

Stephanie Lerke

# Intercultural Learning in Summer Schools in Higher Education – A case study on the International Summer School of the Department of Protestant Theology at Paderborn University

## Zusammenfassung

Obwohl gängige Veranstaltungsformate wie Seminare, Vorlesungen etc. heutzutage im Hinblick auf die hochschuldidaktische Relevanz gut erforscht und definiert sind, trifft dies auf das international beliebte Veranstaltungsformat Summer School nicht zu. Der vorliegende Artikel versucht sich mithilfe der bisherigen raren Literaturgrundlage zu Summer Schools der historischen Entwicklung sowie einer allgemeinen Begriffsdefinition anzunähern, um daraus und durch die auf der interkulturellen Lernmethode (Intercultural Anchored Inquiry (IAI) nach Kammhuber (2010)) basierenden und bereits durchgeführten drei Summer Schools des Instituts der Evangelischen Theologie der Universität Paderborn eine eigene Summer School Definition für dieses Institut zu generieren.

## Schlüsselwörter

Summer School, Sommerakademie, Summer School Definition, Interkulturelles Lernen, Ökumenische Kompetenz

## Abstract

Although common event formats such as seminars, lectures etc. are nowadays well researched and defined scientifically with regard to their relevance for higher education, this statement does not apply to the internationally popular event format Summer School. With help of the rare literature on Summer Schools, this article attempts to approach the historical development and a definition of that term. From this theoretical approach and from the three previous Summer Schools of the Department of Protestant Theology at Paderborn University based on the Intercultural Anchored Inquiry (IAI) according to Kammhuber (2010), a separate Summer School definition is to be generated for that Department.

## Keywords

Summer School, Summer Academy, Summer School Definition, Intercultural learning, ecumenical competence

## 1 Introduction

In the summer semester 2019 the third International Summer School took place at Paderborn University (UPB) from 17<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2019. During this event teachers and students from all Erasmus+ partnerships of the Department of Protestant Theology of the UPB met in Paderborn and sat down together for one week with the topic “*Formation of Faith and Trust. The 37th DEKT<sup>1</sup> as Space of Religious Education*”. But what exactly is a Summer School? Particularly in German University context, (international) Summer Schools have become an established part of higher education, the aim of which is, among other things, to ensure a professional and intercultural education and consequently an international exchange (cf. DAAD, n.d.). After three Summer Schools of the Department of Protestant Theology at UPB, there is now the opportunity to reflect on the format. Since there are no empirical studies on Summer Schools for higher education, no valid statements can be made about the increase in competence. Neither it is difficult to compare the concept “Summer School” to other higher education formats like seminars etc. This is a task for future higher education didactic research. The present work was developed within the framework of the Scholarship of Teaching in Learning (SoTL), where it is typologically located in the field of didactic discussion. The latter represents a review and discussion of didactic approaches and findings in the literature on a specific topic. For example, this literature can come from the field of university didactics or from one’s own subject area (cf. Huber, 2014, p. 9ff.). The following research mainly deals with literature from psychology and religious education. The selected research literature will be methodically and exploratively surveyed with the help of document analysis in order to approach the topic. Based on this theoretical basis, an overview of the Summer School development will be given and a suitable working definition for the event form Summer School will be generated. Subsequently, the concept of the third Paderborn International Summer School “*Formation of Faith and Trust. The 37th DEKT as Space of Religious Education*”, which is based on the Intercultural Anchored Inquiry (IAI) according to Kammhuber (2010), will be presented and a specific definition for this Summer School format will be created.

## 2 Summer School

The term *Summer School*, also called *Summer Academy* (*Sommerschule* or *Sommerakademie* in German), is “well-known” and widespread today. Although this event format enjoys great international popularity, a scientific literature on its emergence and definition is very rare, especially in German-speaking countries – with the exception of Salland. On the other hand, over the years it has repeatedly been a topic in English-speaking (American) regions, especially in Amerika. In addition to Ascher (1988), Austin, Rogers & Wallbesser (1972), Conant (1959) and Dougherty (1981) – to name but a few – Cooper et al. (2000) in particular have dealt extensively with the development of Summer Schools and the examination of their functions as well as their effects on participants. However, they do not give a

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<sup>1</sup> DEKT is the German abbreviation for *Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag* and means in English *German Protestant Church Convention*. It takes place every two years for five days in another German city. During this time, over 100,000 people of all ages, religions and backgrounds come together to celebrate a festival of faith and to reflect and discuss the issues of the time. In 2019 it took place in Dortmund (cf. DEKT, n.d.).

definition. For this reason, this paper will first try to approach the term by considering the history of its origin in order to generate a working definition.<sup>2</sup>

## 2.1 History of Summer Schools

According to Cooper et al. (2000), the beginning of Summer Schools in America goes back to the 19th century. At that time, it was not unusual for American children living in the countryside to help out on their farms in the summer and for urban children to “attend school for at least 2 of summer’s 3 months” (Cooper et al., 2000, p. 1). It was not until the 20th century that the situation changed. With the shift of the economic situation from agriculture to industry (cf. Cooper, 2012, p. 6), the onset of family mobility and the implementation of standardized school curricula<sup>3</sup> (some of which were based on German school curricula)<sup>4</sup>, there was no school during the summer for the first time. Consequently, there was enough time for children of school-age to work during the school holidays and earn some extra money. The children who did not do so gave cause for concern. But when the first child labor law was passed in 1916, many of them had little to nothing to do during their summer holidays. For this reason, communities demanded recreational activities for the pupils, so that they could be occupied during the school holidays and consequently cared for. The demand did not go unheard for long and the first summer programs were created. Although at the beginning the focus was on recreational fun and recovery from everyday school life, the educators saw an opportunity in using that special time effectively “to increase students’ interest in lifelong learning” (Cooper et al., 2000, p. 1). Nowadays the offer and the associated aims of such Summer Schools go far beyond the purely organized leisure activities of pupils during their summer holidays (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 1, Dougherty, 1981).

