Integration and intercultural improvement in Araby/Dalbo

- A pilot study about experiences and possibilities
Entrepreneurship, Master Programme
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Integration and intercultural improvement in Araby/Dalbo
- A pilot study about experiences and possibilities

Delgash Ramadhan

Handledare: Frederic Bill  Program: Entrepreneurship, Master Programme, 60 hp  Kurskod: EAEP1Termin: HT14
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In the Swedish political debate there is a general agreement about the problems with the integration process regarding especially third country nationals from Africa and Asia. In various SOU reports,¹ there are testimonies about flaws in the interaction between the majority community and minority groups (where newly arrived third-country nationals are an especially prevalent group). Thus, Sweden has for several decades been in transformation from a culturally relatively homogeneous nation into a multicultural society. There have of course been cultures like the Sami, Finnish, Roma and German present alongside the Swedish majority culture.

However, today there are neighborhoods where people with a “traditional” Swedish cultural background are a minority. Furthermore in almost all parts of society, like school, health, media etc., there are indications of discrimination (SOU 2006:73). This seems to be in line with a general tendency within the European Union where increased multiculturality has been fueling anti-immigrant movements of which some has even gained enough popular support to gain seats in the EU-parliament.

However, the general debate concerning integration issues are changing, during the 70's and early 80's the main topic was bilingualism and other lingual issues connected to attitudes and values of individual minority groups. Intense and sometimes harsh debates were about the extent to which immigrant children should be taught and in their first and second language, and how this teaching should be organized (Bratt-Paulston, 1983). At the beginning of the 1980s, practically no Swedish researchers had attempted to discuss the complexities of a multicultural society. Rather research was mostly about bilingualism, prejudice and culture shock. The teaching and understanding of 'immigrants' and refugees focused very much on statistics, and possibly about societal context knowledge, and still there are no mandatory elements concerning multicultural competence in for instance the training for teachers, social workers and psychologists.

Even though ethnocentrism to some extent can be considered “natural” all citizens must accept and understand that integration (especially in the sense of handling differences) does not take place without hard work, positive attitudes, willingness to learn and understand. Thus it requires tolerance and patience. (Lundberg, 1991, SOU 2005:41, SOU 2006:73)

Being an immigrant/refugee myself I have experienced discrimination,
segregation and other issues related to exclusion in a new society and a new culture. However I have also been considering that there is something of a communication problem in that some people are supposed to be helping and some are supposed to be helped. Therefore I originally wanted to try to work actively to change the situation for refugees in Araby/Dalbo area in my home town Växjö. I wanted to carry out a project that really could change the situation for refugees in Araby/Dalbo, and even more important try to get them themselves involved in the process. I was planning to conduct an Action cum Research project by using education as an important tool. This is based on the notion that by increasing knowledge and awareness among newly arrived families and individuals about transcultural processes it is possible to promote inclusion in society with positive intercultural relations-effects as a consequence. According to research results (Lundberg, 1991) there is good reasons to believe that intercultural and transcultural understanding and competence are a very important basis for improving living conditions reduces intercultural and transcultural conflicts and tension and create better integration. Based on this the aim was to describe the integration problem from two different perspectives and to examine the extent to which young immigrants and refugees and officers (interacting with immigrants) possess intercultural competence.

In this study a number of important concepts will be utilized, especially Segregation, Integration and discrimination. According to the National Encyclopedia segregation is defined as "... the spatial separation of populations.” In society there is segregation in schools as well as in residential areas. Segregation may have a different basis, such as origin, religion, sex, language, health, etc. (NE, 2013). The opposite of segregation is integration. According to the National encyclopedia, inclusion is a term in the social sciences that denotes a "... process that leads to the separate units
are combined; although the outcome of such a process.” (NE, 2013) Bunar (2001) explains integration as a two way process in which vulnerable and marginalized groups and individuals struggle for influence and try to gain participation in society. *This gives them opportunities to change the practical conditions of their lives in terms of employment, housing, education, leisure and the like.* [...] This definition is in line with the Government's view that the need for integration is occurring both at the individual and societal *level.* (ibid, p. 65) Thus, the integration process is reciprocal, everyone is involved and must contribute (Government Bill, 1997/98). Roth (2005) uses other concepts related to "integration", introducing the concepts of "negative distance" and "positive presence". He believes "... that there are values such as fairness, self-esteem, integrity, and social community." Roth (2005, 18). These values determine if there is negative or positive distance proximity. Roth (2005) says "What is ultimately important to realize morally reasonable proximity and distance relationships is that the various groups have been able to maintain an open, respectful and empathetic dialogue with one another." Roth (2005, 19). Core values are then autonomy, integrity, justice, self-esteem and social community. Generally discrimination can be defined as someone being treated, directly or indirectly, less favorably than someone else. With respect to the core values of Roth (2005) a feeling of being discriminated will emanate from having ones core values challenged or neglected.

