

CercleS 2022

The Future of Language Education
in an Increasingly Digital World:
Embracing Change

**BOOK OF
ABSTRACTS**



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The Future of Language Education in an Increasingly Digital World: Embracing Change

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ORAL PRESENTATION

Student experiences of critical multilingual and intercultural communication competence assessment in higher education

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Intercultural communication competence (ICC) is widely discussed among scholars. Still considerable variation in definitions and terminology remains. For example, whether ICC is seen as a trait, a skill, or a performance outcome is still very much debated (Griffith et al., 2016). In addition, many theories have been criticized for neglecting the language as part of ICC (e.g. Piller, 2017). There is also a need to move away from models and definitions of ICC that rely on national culture groups and singular cultural identities toward a fluid, dynamic, contested nature of cultures, multiple cultural identities, and intercultural interactions (e.g. Dervin, 2010; Holliday, 2016; Martin & Nakayama, 2015). In this presentation we focus on a study on assessment of multilingual and intercultural communication competence (MICC) as a situational and contextual process in Higher Education. The aim of the qualitative, empirical study was to understand the students' perceptions of assessment. Here, assessment was a process of giving and receiving feedback rather than as a summative assessment. The data consist of 74 texts on assessment written by university students. The results show that the combination of self- and peer feedback enabled students to see MICC as both situational and as a life-long process. Further, the understanding of the contextual and situational nature of MICC was enhanced through this process. However, students faced challenges in assessing a phenomenon that was novel to many of them as well as in seeing formative assessment as a tool for learning.

Keywords: Multilingual and intercultural communication competence; assessment; students' experiences

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Bionotes: **Lotta Kokkonen** is working as a Senior lecturer at the Centre for Multilingual Academic Communication, University of Jyväskylä (JYU). She is teaching intercultural communication and her research interests include asylum seekers' and refugees' social networks and belonging, international students' wellbeing and social networks, and networking from a relational perspective. Kokkonen is involved in curricula development for 'home internationalization' and she is responsible for organizing the study programme for students going on an exchange. She is also coordinating a research project on highly educated immigrants' language learning and belonging (JYU).

Teija Natri is a Senior Lecturer of the Centre for Multilingual Academic Communication at the University of Jyväskylä (Finland). She is teaching French for academic purposes and multilingual communication competence. Her specific interest in pedagogical development lies in multilingual and intercultural communication competence in higher education as well as in digital citizenship. She is involved in many national and European research and development projects, such as Digital citizenship through language education (ECML) ja Enseigner et apprendre les langues par les tâches et avec le numérique (Erasmus+).

ORAL PRESENTATION

Student-facilitated Online Writing Groups

Christine Horton

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Writing Groups for doctoral students have emerged as an interventionalist pedagogy in response to the recognition of doctoral writing as a "challenging high stakes activity" (Cotterall, 2011, p. 413). By reinforcing writing as a social practice, writing groups can help students to develop the skills needed to publish their texts, the benchmark for success in doctoral programs. They can also help to support students, as early-stage researchers, in constructing their own academic identity, or voice. As described in the literature, writing groups are composed typically of field-specific students who are managed by a facilitator, an expert in the field who offers advice and feedback, often in face-to-face settings. However, the writing courses offered at the Language Centre are multidisciplinary and online, raising the question of how the important benefits of writing group pedagogy can be realized in different teaching situations.

To address this question, I present the results from analysis of recordings from writing group meetings from n=21 student-facilitated online, multidisciplinary writing groups collected over two years from doctoral writing courses at Tampere University. Using content analysis, I compared the data from student-facilitated groups with instructor-facilitated groups described in the literature with the objective of developing guidelines for student-facilitated online writing groups. Understanding how student-facilitated writing groups proceed in an online context can shed light on how writing group pedagogy can be applied in different contexts to support doctoral student success.

Keywords: online, doctoral, writing group, research writing

References:

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