What was used in the 1950s to prevent the delinquent behavior of pupils who spent their free time on the streets during the summer, remains a latent function of Summer Schools to this day. The reason for this was that wealthy families could pay and provide tutors for their children during the summer holidays and that children from disadvantaged backgrounds had to be offered an alternative. For this reason, Summer Schools were developed for these children as a pedagogical means in order to give them the opportunity to avoid or remedy their learning deficits. Another goal related to this is that thereby pupils “build a positive attitude towards themselves and learn to reduce the chances of anti-social behaviors in the future” (Cooper et al., 2000, p. 4). Cooper et al. divide these Summer School programs into four categories<sup>5</sup> to address learning deficits (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 4, Ascher, 1988, Austin, Rogers & Walbesser, 1972, p. 171ff.):

*Minimum competency requirements to achieve a degree.* In order to get a high school degree, most states in the USA have set minimum competence standards. If a student does

<sup>2</sup> How the event format developed in other English-speaking countries requires a detailed investigation, which would go beyond the scope of this article. Therefore, based on the literature available so far, only the American and German development of this term will be discussed in this paper.

<sup>3</sup> These school curricula only were approved in the 1980s (cf. Mintrop, 2007, p. 64).

<sup>4</sup> For example, the German subject “history” was regarded as a model in the USA (cf. Naumann, 2012, p. 186ff.).

<sup>5</sup> The headings for the four categories are independent and formulated according to the text by Cooper et al., 2000, p. 4ff. and Cooper, 2012, p. 6ff.

not meet these requirements, Summer Schools can provide a good opportunity to develop or enhance the specific skills required to achieve the degree through intensive teaching (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 4, Ascher, 1988, p. 3). One example is the Summer Bridge Program at Chicago public schools. This program

has a policy that establishes district-wide standards of promotion for students completing third, sixth, and eighth grades. If students do not meet minimum grade-equivalent reading and math scores, report card grades, and attendance criteria, they are either retained or must attend the Summer Bridge Program [...]. (Cooper, 2012, p. 7).

*Repetition.* As in the previous category, this one is also concerned with school matters, namely repeating failed courses from the regular school year. Usually, this special form of Summer School is mostly used at secondary level while elementary school students are only allowed to participate in such a Summer School if they are recommended or obliged to do so. However, participation is only permitted if the students' promotion to the next grade depends on it (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 4).

*Free and appropriate education for students with disabilities.* With the development of the disability rights movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the public education of pupils with disabilities also became the focus of attention (cf. Eiesland, 2018, p. 65). Before 1975 the complete exclusion of children with disabilities from public school was rather common. “[A]pproximately 1 million children with disabilities were excluded entirely from public education, and more than half of all children with disabilities did not receive appropriate educational services.” (Cooper et al., 2000, p. 4). But this miserable access to public education was to be improved by some laws initiated by the disability rights movement. In addition to the right to remove structural barriers in state-sponsored buildings (“Architectural Barriers Act” of 1968) and the right of access to state-sponsored programs (Section 504 of the “Rehabilitation Act” of 1973) (cf. Eiesland, 2018, p. 65), the “Education for All Handicapped Children Act” (EHA; P.L. 94-142) of 1975 – which was again passed in 1997 as the “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act” (IDEA; P.L. 94-142) (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 4) – guaranteed children with disabilities “free and adequate public education [...], regardless of the nature of their disability and in an environment with as few restrictions as possible.” (Eiesland, 2018, p. 65, my translation). A further decision was taken in 1979. It was assumed that the summer holidays and the accompanying educational break would lead to a decline in the skills of IDEA students with disabilities. As a result, the United States District Court ruled that the Pennsylvania Department of Education had to develop and provide a school-based and government-financed program for the holidays. This was to enable students with disabilities to maintain their individual educational progress beyond the regular school year without additional financial costs (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 5).

*Closing the gap between rich and poor.* With the enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA; P.L. 89-10) of 1965, the education system was to be further reformed by additional funds and education programs. According to Title I, this was to benefit in particular educationally disadvantaged pupils from low-income families who lived in poor areas or were themselves affected by poverty. The aim was to break the cycle of poverty. In 1994 ESEA was re-approved with the title “Improving America’s Schools Act” (IASA; P.L. 103-382). This added another objective, namely the continuous closing of the performance gap between rich and poor (cf. Stedman, 1994, p. 8ff.). To enable each child to reach

high standards (Section 1001 (b) (4)) (cf. Congress.gov, 1993), Section 1001 (c) (4) states that resources should be used “to ensure that children have full access to effective high-quality regular school programs and receive supplemental help through extended-time activities” (Congress.gov, 1993, cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 5). This has led to the implementation of summer education programs for these disadvantaged children (cf. Cooper, 2012, p. 7).

According to Cooper, such Summer School programs to remedy learning deficits have become even more important today. He comes to this conclusion on the basis of research results from a meta-analysis carried out by him and his team on the summer learning deficit. Using 39 existing studies, 13 of which could be used for a statistical synthesis, an attempt was made to find out to what extent the summer holidays affected the results of proficiency tests.

Their meta-analysis indicated that the summer learning loss equaled at least one month of instruction. On average, the children’s test scores were at least 1 month lower when they return to school in fall than scores were when students left in the spring. (Cooper et al., 2000, p. 6).

However, the impact of learning loss on the various competences acquired in school (such as reading, mathematical knowledge, spelling, etc.) varied considerably. It was assumed that the family economy was a key factor. For example,

[t]he meta-analysis revealed that all students, regardless of the resources in their home, lost roughly equal amounts of math skills over the summer. Substantial economics’ differences were found for reading, however. On some measures, middle-class children actually showed gains in reading achievement over summer, but disadvantaged children showed losses. Reading comprehension scores for both income groups declined, but disadvantaged students’ scores declined more. (Cooper, 2012, p. 5).