In order to change social living conditions I use Appreciative Inquiry (AI) together with Actor - Network Theory (ANT) as an analytical tool. This implies that ethnic affiliation (an individual's national and ethnic origin, color or other similar circumstance) is based on self-identification. Thus, the individual defines his own ethnic affiliation and therefore social and societal factors are important aspects of understanding how people define themselves.
Therefore, theories from social science (like ethnocentrism, islamofobi and postcolonialism) will be of importance for understanding personal views, attitudes and actions.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this essay is to identify and gain understanding regarding how young immigrants/refugees and professionals interacting with refugees, understand the processes and problems with intercultural communication.

The two main questions of the essay are:
How do these two groups understand intercultural, transcultural and interreligious competence among immigrant residents and professionals?
Which possibilities does intercultural competence has for improving integration?

Research review

2.1 Introduction

A normal research overview of my project should include research about very similar studies. That is hardly possible in my case. I have glanced through a lot of reports and evaluation of integration projects carried out within the EU but they have all a different content than my project. My main interest is how intercultural understanding and competence can improve the integration process for immigrants and refugees. Therefore my theoretical overview and research documentation will have a focus on some theoretical concepts and knowledge about how intercultural knowledge and competence can improve intercultural behavior.
My essay adopts pieces from a range of theoretical perspectives and theories. Many of these theories are in turn based on other theories. Here I have chosen to briefly focus on a few theories and research that I consider central to my work.

2.2 Ethnocentrism
All social interaction starts with yourself and at least another person. Depending on what you bring into that social interaction and the other person’s background and values some of the problems will depend on the differences and similarities. All people must act from an ethnocentric perspective. If you have no other experiences than your own culture you can’t avoid to act ethnocentric towards other people.

On a general group level ethnocentrism is one of the biggest obstacles for a successful integration in a new society. Ethnocentrism basically means that you as an individual or a social group favors and idealize your own group relative to other groups. As an example, a strong social identity as "faithful Muslims" or that of "faithful Christians" effects how you perceive and relate to other people. Hedin (2006) is a scholar of religion who even says that a lot of historical research hereby can reinforce prejudice. To legitimate colonialism scientists and their arguments were often used. Racism has a clear "scientific" background and was so successful that their results came to be presented as truths among others in Swedish schoolbooks from the 1950s. (Lundberg, 1991) Thus, the scientists who did early research on the Orient generally have later been rejected as products of ethnocentrism (cf. Said, 1993).

Lundberg (1991) argues that ethnocentrism has two aspects. One is the
unconscious ethnocentrism, which to some extent is natural and "obvious" to most people. It may even be desirable in certain ways, says Lundberg. He takes as an example the principle of not using physical violence during the upbringing of children. It is taken almost for granted despite the fact that the principles of "non-violence" in the upbringing of children are a minority, even in Europe. Other strong "cultural dominant traits" such as avoiding conflicts are so unaware of most Swedes that they do not even perceive it as an ethnocentric behavior when a Swede strongly dislike a conflict-oriented "non-Swede." Some kind of ethnocentric values and behavior we want to defend but we can be aware of it is still ethnocentrism. Then there is a more severe form of "ethnocentric approach," says Lundberg (1991), where representatives of a culture or ethnic group consider their own group as superior and better than another group. The political movements with strong nationalism, this form of ethnocentrism is very common. Lena Olsson has described the Swedish cultural perception and ethnocentrism in her thesis "Culture sight in Swedish geography textbooks, 1870-1985," (Olsson, 1986). She demonstrates this, including how strong ethnocentric and even openly racist values were expressed in Swedish textbooks into modern times. In a recently published document on the Internet, she describes this view of ethnocentrism that avails its own culture, values and norms to judge other cultures. Olsson (2012) argue that ethnocentrism cannot be cleared away from people's consciousness. She believes that in a multicultural society can awareness of this ethnocentric tendency we all carry within us be of great importance to reduce exclusion of refugees in society. Moreover, it would actively hamper spreading awareness myths of other cultures and religions.

Of course, a deeper understanding of ethnocentrism is of great importance for understanding the problems of integration and refugee problems and difficulties in Sweden. If ethnocentrism can be reduced among the refugee
groups and among Swedes will be of great value to reduce segregation and Xenophobia. Even just a mere understanding of the dimensions in ethnocentrism will be of great value.

