had hardly any contact with the rest of the world and therefore noone is aware of their culture. They have a unique form of communication. Business is only discussed between men. Men can only speak to one another when contact through a woman by the holding of shoulders. This makes possible speech be-

tween the men. This code of speaking is the task of the other group, the “Europeans”, to crack.

In following discussion the aim and results of the game were talked about. The participants spoke of their anticipations and expectations and all commented on the important role that the development of communication played.

There was then a short presentation about the theme: “Phases of cultural adjustment”. The presentation was from the conclusions of Milton’s interpretation of the model of “Umwandlungsreise” from Ethnocentrism to Ethnorelativism in the area of adjustment and the differences in cultural attitudes. Six levels of character were described as: rejection, fending off, sidelining, acceptance, accommodation and integration.

4. On the basis of the example of the possible different uses and divisions of a pumpkin Stefanie Seewald gave a short lecture on the nature of conflict. The question was posed as to whether the article can be divided without conflict (pips, peel, flesh). Must one mean the abandonment of another? Halloween this evening and Soup next week? These questions were discussed in the context of this example.



5. Frau Seewald then spoke of culture as a system of orientation. She stressed that culture is only one factor resulting in a particular behaviour and that both personality and the situation itself also play important roles. Culture is also more than just everyday behaviour. In addition she said that stereotypes are simplification of complexity and need not be automatically negative as a basis for understanding and communication. To end, she spoke about how Germans are perceived abroad regarding culture and named the issues of time organisation, division of work and home life, and communication style.
6. To conclude we evaluated the workshop together and spoke about the imminent trip to Belgrade and Novi Sad.