Cooper therefore proposes, among other things, to continue the use of Summer School programs to compensate for the learning deficits that arise during summer holidays, partly due to the social imbalance (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 6, Cooper, 2012, p. 4f.).<sup>6</sup>

However, the focus of Summer Schools over time should not be restricted to remedying pupils’ learning deficits. In addition to the support measures mentioned above, CONANT pointed out in 1959 that education committees should also provide educational opportunities to other pupils during the summer holidays “who needed more flexible course schedules or sought enriched educational experiences.” (Cooper, 2012, p. 7). He recognized the possibility that students who could not attend certain courses during the regular school day due to their strong involvement with extracurricular activities or the completion of internships could still attend and complete these courses with a Summer School program. At the same time, Summer Schools could reduce the students’ academic burden “without delaying their graduation.” (Cooper, 2012, p. 7). Similarly, through the Summer School programs, the acquisition of an earlier degree would be possible by accelerating the accumulation of credits. Considering the constantly growing population and the baby boom in the following years, schools used the event format as alternative option (cf. Cooper et. al., 2000, p. 5f.).

<sup>6</sup> Further results of Coopers meta-analysis can be found there.

Although the event format was initially designed primarily for schools, it also found its way into the university context. But here they were also addressed towards school pupils. For example, special Summer School programs can be found that are designed “for students with academic gifts or other talents” (Cooper, 2012, p. 8). These summer programs offer them advanced training on specific topics that goes beyond the normal school curriculum. Even though some schools offer Summer Schools for gifted students themselves, which are thematically oriented on university curricula, there is the option that Summer Schools for advanced education take place at universities. However, these courses usually entail costs that are borne either by the students themselves or by scholarships (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 6, Cooper, 2012, p. 8).

One last advantage that Cooper lists has nothing to do with the participants themselves but considers teachers. In my opinion, it could rather be understood as a positive side effect of Summer Schools. This event format offers them the opportunity to increase their income by teaching during the holidays – which are actually intended for recreation from everyday school life – and to independently challenge and promote their professional and technical skills through teaching (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 6, Cooper, 2012, p. 8).

Although Cooper lists numerous Summer School variants, there is another variant in the university context: Summer Schools which are offered to students by universities. Their function is similar to Summer Schools in the school context. It is possible to catch up on courses from different departments and thus achieve credit points that could not be acquired during the semester. These courses cannot only be attended by domestic students, but also by students from abroad. Especially for the second group of students, it is an ideal opportunity to get to know studying abroad or to complete a compressed semester abroad. Due to the time frame of a few weeks and the respective workload (compulsory attendance, excursions if necessary, regular homework as well as performance tests in the form of essays and exams), usually only two to three courses can be taken. At the end of the Summer School, participants will be handed grade reports, which they can present to their respective university for crediting (cf. College Contact, n.d., Naue, 2014).

According to the literature available so far, German Summer Schools developed in a way that was different from American ones. Instead of being embedded in a school context, they evolved out of various contexts (e.g. book trade, politics, art, university etc.). Suggestions for the concept came from abroad. However, it should be noted at this point that comprehensive research is still needed on the historical development of Summer Schools in Germany. Therefore, only two of the contexts mentioned are paradigmatically dealt with.

*Book trade.* An example for this context is the Summer Academy of Eugen Diederich in 1923. His summer academies of the young book trade were oriented towards the university summer courses, the summer academies of the Fabian Society<sup>7</sup> and Friedrich Naumann’s

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<sup>7</sup> The British socialist intellectual society Fabian Society did not only write books and deliver speeches, but also hosted “‘Sommerakademien’ to socialize with each other. Lectures were given, sports were practiced and industrial facilities were visited.” (Viehöfer, 1988, p. 70, my translation). In this context, the title of a newspaper article referred to a “summer school” instead of a “summer academy” (cf. Viehöfer, 1988, p. 70).

planned but not implemented political Summer Academy<sup>8</sup>. He linked different aspects of the a) Fabian movement, with the b) youth movement and the c) adult education movement and developed his own Summer Academy concept. In a) a sociable setting outside the city, the participants should be given the opportunity to engage in sports, b) to live in the spirit of the youth movement (e.g. hiking, singing folk songs, communication on first name terms, co-determination at events, etc.) and c) to exchange ideas on a professional level (e.g. professional and interdisciplinary lectures, working groups, round table discussions, etc.) (cf. Viehöfer, 1988, p. 70ff.).

*Artistic context.* In its beginnings, this form of event represented a teaching model that distinguished itself from those of the classical art academies and thus served as a kind of counter-model. Without “entrance examinations and admission criteria such as gender, age and nationality as well as specific style and motive requirements” (Salland, 2016, p. 31, my translation) and without the conduct of examinations, for a period of a few weeks all those interested in art (i.e. without classification into beginners and advanced or according to origin) were given the opportunity to gain various experiences in the artistic field (cf. Salland, 2016, p. 31). An example of such an art Summer Academy in Europe took place in the summer of 1953. The International Summer Academy for Fine Arts – also called the “School of Vision” – founded by the artist Oskar Kokoschka at Hohensalzburg Fortress, was based on alternative models to traditional art academies. He had come to know these models during his stay in the USA where he had escaped to having been classified a “degenerate artist” by the Nazis (cf. Wally, 1993, p. 5ff.). By means of an interdisciplinary program (architecture, sculpture, art history, lithography and painting) and a variety of methods (such as practical work, classroom discussions and round-table discussions), a participatory teaching structure was created which focused on the development of personality and the associated competences (cf. Salland, 2016, p. 32, Wally, 1993, p. 20ff.).