2.3 Islamophobia

Ethnocentrism and xenophobia is of course strongly linked to the concept of Islamophobia. Most likely Islamophobia ideas and opinions play a significant role both to understand discrimination and the segregation that have faced muslim groups since started to come to Sweden. The biggest groups have been the Turks, Iranians, Iraqians, Kurds, Bosnians, Somalians and todays Syrians. Scientists like Gardell (2011) strongly support the assumption that Islamophobia and prejudices about Muslims may be an important analytical tool. The concept of Islamophobia now seems to be quite widely accepted and is sometimes compared with anti-Semitism or ethnocentrism and xenophobia.

The author writes that "Islamophobia is often, but not always, linked to conspiracy theories about Muslims infiltrated the West to gradually seize power and destroy our freedom ..." (Gardell, 2010, p. 15). Islamophobia expressed in many ways. Svanberg & Westerlund (1999) suggests an explanation for it:

Alongside a pronounced Islamophobia as some right-populists, neo-Nazis and extreme right wing Christian groups account for or riding, there is a general xenophobic rhetoric layer of the society. There is also a cultural racist attitude of some opinion leaders and researchers dedicated to immigrant issues. This posture is promoted by an often stereotyped and negative image of Islam in the media. (Ibid, p. 11)
2.4 Postcolonial Theory

I have chosen to include post-colonial research and theory as I believe it may be of interest to understand the segregation and discrimination that is so talked about in the media and in research literature (see for example the presentation of Islamophobia). Probably refugees have noticed discrimination, and maybe it is possible to interpret and understand some Swedes statements better with this theoretical background. This presentation of postcolonial theory is based primarily on Young (2003) and Loomba (2006) and own conclusions and reflections.

The term colonization can be defined in different ways, but this concept is limited in scope, referring to the European conquest, control and exploitation of territories, which took off in 1500s. Colonialisms' purpose was primarily to restructure non-capitalist economies into the capitalist system to foster the development in Europe. Colonialism was legitimized by among other things race ideologies, which implied that history constantly moves forward toward a more developed community. Europeans licensed their intrusion into other parts of the world by spreading development and modernity. Race ideologies is also closely linked with Social Darwinism, which further legitimized the colonial projects. Social Darwinism placed "the white man" top of the food chain, and it therefore felt that the white man had the right to use violence against and eradicate the "inferior" races. This was considered a necessary step in the civilizational development. These thought patterns are the key notions of colonial thinking / ideology and can be summarized in the contemporary expression "the white man's burden". The term refers to a belief that it was the white man's duty to colonize and "develop" the inferior parts of the world.
The prefix "post" in post colonialism can be confusing enough to refer to several explanations. "Post" denotes both the ambition to "think beyond" the boundaries constructed over colonialism time, and highlights the notion that contemporary society is still characterized by colonial thinking. Accordingly postcolonial researchers constructed a knowledge that is still relevant and legitimizes various power structures. This is interesting for the essay that I shall examine the arguments and perspectives on "foreign cultures".

An important starting point for the post-colonial theory is that language is structured around binary oppositions (dichotomies), so that for example, rational / irrational, man / woman, white / black, normal / abnormal, etc. This means that different concepts are only given meaning through their contrast and it is therefore these differences that generate meanings. According to postcolonial theory then, the reproduction of the colonial dichotomy persists, where Western ideas and thoughts are considered superior, and where non-Western ideas considered inferior. These ideas persist because of the notion that we are all on the same line of development, where the West is considered to have reached the top. "Other disclosure" occurs most often not consciously but is the result of our underlying Eurocentric notions. The concept of Eurocentrism refers to "a world view which claims that the West has an innate superiority in relation to the East," which results in "the perception that the West deserves to occupy the progressive world history main stage, both in the past and now." "Other disclosure" is also based on ethnocentrism (see previous report), which means that you consider and assess other cultures' behavior patterns and worlds of ideas based on their own culture. According postcolonial theory marked the entire modern Western culture's self-understanding of racist beliefs. Racism constitutes a latent part of the West's imagination. Racism is woven into our linguistic categories, which we use to organize and define our surroundings. Thus, this thinking reproduced racism.
on a hidden and unconscious level, through the use of racism basic concepts designs. The concept of race is one of the most basic concepts included in racism concept designs. According to postcolonial theories it is thus considered conceptions surrounding the expression "the white man" which survive in today's society. Westerners consider non-Westerners as inferior and in need of help to develop to the Western level. What is interesting for the essay is whether these ideas are contained in Swedes' imagination? Do refugees meet such unarticulated ideas? Produced Western ideas, systems and thoughts as superior to non-Western? Are there clear ethnocentric and Eurocentric notions? Are there statements and formulations to write "Westerners" or "Non-Westerners" certain specific qualities, attributes, or values? This results in an "appeared behavior " and "thinking"?

