



Dr. Annette Deschner (University of Education Karlsruhe, Germany)

“CULTURESHAKE” (CUSHA) 2016 – 2019: A Short Project Presentation at ICCS & CoGREE Colloquy at Klingenthal 13/10/2016 in the Section Best Practice.

“Is all our Company here?” (Midsummer Night’s Dream Act 1, Scene 2) is the entrance to a European project with its colourful characters and timeless themes. Shakespeare’s plays have enthralled audiences for over 400 years whether as the popular entertainment of their day or the shared culture of modern times performed in dozens of languages and across the world. 2016 is the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death and the project CULTURESHAKE uses “Midsummer Night’s Dream” and “The Tempest” as a focus for an intercultural and multilingual learning project designed by Germany, Sweden, Slovenia and the UK.

It’s as you might have guessed by now not a genuine religious education project I’m going to talk about. But why then present it here today? I was asked yesterday to present the Erasmus+ project. So I just in the break today put together some ideas that could be of interest in our circle. I’m very thankful for that because it gives me the opportunity to refer to the ideas we talk about here in Klingenthal.

Yesterday during the discussions, the need to intertwine education areas so that they can interact and find mechanisms was mentioned. This is very much the case with the project “CULTURESHAKE”. One of the intellectual outputs, the online dictionary was designed in reaction to the need expressed by RE teachers to the Religionspädagogische Institut Karlsruhe (RPI Karlsruhe), the religious pedagogical institute at Karlsruhe. I will tell you later about this product but before this I want to share some details about CULTURESHAKE with you. So we can put all into context.

The duration of CULTURESHAKE is 3 years. It started last month. Within Erasmus+ it is located in the programme line KA 2 as a strategic partnership.

The transnational consortium consists of

- Germany: University of Education Karlsruhe (coordinating institution) multilingual and intercultural expertise
- Germany: Friedrich-Wöhler Gymnasium Singen, bilingual grammar school
- Great Britain: Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Stratford, archive and drama workshops for pupils

- Slovenia: Primorska University, expertise in compiling dictionaries

- Sweden: English School of Gothenburg, multilingual and multicultural setting with inclusive schooling

The fundamental goal of the project “CULTURESHAKE” (CUSHA) is to develop intellectual outputs for intercultural communication in multilingual educational settings as an open access online resource. The topics integration of refugees, inclusion and ICT – new digital competences – are dealt with reaching these goals in the intellectual outputs. Furthermore, the project is learner-centred because pupils generate multilingual and intercultural teaching material on Shakespeare for their peers and upload it on eTwinning, an EU platform for school projects. The pupils work via eTwinning and come together in 3 learning activities, one in Germany, one in Sweden and one in Stratford. In Stratford, in the archive of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, they have access to translations of Shakespeare in their mother tongues and can work with them. They also attend workshops with actors (voice training, wig making, fencing). With this experience they develop teaching material for their peers and the material is tested in secondary schools.

In the strategic framework for European cooperation in education “ET 2020” linguistic competence is seen as one of the key competences to promote mobility within Europe.

ET 2020 stands for Education and Training with milestones which should be reached by the year 2020. Strategies and goals are named for this in ET2020. It very much focuses on IT and employability. Education is seen as a tool for employability. This attitude towards education was criticised yesterday in our sessions. ET 2020 was opened for the humanities last year to improve the strategies.

Now back to our project CULTURESHAKE.

There is a lack of teaching material bridging the gap between theory and practice in the field of linguistic and cultural diversity. Latest theories of intercultural learning or transcultural approaches have not been considered broadly for teaching in schools yet. CULTURESHAKE is innovative in bridging gaps between theory and practice as well as in incorporating integrative multilingual didactics in the teaching material that is to be designed as open source material online. Concepts for the development of peer teaching material, multilingual cultural sensitive school exchanges, multilingual online dictionaries or multilingual theatre methods are designed and in a next step also hands on activities for the classroom based on these concepts are provided. All the above mentioned concepts are created for inclusive schooling as well as integrating refugees e.g. from world classes into regular classes.

This morning in the talk about inclusion and RE we heard that drama deals with values and that drama is a big resource in education and religious education. So CULTURESHAKE may contribute to this, because refugees, pupils with and without migrant background encounter Shakespearean conflicts and themes like friendship or estrangement, the self and the other in “The Tempest” and “Midsummer Night’s Dream”.

An approach from literature didactics is used here: pupils don’t talk about their own experience but talk about the characters in the play and so can step by step open up if they like and take down the masks in their roles when they are ready to – when they are ready for the other and the self.

With regard to “ET 2020” and the “European Language Action Plan” an essential aim in CULTURESHAKE is to raise awareness of everyone’s inward plurilingualism in contact with other plurilingual speakers to foster language learning for a mobile Europe.