Nowadays, like in America, there also exists a variety of Summer Schools in the German-speaking area like in United States. Based on the positive effects of Summer Schools on the participants<sup>9</sup> and Cooper’s findings, it can be assumed that the demand for such Summer Schools will continually increase due to the structural changes within families, the demand for a globally competitive higher education as well as the associated definition of high educational standards and competence acquisition (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, p. 7ff.). The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) agrees on this statement with regard to the university context:

In the last 15 years, Summer Schools have become an important and fixed part of the teaching program at every German university. Particularly in times of strong competition on the international education market and tighter curricula, the demand for and importance of this teaching format have increased significantly. In this context, German universities are increasingly using this format as a simple and at the same time very effective instrument to sharpen their profile in national and international competition. (DAAD, 2018, p. 4, my translation).

<sup>8</sup> The Summer Academy was to take place in August 1914 in Amorbach with the theme: *Wie weit ist Liberalismus gesellschaftstragendes Prinzip?* But the outbreak of the First World War prevented its implementation (cf. Viehöfer, 1988, p. 70).

<sup>9</sup> The positive effects have been elaborated and described in detail by Cooper and also by Hattie (cf. Cooper et al., 2000, Cooper, 2012, Hattie, 2015).

DAAD “is the world’s largest funding organisation for the international exchange of students and researches” (DAAD, n.d.), which has been funding Summer Schools since the 1980s. The academic predecessors of the program framework for Summer Schools in Germany and abroad were Summer Academies funded by the Federal Foreign Office (AA) in the early 2000s and Summer Schools funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). In addition to funding, the aim was, and still is, to offer participants further professional training in current areas of research. In 2013, the content of the aim was revised, and further aims were added:

In addition to high-quality further education, cultural exchange and insight into teaching and research methods, the focus from now on was on attracting qualified students and doctoral candidates and on establishing German universities on the international education market. (DAAD, 2018, p. 5, my translation).

Today’s enormous number of academic Summer School offers at home and abroad – for example on the internet – confirms the assumption of Cooper and DAAD that the Summer School event format has already established itself with regard to the university context and will continue to be highly topical in international higher education.

## 2.2 Definition

The term “Summer School” (in the USA also called “Summer Sessions/ Summer University/ Summer College/ Summer Courses” or in German “Sommerakademie/Sommerschule”) is generally neither clearly defined nor protected (cf. Salland, 2016, p. 32, College Contact, n.d.). Exceptions to this are definitions that are individually tailored to the respective specialist context, such as in systems medicine. The “Interdisciplinary Summer School in Systems Medicine” is defined as follows according to the BMBF:

Summer Schools are defined here as workshops lasting several days in which junior researchers are given the opportunity to gain further qualifications in the new, interdisciplinary field of system medicine through training, seminars, intensive professional exchange and interdisciplinary networking. Researchers from various disciplines can participate in the Summer Schools during or after their doctorate. The aim of the Summer Schools is to promote rapprochement between the various disciplines and to provide participants with additional qualifications for scientific work in the field of systems medicine. Summer Schools can be held in cooperation with foreign European institutions. Part of the course can take place at a foreign institution. (BMBF, 2016, n.p., my translation).

Summer Schools are generally an internationally widespread and popular event format in the field of education, which is “framed by various attributions of meaning and forms of organization” (Salland, 2016, p. 32, my translation). The name of the event format already indicates the time of the event. Although the original purpose of the summer holidays was primarily to relax, over the years it has become possible to use this special time effectively in the field of education – namely in the form of Summer Schools (cf. 2.1 History of Summer Schools). Although interested parties are offered an additional educational opportunity mainly in the season, in which there are only very few events, there are also Winter, Spring School and Autumn/Fall Schools.<sup>10</sup> The time frame of a Summer

<sup>10</sup> An example for variants can be found at: cf. (DGfS) (n.d.), Hochschule Düsseldorf. University of Applied Sciences (2019), Paderborn University (2017), ZSB (n.d.).

School can also vary greatly. From a few days to several weeks, a heterogeneous group of participants is offered an intensive discussion of a selected scientific topic. The Summer School can serve different purposes for the participants. It can be used both privately and professionally for further training or further education as well as for a qualified degree<sup>11</sup> in the respective subject area. Accordingly, its didactic design, the group of recipients and the associated educational standards vary, as the examples already mentioned show (cf. 2.1 History of Summer Schools). The implementation of a Summer School is not solely the responsibility of the professorial level, but can also be practiced by teachers, lecturers, trainers or other personnel with specialist and didactic qualifications (cf. Salland, 2016, p. 10ff.). In the university context, it is an already established event format with the aim of ensuring a high-quality, specialist further education with cultural exchange and providing an insight into teaching and research methods, attracting qualified students and doctoral candidates as well as positioning the German higher education system on the international education market. The program framework may vary from Summer School to Summer School. However, the question arises as to what extent this format differs from other higher education formats such as seminars/block seminars, lectures, conferences and excursions? Does it promote some competences such as intercultural competence more than others? At the present time the field remains widely unexplored and therefore requires intensive higher education research in the future.

The diversity of this term and the lack of scientific literature make it clear why there is still no uniform definition and why the phenomenon must therefore be defined individually in relation to the respective context.

### 3 International Summer School of the Department of Protestant Theology at Paderborn University

In the following chapter, an attempt will be made, on the theoretical basis of the previous chapters, to create a specially tailored Summer School definition for the Department of Protestant Theology of the UPB by examining of the International Summer Schools, which so far have been carried out of this department.

#### 3.1 History of the International Summer Schools of the Department of Protestant Theology at Paderborn University

International Summer Schools of the Department of Protestant Theology at the UPB do not exist for very long, as the number of Summer Schools carried out testifies<sup>12</sup>. With the expansion of the Erasmus+ partnerships of the Department the first international Summer School “*Teaching Religion in a Multicultural Context*” was conceptualized. It took place from 25-29 September 2017 in Thessaloniki, Greece, was planned and carried out in cooperation with the Greek Erasmus+ partnership (Aristotle University) and sponsored by Aristotle

<sup>11</sup> An example of such a qualified degree is the language course, where at the end, after passing the exam, you can obtain a certificate such as Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), etc. (cf. Harvard University, n.d.).