In sum, postcolonial theory is about how our time and imagination are caught in an era of imperialism and colonialism, and how this is still manifested in different discourses. This reproduces imperial and colonial structures, which maintain the current polarized world order between the "we" (the West) and "them" (the East). Although there are no longer any colonies or colonial powers left, says thus postcolonial theory that many structures from that period survives, which contributes to a political, scientific and cultural superiority and inferiority. One can therefore say that colonialism ideologies survive, thus perpetuating the prevailing dominance of the relationship between the West and the East. Postcolonial studies both aim to expose and challenge the structures and performances that communicated and reproduced in speech and writing. Finally, the following issues guidance in the analysis of the socio-cultural practice:

- What is the relationship between the identified practice and the socio-cultural practice?
- Reflected colonial / post-colonial thoughts?
- Consolidating practice the dominant discourse or transformed discourses and contributes for change?

Even if Sweden was not so active in colonization and slave trade (even if Sweden made a few attempts) we were very active to build "scientific" knowledge about racism, when State institute for racial biology (Statens institut för rasbiologi) was established in 1922 in total political harmony. And maybe we shall not forget that Sweden acted like a colonial power when Finland became a part of Sweden during the early Middle Age.

2.5 Intercultural Competence

2.5.1 Introduction

According to Brislin (1981) and Paige (1986) the start of the intercultural field can be traced back to the time after Second World War and especially the 60-ies and 70-ies in the US. The authors mean that the failure of Peace Corps in many countries raised the question if the Americans lack cultural understanding. Before that time it seems to have been a rather naive idea that every country loved the American way of life. And if they also sent people to improve their living standard they must love the Americans even more. But there were a lot of indications that the Peace Corps workers were not loved everywhere. On the contrary they were often met by hostile behavior and attitudes. Many Peace Corps workers were sent back to the US.

In the United States came in the 60s and 70s uprising from blacks, Indians and Mexicans against the white majority culture. On USA's "backyard" Cuba, was carried out in 1959 a revolution, whose leader was a US-educated lawyer, Fidel Castro. Probably did these negative experiences for the political
leadership of the United States to contribute to the interest to the field of intercultural communication and training significantly grew in the early 70s. An especially center for research and education created in the early 60s to improve relations between "East and West". It was called "East-West Center" and is located in Honolulu, Hawaii. (Lundberg, 1991)

Many believe that the 1973 oil crisis when the price of crude oil rose by about 400% in a few months was also a kind of "kick-off" of interest to understand other cultures better. After the oil crisis was published numerous books about the Arab culture and Islam was published. It was probably then that the West realized that you have to learn to interact with them who had more or less control over oil resources in the world. Then as now, it was realized that energy was one of the key prerequisites for future economic growth. In addition came the oil crisis meaning that many countries in the Middle East (e.g. Saudi Arabia) was very important markets for the West. Suddenly a series of books was published about how to understand and interact with Arabs and Muslims.

My intention with this literature overview is to identify some of the most important research questions in the field of intercultural understanding. For me I assume it is essential to get a picture of the knowledge situation in the field of intercultural understanding to be able to improve intercultural understanding and communication with Swedes. I am convinced that knowledge about intercultural understanding and communication is decisive for improving integration of refugees in the Swedish community. The books I have come across and the experts I have been in contact with has convinced me the importance of in both intercultural competence for improved integration of refugees. And that the intercultural competence need to be developed among Swedes and refugees. In the book "Developing
Intercultural Competence in Practice" by Byram, Nichols & Stevens (2001). They present several examples of how important intercultural competence can be to improve social interaction.

2.5.2 Intercultural competence – a historical perspective

In Sweden it is not very many scientists who occupied themselves with the concept of intercultural competence. 1980 was held, however, in Göteborg, a symposium on multi-cultural competence. The concept of intercultural appeared at that time not yet in Sweden why it is worth paying attention to the reasoning, which occurred on multi-cultural competence.

Engelbrektsson (1980) believes that multi-cultural competence is a very complex phenomenon and chooses in her speech not to attempt to define the term. Instead, she problematized the concept and expressed the opinion that it gets better when further discussion to distinguish different levels of the phenomenon than trying to treat multi-cultural competence as a global phenomenon.

Allwood (1980) also argues that multicultural competence is something very complex and not possible to achieve. Although a complete competence in a culture has no man considers both Allwood and Engelbrektsson 1980). Allwood defines cultural competence primarily in terms of ability to participate in various activities of a cultural community. For Allwood represent linguistic and cultural competence closest prerequisites for each other. Allwood therefore defines the multi-cultural competence as "being able to attend activities not only in one but in several cultures" (ibid, p. 65). In order to participate in an activity requires at least the following:
(1) Sharing of or at least understanding of the motives, aims and objectives of the business.