Objectives in CULTURESHAKE are:

- promote foreign language learning, cultural awareness
- promote multilingualism and the use of mother tongues
- enhance digital learning
- develop the European dimension in education particularly through the multilingual focus
- use the transnational expertise of the project members
- encourage the best use of results, innovative products and processes
- produce sustainable development of cooperation between the partner countries and institutions in the field of education

The project is to develop innovative teaching methods based on cultural theories, theatre pedagogy and integrative multilingual didactics. Approaches socializing into a national culture frame are to be shaken. So Shaking – bringing into a different context, de- and recontextualize is a guiding principle in CULTURESHAKE. We refer to Terry Eagleton’s “Hybrid Cultures” as one theoretical resource. The idea is to shake monolithic constructions of culture like national cultures, open up container cultures and work on a hybrid, transcultural maybe even translingual setting.

Topics

- Inclusion and equity (we focus on language in this area what to us also means personal development and social inclusion because it opens up participation in society)
- ICT – new technologies and new digital competences (we use eTwinning for pupils and compile a multilingual online dictionary)
- Integration of refugees (first we thought about migrant language and then there was this huge wave of refugees in 2015. The situation in Germany was and is, when you talk to teachers, that they desperately look for teaching material or at least ways to deal with refugee pupils in the classroom).

Priorities

- Inclusive education
- Open and innovative education embedded in the digital era
- Addressing underachievement in the basic skills of literacy through more effective, innovative teaching methods

Options for Stakeholder Involvement

- Critical friend (e.g. assessment procedure in webinars)
- Use and/or implementation of project products
- Participant of multiplier events

We will provide the following open Access Products

- Multilingual online dictionary on Shakespeare
- Multilingual peer teaching units on Shakespeare (developed by pupils with different mother tongues for peers)
- Method guide for teachers “Shakespeare in the 21st Century Classroom”
- Manual for teachers “Exchanging Culture Shakes: A Teacher Manual for Multilingual and Transcultural School Exchanges”

In the following I'd like to focus on the multilingual online dictionary on Shakespeare because it was developed with the input of the Religious Pedagogical Institute at Karlsruhe, because they told us about the needs of religious education teachers. The cooperation with the RPI on language other than the school language and RE started about 10 years ago. The national context in Germany:

We (RPI and PH) started to work on bilingual religious education with focus on English or French as working language. But classroom reality is different there are many languages. So we started to discuss multilingual religious education. And now after the refugee wave in 2015 the language mix and variety in German schools and also religious education has become crucial. RE now partially has become the place for refugees. With the online dictionary CULTURESHAKE wants to provide a tool to make schools not only a place where refugees are, but create a mutual space:

How can we promote a lived space with language awareness in RE?:

In our project CULTURESHAKE pupils make their own dictionary entries in their mother tongues. This means that there are entries of the same term in the national or school language they are exposed to and the many other tongues and mother tongues in the classroom. So this supports the European idea of maintaining language variety. For RE this means that each pupil has the chance to develop their faith binding back to traditions of faith in their families. With the reference to their mother tongues and using their mother tongues pupils refer to the religious concepts they were familiarized with in their families. With language scaffolding techniques like making a dictionary entry in the mother tongue as well as in the school language and negotiate about this with the other pupils with other mother tongues enables pupils to build up religious concepts in both languages and none is left behind. This multilingual approach is based on scholars like Cummins and Butzkamm, who

developed an approach for a bilingual setting. We also refer to Adelaide Hu who speaks about lived multilingualism. In contrast to Chomsky's idea of the nativelike speaker, the intercultural speaker (Hu) communicates with the language but this does not necessarily mean to have a C2 level. This matches with the integrative multilingual approach in CULTURESHAKE. It is not about learning languages additively: one perfectly and a bit later on language two and so on and so forth, but to take part in a vivid multilingual community and share concepts of faith. By using all these languages pupils can refer to all their underlying proficiencies language and contentwise.

I think it is a way to enable pupils to develop their faith acquired in the family alongside a linguistic proficiency and academic learning at school. So they don't have to give up their family traditions and can participate in an interreligious dialogue at the same time.

Now, what about alphabets and a dictionary?

We developed this intellectual output because of the need of religious education teachers we came across. They ask what we can do if pupils with a refugee background can't read and write in secondary school and don't speak the school language. The idea in CULTURESHAKE is to involve images and audio files in the dictionary. Thus also alphabets can participate in this tool and it is not done for them but with them to empower them.

At the end I want to summarize how RE can benefit from CULTURESHAKE?

Two products can be used in RE – we develop them in accordance with one of our stakeholders, the religious pedagogical institute Karlsruhe, I mentioned before:

- a) Integrative multilingual drama teaching material on conflict and The Other
- b) The multilingual online dictionary including audio files and images. This tool can be adapted to RE.

With our project CULTURESHAKE we want to make a contribution to the Paris Declaration of Tolerance. This document supports diversity and inclusive education. This was a response to the terror attacks and the EU ministers of education released the Paris Declaration of Tolerance in 2015.

Thus the European vision is fostered maybe through Shakespeare and his Midsummer Night's Dream:

“So we grow together, Like to a double cherry, seeming parted, But yet an union in partition”
(Midsummer Night's Dream Act 3, Scene 2).