<sup>12</sup> The Summer School Programs served as a basis for the history of the Summer Schools of the Department of Protestant Theology at UPB.

University, Paderborn University, the Protestant Church of Westphalia and the Protestant Fellowship of Westphalia and Lippe. Participants were two lecturers and ten students from Paderborn as well as four lecturers and also ten students from Greece. Due to the heterogeneity of the participants (with regard to gender, age, denomination and nationality) it was agreed that all teaching was to be conducted in English. The first day was marked by an international conference in which the lecturers introduced the participants to the topic through presentations. Following each lecture, the participants were invited to an open discussion. In contrast to the previous day, the second day was organized from a student perspective in form of a seminar. The students of both universities introduced the thematic focuses of their city, university and country. The remaining days were devoted to the topic: fieldwork, where the entire group of participants made excursions to special places (e.g. Intercultural School Thessaloniki, Museum of Vergina, etc.) and worked on the Summer School topic in this context (cf. Paderborn University/ Aristoteles University of Thessaloniki, Summer School Program. Biblical Texts in Religious Education).

The second international Summer School with the topic: “*Biblical Texts in Religious Education*” took place from 22-27 May 2018 again in Thessaloniki, Greece. It was also planned in cooperation with the Greek Erasmus+ partnership (Aristotle University), conducted in English and sponsored by the same institutions (cf. First Summer School 2017). This time the group of participants was balanced both with regard to lecturers (three each from Paderborn and Thessaloniki) and students (ten each from Paderborn and Thessaloniki). The structure of the previous Summer School was also taken up but was thematically adapted with regard to the Summer School topic and thus new experiences could be made (cf. Paderborn University/ Aristoteles University of Thessaloniki, Summer School Program. Teaching Religion in a Multicultural Context).

The third International Summer School “*Formation of Faith and Trust. The 37th DEKT as Space of Religious Education*” differed from its predecessors in many ways. Although the teaching language was again English, it took place for the first time in Paderborn, Germany from 17-23 June 2019. It was supported by the Protestant Church of Westphalia, Paderborn University and the Protestant Fellowship of Westphalia and Lippe. In contrast to the previous Summer Schools, this one was further opened internationally by including the other Erasmus+ partnerships of the Department of Protestant Theology. Not only six Paderborn students of Protestant theology took part, but also six students each from Greece (Aristotle University Thessaloniki, Faculty of Theology, School of Theology), Romania (Lucian Blaga University Sibiu, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, Department of History, Heritage and Protestant Theology) and Italy (Valdensian Faculty of Theology). The group was very heterogeneous in that students not only came from various countries with different cultural or denominational backgrounds, but also from different degrees (theology for teaching or church service). The same applied to the lecturers. Another parallel can be found in the continuous topic *Religious Education* of all Summer Schools. The topic “*Formation of Faith and Trust*” was already a partial aspect of the lecture by Harald Schroeter-Wittke from the first International Summer School in 2017. Thus, the topics are connected with each other again. The structure was also based on the previous Summer Schools (from theory to practice). As with the first two Summer Schools, the remaining days were devoted to the theme of *fieldwork*, which was carried out every day through

joint reflections. This procedure differed from what happened in previous Summer Schools because the fieldwork took place on the DEKT – “a place where the formation of faith and trust can be learned and lived” (Paderborn University/ Aristoteles University of Thessaloniki, Summer School Program. Formation of Faith and Trust. The 37<sup>th</sup> DEKT as Space of Religious Education). Thus, the two different places (University and DEKT) were joined to one place of learning in the field religious education<sup>13</sup> – the Summer School. Consequently, the didactic innovation of this course was the interlocking of theory and practice as well as intercultural learning in a place of learning of the discipline religious education (cf. Paderborn University/ Aristoteles University of Thessaloniki, Summer School Program. Formation of Faith and Trust. The 37<sup>th</sup> DEKT as Space of Religious Education).

### **3.2 Intercultural Learning as a Didactic Basis of the International Summer Schools of the Department of Protestant Theology at Paderborn University**

Summer Schools of Protestant Theology at UPB consist of three different event formats: conference (first day), seminar (second day) and excursion (remaining days). It should be noted that the weighting of the formats may vary. These formats have already been described and researched in numerous scientific journals.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, this paper focusses on the didactic basis of Summer Schools and the acquisition of intercultural competence.

The 21st century is marked by the increase of international interdependencies in political, cultural and economic fields as well as by globalization processes. As a result, people from culturally different contexts meet and make contact with each other, whether in their professional or private lives. These interactions are not always characterized by mutual understanding; on the contrary, difficulties and conflicts often arise in and with them. In order to master such situations positively, a so-called intercultural (action-)competence is required. In view of the current situation, the importance of multicultural learning, which is nowadays rather referred to as intercultural learning, is steadily increasing in today's plural society (cf. Pirner, 2006, p. 26ff.). Although both terms can be used as synonyms, the difference between multi- and interculturality should be addressed first. All three terms have the word stem “culture” in common. The concept of culture is very complex and difficult to define.

‘Cultures’ can extend over very different time spans and geographical areas; they may include and exclude a few or many millions, even billions of people. They are open and dynamic life forms linked to certain explicit and implicit knowledge inventories, to language games and practices, and they can be characterized by certain common characteristics, but do not have to be completely homogeneous (in every respect). Moreover, as is often stressed today, their genesis and development depend on cultural exchange. There is no culture without other cultures. (Straub, Nothnagel & Weidemann, 2003, p. 16, my translation).