(2) An understanding of the roles that are linked to, activities such as vendor, customer or physician, patient and understanding of the rights and duties associated with the roles.

(3) Understanding the people and the part of reality that are affected by the activities and on the attitudes and values that are usually attached to it.

(4) Understanding of and ability to conduct and procedures that are linked to activities and their roles. Particularly important here is the communicative behavior and the procedures applicable thereto.

(5) Often an ability to evaluate results and modify behavior in relation to them and the ability to generalize from one activity to another.

(Allwood, 1980, p 65-66)


Lundberg (1991) has written about intercultural communicative competence in his thesis. He writes about his perspective about intercultural competence. He has proposed some principles around which education and training ought to be built. These principles can be summarized in the following paragraphs:

- Theoretical knowledge
- To be trained to listen and see (develop cultural sensitivity)
- A self-reflective perception (about yourself as a cultural human being)
- To build upon one's own affective experiences from intercultural interaction
- Learning of skills

The theoretical knowledge can be based upon themes like cultural assumptions, cognitive-perceptual factors and verbal as well as non-verbal aspects. By the concept "to be trained to listen and see" Lundberg means the ability to recognize cultural expressions in daily life (in behavior, advertisements, mass media etc.). To have a self-reflective perception means that a person can perceive his own behavior "from outside". He or she has the ability to look upon his/her own behavior in a relative and critical way. An important conclusion for Lundberg is that it is important to differentiate between a general and a specific intercultural competence. The specific competence consists of both cultural and situational aspects. He strongly argues for the importance of building the specific competence on the general one. According to Lundberg there are good possibilities to develop a general intercultural competence with academic education, critical thinking combined with simulations activities and role-playing. (Lundberg, 1991).

Internationally, there are several attempts to define and describe intercultural competence. In particular, many American scientists tried to identify what distinguishes an intercultural competent person. But in any depth research has however, not been conducted. Dinges (1983) has an article on intercultural competence tried to go through the research literature.

He claims to have found six different perspectives or approaches to
intercultural competence:

(1) "Overseasmanship",
(2) Isomorphic Attribution,
(3) "Multicultural Man"
(4) Social Behavior and Learning,
(5) Typologists and
(6) Intercultural Communication.

Some of these approaches or perspectives have some similarities. Meanwhile there are wide differences in the perception of how intercultural competence can be achieved and the content of the proposed competence: Some authors discuss almost exclusively personal characteristics of an intercultural person while other researchers are concentrating on skills in behavior.

Ruben (1976) identified seven dimensions that describe intercultural competence and adaptation, namely (1) the display of respectability, (2) interaction posture, (3) orientation to knowledge, (4) empathy, (5) role behavior, (6) interaction management and (7) tolerance for ambiguity. Role behavior was divided into three separate aspects why Rubens's developed scales became nine in number. These scales were developed to trained observers could assess people in intercultural interaction.

Several researchers (including Ruben, 1977), have studied and discussed the concept of intercultural effectiveness. Gudykunst and Kim (1983) have described cross-cultural efficiency as "Minimizing misunderstanding". Gudykunst, Wiseman & Hammer (1977) argue that the people who are effective in intercultural communication use a "third-cultural perspective". This perspective is characterized by:

1) they are open-minded toward new ideas and experiences,
(2) they are empathic toward people from other cultures,
(3) they accurately perceive differences and similarities between the host culture and their own,
(4) they tend to describe behavior they don’t understand rather than evaluating unfamiliar behavior as bad, nonsensical, or meaningless,
(5) they are relatively astute noncritical observers of their own behavior and that of others,
(6) they are better able to establish meaningful relationships with people from the host culture, and
(7) they are less ethnocentric. (a.a., s 424)

In a later work by Gudykunst & Kim (1983) expands the requirements for effective communication, to include both cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Among the cognitive components mentioned first knowledge of the language and culture. Another factor that is considered important is the degree of category width. Categorizing "narrow" meant that a person sees very few different explanations for certain behavior. A person with a broad category width see instead a large number of possible explanations for individual behavior. There is research showing that Peace Corps worker who was "broad categorizers" discontinued their missions more often than those who were "narrow categorizers." Another factor which, according Gudykunst & Kim (1983) distinguishes effective communicators from the less efficient is the extent to which they may differ in specification, interpretation and evaluation of a particular behavior. The less knowledgeable are not aware that for each description of a behavior, there are different interpretations, and each interpretation there may be several different values.