<sup>13</sup> Andrea Schulte, among others, dealt with places of learning of religious education. She assumes that by means of different ways of access, in principle “every place is suitable for perceiving, exploring and learning or opening up, because every place enables and sharpens the receiving and researching view of the phenomena present” (Schulte, 2013, p. 17, my translation), whereby any place can become a place of religious learning (cf. Schulte, 2013, p. 17ff.). For further information cf. Schröder (2012), Grethlein (2009), (2015) & Henn (2017).

<sup>14</sup> One example cf. Schröder (2001).

The respective prefixes each have a different meaning. While the prefix “multi-”, emphasizes the coexistence of different cultures, “inter-” refers to acting together. Thus, a wide difference becomes clear. According to Hohman, the latter is also understood as an answer to possible problems in a multicultural society. Through mutual exchange the different cultures enter into a productive relationship with each other and a mutual understanding process can develop (cf. Hohmann, 1983, p. 4ff.). Welsch adds a third variant: transculturality. The prefix “trans-” accentuates the penetration of a culture. By means of cultural coexistence, cultural boundaries are abolished, so that cultures merge within a community and this group is understood as structurally heterogeneous (cf. Welsch, 1997, p. 67ff.). If the initial situation is considered again, the society in Germany in particular is changing from being a “multi-” to becoming “intercultural”. Therefore, the multicultural and transcultural aspect is excluded in the following. Intercultural competence is required in order to behave correctly and to understand each other in intercultural situations, as already mentioned. However, what intercultural competence means and how it can be acquired is explained below (cf. Pirner, 2006, p. 26 ff.).

Nowadays, intercultural learning is the subject of research and it is therefore discussed and defined internationally in many different ways. Due to the advancing globalization process, different cultures meet nationally and internationally. Therefore, it is particularly relevant in the pedagogical context to prepare certain groups of people for the encounter with different cultures and thus to create a prerequisite for such encounters. Intercultural learning is generally seen as a lifelong process, the cornerstone of which is laid at school. It should be noted that many other educational institutions, such as universities, etc., also offer an ideal learning location (cf. Willems, 2009). Vogl defines intercultural learning as follows: “[...] to learn to perceive intercultural difference, to recognize the foreign as normality, to experience and undergo intercultural encounters, and to address intercultural contents.” (BMW- AG, 1997, p. 1, my translation.) She “perceives cultural differences as a welcome opportunity for pupils, parents and teachers to learn both with and from one another and to build bridges between cultures.” (BMW Group, 2007, p. 11.)

Similar to the definition of intercultural learning, the conceptual understanding of intercultural competence also varies greatly depending on the respective understanding of competence and culture.<sup>15</sup> The term intercultural competence refers to a complex theoretical construct that integrates a certain knowledge as well as many different skills and abilities. Intercultural competence is subdivided into four individual components, which can be located on a strategic and professional level as well as on an individual and social level (cf. Straub, 2010, p. 31). Thomas defines intercultural competence as follows:

Intercultural competence shows itself in the ability to grasp, respect, appreciate and productively use cultural conditions and influencing factors guiding one’s own or other people’s perception, judgement, feelings and actions, in the sense of a mutual adaptation, from tolerance regarding incompatibilities and a development towards synergetic forms of cooperation, coexistence and effective orientation patterns in relation to world interpretation and world-shaping. (Thomas, 2003, p. 139, my translation).

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<sup>15</sup> An overview of competence models used today can be found, for example, in the article: Bertelsmann Stiftung & Fondazione Cariplo (2008).

Consequently, this competence consists not only of a single component, but unfolds its full effect through the interaction of all four. The different pieces of knowledge, skills and abilities underlying the components can be assigned to three different levels of learning (cognitive, affective and behavioral): *Cognitive*. This learning level focuses on the theoretical acquisition of intercultural knowledge. This includes, for example, facts at political, social and historical levels that provide information about the different cultures, their theories and concepts. *Affective*. This learning level aims at the acquisition and development of intercultural sensitivity. In addition to a fundamentally positive attitude towards foreign cultures and a sensitive approach to cultural differences, the aim is to reduce fears in intercultural situations. In addition, the ability to empathize should be increased. *Behavioral*. This learning level aims to expand the repertoire of actions. By enabling people to deal with conflicts and by getting to know and “learning” foreign cultural behaviors, new or modified culturally appropriate ways of acting can be attained (cf. Straub, 2010, p. 37). Intercultural learning should stimulate precisely these levels in order to promote and challenge individual components of intercultural competence.

For religious education, there is another aspect which, according to Pirner, should be taken into consideration, namely interreligious learning (cf. Pirner, 2006, p. 28). Interreligious learning takes as its starting point the religious heterogeneity of individual societies and in between societies, which becomes recognizable through the development into a world society (cf. Asbrand & Scheunpflug, 2005, p. 274ff.). Interreligious learning focuses “on conscious perception, appropriate encounters and differentiated confrontation with witnesses and testimonies of foreign religions” (Sajak, 2018, 27). In relation to the above-mentioned intercultural learning, it becomes clear that both approaches pursue a common concern: “Intercultural as well as interreligious learning aim at a fear-free, appreciative and reflected discussion with the foreigner, in which the own identity is strengthened and a genuine dialogue with the other [...] is possible.” (ibid.). The difference here lies in the emphasis. While intercultural learning focuses on the field of culture, interreligious learning focuses on the field of religion (cf. ibid.). Thus Pirner, as well as Sajak assume that intercultural learning and interreligious learning belong together. Schröder also says that both forms of learning are indispensable for each other. For him, intercultural learning is the older sister of interreligious learning. Despite this relationship between the two areas, the religious dimension of intercultural learning is only partially taken into account, mostly in exceptional cases (cf. Schröder, 2005, p. 529). Therefore, Schröder demand to use the plurality of religions as a basis to stimulate and promote intercultural as well as interreligious learning.<sup>16</sup> Since in the International Summer School of Protestant Theology of the UPB only Christian theology in its various denominations (Orthodox and Protestant) is involved, this is not interreligious learning, but ecumenical learning which is complementary to interreligious learning (cf. Simojoki, 2019, p. 34ff.). In addition, the Summer School participants come from different European universities, so that the Summer School promotes both intercultural and ecumenical learning.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Islamic theology is taught at both universities (Paderborn and Thessaloniki), therefore an opening of the perspective on interreligious learning is to be expected in the next years.