Among the affective components mentions Gudykunst & Kim (1983) in
addition to the "third-cultural perspective" (openness, empathy and non-ethnocentric), although tolerance for ambiguity. Among the behavioral components mentions the authors of three of the factors that Ruben (1976) have raised, namely the ability to show respect, the ability to respond in a descriptive, non-evaluative or judgmental way, and the ability to initiate, execute and terminate interactions on a manner that is consistent with the other party's needs.

Brislin (1981) has discussed his views on intercultural competence under the term "effective intercultural interactions". He divides the demands of the individual between personal qualities, as people usually acquire during their upbringing and skills, which is more the result of study and training. Two characteristics Brislin consider particularly important are non-ethnocentrism and "non-biased reviews". Brislin takes also up a tolerant personality, personal strength, and capacity to establish social relationships, problem solving skills, task orientation and the ability to learn from intercultural experiences. For Paige (1986), intercultural skills and cross-cultural effectiveness is a starting point for further analyzes. He argues that:

Cross-cultural effectiveness is positively influenced by:

(1) Knowledge about the target culture, (2) personal qualities such as openness, flexibility, tolerance of ambiguity, and sense of humor (3) behavioral skills such as communicative competence, culturally appropriate role behavior, ability to relate well to others, (4) self-awareness, especially with respect to one's own values and beliefs, (5) Technical skills, including the ability to accomplish the task within the new cultural setting, and (6) situational factors such as relative similarity of the target culture to one's home culture, culture, receptivity to foreigners, political /
economic / social conditions in the second culture, or clarity of expectations regarding the role and position of the foreigner.  (Paige, 1986, p 137)

Paige's description of important influences on intercultural competence contains several aspects discussed above. What Paige particular points to is that intercultural competence is strongly related to situational and contextual factors. This is consistent with my own view that intercultural competence should be divided into at least two distinct components, one general and one specific. The specific skills can then be divided into a contextual and situational factor.

Dinges (1983) have attempted to divide the intercultural competence in different dimensions and relate the literature and the research on intercultural competence. He suggests 10 different dimensions:

- Cognitive-perceptual processes
- Dynamic learning
- Communication dynamics/communication style
- Stress tolerance
- Interpersonal relations
- Motivation and incentive dynamics
- Development continuity
- Life transition
- Composite trait complex
- Interactional / International-transactional dynamics

When some dimensions are not mentioned earlier, I here briefly explain some
of these. With the "Dynamic learning" refers to the author that intercultural interaction can be seen as a dynamic learning environment. Authors who have this view also places great emphasis on practical experiences and experiential training methods. "Motivation and Incentive dynamics" is a perspective that draws attention to motivation and stimulation as a means to achieve intercultural competence. These aspects have been highlighted too little so far, says Dinges. The importance of continuity in the personal development of the individual is something that the "Development continuity" special attention. A writer who strongly emphasized this is Adler (1976) with the concept of "Multicultural Man." The meaning of life changes (Life in Transition) provides a perspective that practically has not been recognized in relation to intercultural competence. This dimension is interesting. On the one hand, one can consider the cultural change that such a change of life, and one should pay attention to other important life changes in relation to the development of intercultural competence. Some critical development stages in life (eg liberation process as a teenager) provide a better or worse due to the development of intercultural competence? Dimension "Composite trait complex” means that the personal properties particularly emphasized the development of intercultural competence. The last dimension "interactional Dynamics" sums up the importance of situational aspects in relation to personal variables for the intercultural competence (see, eg, Paige, 1986)

2.5.3 Empirical studies

Some researchers have been using empirical data collected tried to precisely identify several of the most important aspects of intercultural competence. After studying Canadian aid workers' efficiency in developing countries came Hawes and Kealey (1979, 1981) concluded that "flexibility, respect, listening skill, trust, calm and self-control, and sensitivity to cultural differences"
(Hawes and Kealey, 1979, p. 167) was particularly important aspects of intercultural competence.

Hammer, Gudykunst and Wiseman (1978) conducted a study with Americans who lived abroad for more than three months and identified by factor analysis, three dimensions of intercultural effectiveness: "(1) The ability to deal with psychological stress, (2) The ability to Communicate effectively, and (3) The ability to Establish interpersonal relationships ". Abe and Wiseman (1983) replicated this study with Japanese university students who visited the US for the first time. Their study resulted in five dimensions were identified: "(1) The ability to Communicate interpersonally, (2) The ability to adjust to Different Cultures, (3) The ability to Deal with Different societal systems, (4) The ability to Establish interpersonal relationships, and (5) The ability to understand others." These somewhat different results concerning intercultural effectiveness has led to a debate whether intercultural effectiveness is culture specific or general culture (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1984; Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Wise Man & Abe, 1984).