<sup>17</sup> Especially ecumenical learning should not be limited to the school level but should also be increasingly established in the (European) university context (cf. Schambeck, Simojoki & Stogiannidis, 2019).

According to Hiller, university as a place of learning offers great potential for acquiring intercultural competence. It should be noted that the available potential in higher education has not yet been fully exploited, although intercultural competence has become necessary due to the increasing internationalization processes in studies, science and teaching (cf. Hiller, 2010, p. 19ff., my translation). Therefore, universities have gradually established corresponding events, programs or offers through which these competences can be acquired. One organization that has recognized the potential of higher education institutions is the DAAD (cf. 2.1 History of Summer Schools). It also includes the EU-program Erasmus+, which promotes the mobility of learners and teachers and supports them in acquiring “employment-relevant and intercultural competences.” (BMBF, n.d., my translation.)<sup>18</sup> This is interesting, because the participants of the Summer Schools of Protestant Theology belong to the Erasmus+ partnerships of the department and the stay of the lecturers was also promoted by Erasmus+. In general, the Summer School of Protestant Theology of UPB is based on the intercultural learning method of situated learning – Intercultural Anchored Inquiry (IAI) according to Kammhuber in order to develop its own intercultural learning environment. This intercultural learning method is based on the principles of situated learning (subject-centred, active and constructive, situated, social and identity-building) and can enable transfer-effective learning on the basis of experienced critical interaction situations. Such problem situations are authentic and relevant for the participants and they represent the starting point of the IAI, by means of which participants can learn intercultural knowledge and action (cf. Kammhuber, 2010, p. 64ff.). The IAI learning cycle is as follows:

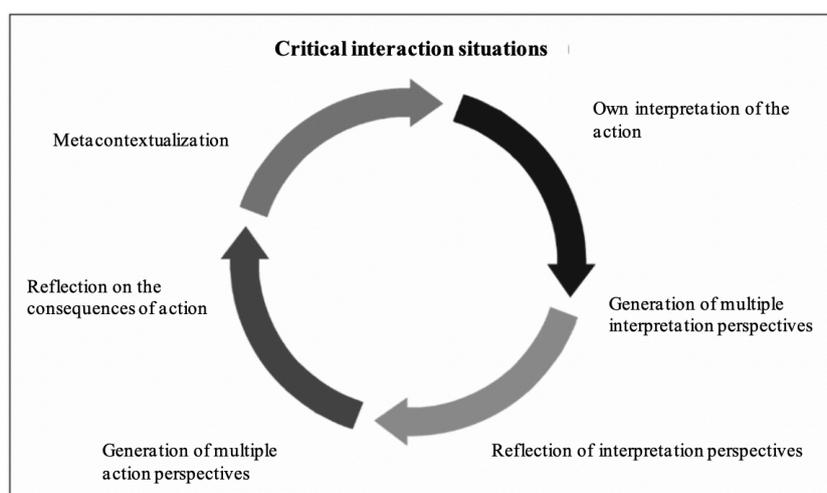


Fig. Intercultural Anchored Inquiry (Kammhuber, 2010, p. 69, my translation.)

For ecumenical learning, Kammhuber’s IAI was adapted on the basis of the coherence described above. In contrast to the previous Summer Schools, the described Summer School of 2019 took place in Germany. As mentioned above, first two day-blocks (conference and seminar) took place at Paderborn University and the remaining fieldwork block at DEKT in

<sup>18</sup> “Since 1987, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), has been carrying out the tasks of a National Agency for EU programs in Higher Education (including Erasmus) in Germany, which will be brought together under the Erasmus+ umbrella from 2014 onwards.” (Erasmus+, 2020, my translation).

Dortmund. For the participants from abroad these were new cultural places with possibly unprecedented barriers to action (pure, normative and identity-related levels of actions) (cf. Kammhuber, 2010, p. 65), for which they had to acquire a new repertoire of knowledge and actions or adapt their existing repertoire. Although these places were a home game for the students from Germany, English as a teaching and working language – which was not a native language for any of the participants – created an interaction barrier. Thus, a continuous problem situation could be created for all participants, lecturers and students alike, in which they were in a constant intercultural training and ecumenical exchange. Additional barriers were the cultural differences in learning and teaching styles, which were reinforced by the English language. The first block (lectures) was prepared by the lecturers alone in order to make this easier, especially for students who were still inexperienced abroad. The student participants were able to familiarize themselves with the English technical language by listening to the lectures and could gently enter the discourse, during the subsequent discussion. Furthermore, the participants gained insight into the different, partly country-specific theological and interdisciplinary discourses on the Summer School topic: Formation of Faith and Trust.<sup>19</sup> This was a good preparation for the second block (seminar), which was organized and carried out by students alone. They introduced themselves and the thematic focuses of their city, university and country. In the end, these were compared with each other. By dealing with the familiar and the foreign, the participants were encouraged to change their perspective and to broaden their own perception. These two different types of format events quickly showed how differently the respective country, the respective format and its implementation are perceived and how even lecturers (who are considered omniscient by many students) could be assigned a learner role themselves. For example, work orders and questions had to be reworded for better understanding due to linguistic differences, although they would have been quite understandable in the respective home country. The last thematic block (excursion) offered all participants a varied program from which they could select individual items for themselves from the catalogue of the 37<sup>th</sup> DEKT. This gave them the opportunity to independently to explore the cultural offers using their previously acquired knowledge. What had been experienced and learned did not remain unreflected. Exceptions were the joint attendance of two services (opening service of the DEKT and service of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Apostles in Dortmund). This meant that ecumenism could not only be lived in the group of participants, but also experienced in the divine service. Following the Greek Orthodox divine service, the highlight was a meeting with Pastor Emmanuel Sfiatkos (Archimandrite of the Ecumenical Patriarchate) in the Greek Orthodox Church of the Holy Apostles in Dortmund, where questions concerning the Summer School theme and DEKT theme were discussed and debated. This again stimulated a change of perspective and expanded the participant's own perception. The whole Summer School process was continuously stimulated and supported by the different reflection units recommended by Kammhuber (single reflection,