Hammer (1987), in a later study compared the original model with three factors of Hammer et al (1978) with Abe and Wiseman’s (1983) model with five factors. With the help of LISREL technology tested Hammer which of the two models that best matched the data he possessed. Somewhat surprisingly, it turned out that the data fit both models are almost as good. Hammer (1987) argue for their analyzes to the model with three factors is preferred because it provides a simple description of reality.

Martin (1987) have investigated the effect of intercultural experiences of 175 American students. With the help of questionnaires whose response factor analyzed Martin identified four dimensions of intercultural competence.
Dimension (1) "Awareness of Self and Culture" accounted for 59% of the explained variance. Dimensional (2) "Awareness of the implication of Cultural Differences," contained 22% of the explained variance. These two dimensions can probably be regarded as cognitive aspects and related to the previously reported factor to deal with psychological stress. Dimension (3) "Interpersonal Flexibility" (12% of the variance) and dimensions (4) 'Ability to facility Communication "(7% of the variance) can be compared with the two previous factors to communicate effectively.

In Sweden I have only found Lundberg’s(1991) dissertation about intercultural communicative competence. He carried out an educational experiment with pre-schools teachers during their education. He shows in his experiment that it is possible to improve intercultural competence through rather limited training and education. He had in total 8 lessons. The total amount of time for training and teaching was 9 hours. 6 of them were cognitive education. There is a significant improvement in their intercultural competence. But if that kind of intercultural competence (there are many problems to “measure intercultural competence”) has any important role to improve integration of refugees in our society we cant be sure about.

2.5.4 Inter-cultural adaptation and learning

Grove & Torbiorn (1985) have indirectly touched on intercultural competence in an article, which deals with a new concept of intercultural adaptation. The authors use three psychological constructs to describe the process: (1) Applicability of behavior, (2). Clarity of the mental frame of reference, and (3) Level of mere adequacy. It is important authors assert that describe intercultural adaptation in terms of a person's cognitive and emotional "inner world". Applicability of behavior is described as the degree of compliance between a person's behavior and his surroundings. Particularly
important is the person's own perception about compliance. "Clarity of the mental frame of reference" is described as a person experience the panels of the degree of uncertainty in the behavior towards the environment. A different environment affects a person's frame of reference while a certain person's frame of reference influences (through the person's behavior) is the social environment. "Level of mere adequacy" represents the person's own internal "yardstick" on what is an acceptable level in terms of the degree of "Applicability" and "Clarity". High values of these variables could mean a successful intercultural adaptation.

I agree with this reasoning when defining inter-cultural adaptation as a purely subjective experience aspect of one party. A person with a high degree of cross-cultural adaptation therefore need not simultaneously exhibit extensive general or culture-specific intercultural competence.

There have been some attempts to describe intercultural learning. These attempts also describes indirectly intercultural competence. First I present here two variants of the same basic model.

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These models can, in my opinion, be perceived in different ways. The model by Rohrlich is a further development of the model by Hoopes. I think of the model primarily as an idealized picture of how an intercultural learning sequence should be developed. When a person first comes into contact with
another culture finds herself in a state of ethnocentrism. What then happens is that she becomes aware that cultural variation is present. After a while, the person also becomes increasingly sensitive to cultural variation, i.e., he draws attention to cultural differences in a number of areas (e.g., in the form of non-verbal communication, values, etc.). After more contact and knowledge the person has the opportunity to understand these differences cognitively and emotionally. These differences are accepted and/or respected eventually. It is now the first option to be fair to evaluate and appreciate certain elements of the other culture. After some time it has been in practice internalized elements of the other culture and made them a part of your own personality.

A partially different way of looking at the model is to perceive that this learning process is something you continually have to go through towards other cultures' behavior and value patterns. Although the cultures we know well, there are areas of behavior, which we lack cultural awareness about. We thus appear ethnocentric towards people in these behavioral areas. I think it makes sense to look at the model from both of these perspectives. One perspective may be more considered as a general relationship towards another culture, while, the latter is more specific and related to individual people and situations.

The models above imply certain assumptions about intercultural competence. An intercultural competent person must be aware of cultural differences and sensitive to those in everyday contexts, i.e., he must discover them when they occur. This probably can often seem easier than it ability of times. There is one thing to recognize that eating habits vary culturally, but how many have perceived eye behavior as culturally learned in contact with people from another culture? This also applies to the skilled person to accept, respect and understand (cognitively in the form of knowledge about the living conditions,
for historical reasons, etc.) cultural differences.