<sup>19</sup> In the first panel Vasiliki Mitropoulou (topic: *Relations of trust in multireligious societies*), Daniela Berner-Zumpf (topic: *Trust in philosophical perspective*) and Fulvio Ferrario (topic: *“To have a God is nothing else than to trust and believe Him from the [whole] heart” (Martin Luther)*) gave their presentations. The second panel contained lectures by Helga Kuhlmann (topic: *How can Faith help*), Thomas Girmalm (topic: *Trust in Liturgy*) and Martin Leutzsch (topic: *Faith and Trust: Martin Buber's Challenge to Christian Biblical Theology*) (cf. Paderborn University/ Aristoteles University of Thessaloniki, Summer School Programm. Formation of Faith and Trust. The 37<sup>th</sup> DEKT as Space of Religious Education).

day reflection and meta reflection) (cf. Kammhuber, 2010, p. 69). This represented a constant intercultural and ecumenical interaction in which they could present and discuss those intercultural, ecumenical and subject-related experiences – whether positive or negative – which were relevant to them. Thus, in the Summer School of Protestant Theology a space for intercultural learning was created in which one's own and foreign interdependencies were made the object of reflection and intercultural and ecumenical competence could be promoted.<sup>20</sup> But questions remain open, such as: what intercultural and ecumenical knowledge did they already possess and how did this affect their intercultural and ecumenical learning? What concrete intercultural and ecumenical action competences have they integrated into their repertoire of action through their experiences in Summer School? Since the concept and its analysis only consulted own observations, a more exact evaluation of the different reflection processes should be considered – on the one hand on the intercultural level (e.g. concrete extension of the repertoire of actions) and on the other hand on the ecumenical level (e.g. relationship between the Christian denominations) – by means of empirical instruments such as evaluations by questionnaires, interviews or comparable ones are needed for a prospective provision of the concept.

### **3.3 Creation of a specific Summer School Definition for the Department of Protestant Theology at Paderborn University**

Looking back, a Summer School definition for the Department of Protestant Theology at UPB can be created from in analogy to the definition of the Summer School of systems medicine mentioned above: Summer Schools are one-week workshops in which students and lecturers from the Department of Protestant Theology of Paderborn University and its Erasmus+ partner universities are offered the opportunity to exchange theoretical and technical knowledge on the subject of “*Religious Education*” in English, to network and to experience, test and reflect on theory by concluding fieldwork. The latter is more important due to the number of days available (day 1-2: presentations by lecturers and students followed by discussions; day 3-7: fieldwork). The Summer Schools are intended to foster cooperation between the ERASMUS+ partnerships, achieve scientific-theological exchange as well as stimulate and promote international, intercultural, ecumenical and religion-sensitive learning in a place of religious learning. Summer Schools are planned and implemented in cooperation with the ERASMUS+ partnerships of the Department of Protestant Theology. It is possible to hold the event on site or in the foreign institutions of the partner universities. The number of participants will be equally limited depending on the number of participating Erasmus+ partnerships. Therefore, the number of possible student participants may vary, but is often limited to 10 +/- per university.

## **4 Conclusion**

Common higher education event formats such as seminars, lectures etc. are nowadays scientifically well researched and defined. Therefore, it is all the more interesting that this

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<sup>20</sup> The studies carried out by Erasmus+ show that intercultural competence is demonstrably promoted by Erasmus+ stays (cf. Erasmus+, n.d.).

does not apply to the event format Summer Schools. Although Summer Schools enjoy international popularity, in retrospect the historical development of Summer Schools is not easy to grasp. Although Cooper has extensively researched the functions and effects of Summer Schools context on the participants and concisely presented the history of Summer Schools in the American region, a well-founded international historical Summer School development – also in German-speaking countries –, especially with regard to the university context, cannot be found entirely in scientific literature. Furthermore, it is important to note that the English term Summer School in its original American context referred to educational processes situated in schools and that it is rather recently applied to university contexts. Therefore, empirical studies on Summer School Effects in the field of higher education are still missing. Are the positive effects similar to scholastic Summer Schools? Moreover, there is also a lack of analyses regarding the differences to other higher education formats such as seminars/block seminars, lectures, conferences and excursions. Do they overlap or are Summer Schools perhaps a mix of them all? With regard to the present article, the question also arises whether Summer Schools promote competences such as intercultural and ecumenical competence more than other formats? This as yet unexplored field of the Summer School will therefore require intensive (empirical) higher education research in the future. Whether the reason for this research deficit can be found in the abundance and complexity of the term remains to be seen. Nevertheless, the development of this common event format is substantial for the development of a definition. In contrast to the American area, a definition can be found in the German-speaking area, especially with regard to summer academies in the fields of medicine and art. However, this definition, like the historical development of Summer Schools, is only tailored to a specific professional context, which means that “Summer School” as a clear-cut term is again not to be found. For this reason, it has been possible to generate an innovative working definition of Summer Schools in the university context using the previous scientific basis. This served as a theoretical foundation with which an individual definition for the department could be created, including the Summer Schools of the Department of Protestant Theology at UPB.

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## Autorin

Stephanie, Lerke. Universität Paderborn, Institut für Evangelische Theologie, Paderborn, Deutschland; Email: [stephanie.lerke@upb.de](mailto:stephanie.lerke@upb.de)



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