Bennett (1986) has developed a model (see below) and speaks about "ethno relativism" as a form of intercultural competence. He presents a developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. If you compare this model with the former of Rohrlich there are some common traits. Both have as a starting point in ethnocentrism. What Rohrlich terms as cultural awareness can partly be part of the Bennet stages "denial" and "defense". Rohrlichs stages "sensitivity" and "comprehension" has in common with the Bennet’s stage "minimization". "Acceptance" and "adoption" have their direct counterparts. Bennet's integration phase are lacking in Rohrlichs model.

The three different stage in ethno relativism can be seen as different degrees of intercultural competence. In particular, inter-culturally competent is thus the person who has reached to integration stage. This means, according to Bennett (1986):

...this person has incorporated difference into the "meaning of life" and is thus capable of acting as whole functioning individual outside the constraints of any particular culture. In this stage, difference in general becomes integral to identity ...., it is having integrated the skill of defining cultural context into one's ongoing sense of self. (a.a., s. 58)

THE ETHNOCENTRIC STATES AND THEIR STAGES
The first phase in integration involves an ability to evaluate a situation fairly in relation to the cultural context. Actions and values of good or bad behavior is always made in relation to the cultural environment.

Although Bennett does not see constructive marginality as an absolute final stage of intercultural competence poses the same end point on his continuum.
One of his definitions of constructive marginality goes as follows: "The Experience of one's self as a constant creator of One's Own Reality" (ibid, p 62). Bennett believes that a state of marginality, which does not "belong" in a particular culture, can provide a valuable basis for intercultural sensitivity. Marginality has been wrongly allowed to stand for it's negative, which may be associated with partial stand outside a particular culture. Something that both Adler (1976) and Bennett (1986) points to the terms of intercultural competence is the requirement that the individual experiencing both continuity and ongoing development of its existence. This condition is reminiscent of a category Condon and Yousef (1975) uses in connection with the accounting of cultural value orientations namely "Being-in-Becoming" (ibid, p 2). As I interpreted this category implies the right to be under constant development.

2.5.5 Cultural Features of Swedes

Background

The following two quotations to illustrate the problems of objectively characterize the features of their own culture.

... The people of the Nordic race has shown a courage and a contempt of death as any other race could hardly have correspondence to.

(Brandell, 1944, p 48)

Some breeds, such as the negro races, stays at a low intelligence level, while other breeds, such as the Nordic, achieves a talent that can be described as genius.

(a.a, p 74)
Probably it was this type of "research" that contributed to studies of Swedish culture typical features in the form of values and mentality was almost taboo for decades in the postwar period. It is not until the 80s that Swedish behaviors and values returned to attention in the literature. Sometimes it seems that cultural differences as such have been something almost taboo in the general debate during the 60s and 70s in Sweden. Perhaps one reason could be that many associated cultural differences with the racist ideas of different cultures. Values which people associated to racism and Nazism. We must not forget that in Sweden Nazism and racism also came into the academic world. At Uppsala University a Department for race biology (eugenics) was established already in the 20's. A scientific book that can be related to this activity was called “svensk folkkäraktär” by Brandell (1944). This book and several books later, included textbooks in the public school expressed racist values. Non-European Cultures in school books were presented in a prejudiced way, even after the openly racist values disappeared among the political leaders (see example from Berg, 1981; Olsson, 1986; Rubin & Sohlberg, 1981; Ohlsson, 1988). This means that large parts of the adult population learned "facts" about the different cultures that scientists now totally disagree about.

Some of these descriptions can now earn a certain inter-cultural interest, namely to understand their own cultural traits and ethnocentric images of other cultures. Of course, the picture is more complicated than that. Many times these prejudiced and egocentric descriptions of "foreign" cultures was used by colonial powers. It is hardly a secret that even scientists actively contributed to this mendacious description of reality.

Already Verner von Heidenstam published at the end of the 1800s thoughts
about the Swedes' mood. Sundbärg published 1911 book "The Swedish people's temperament." Even today takes ethnologists developed this book as an important contribution to the understanding of the Swedish culture. From the 1920s seem publications about Swedish culture had a clear focus on racial differences (see for example Brandell 1944). In the postwar period seems very little have been published concerning Swedish mentality, behavior or character traits. Maybe it was a consequence of the Nazi emphasis on cultural differences as a result of racial differences. Anyone who at this time began to discuss cultural differences could be accused of harboring racist values or express national chauvinism. It is only in the 80s, as a series of works published, and several research projects started. (Daun, 1984a, 1984b, 1989a, 1989b; Frykman & Lofgren, 1979; Gaunt and Lofgren, 1984; Hannerz, 1983; Arnstberg, 1989; Alsmark, 1981, 1984; Allwood, 1981; Laine-Sveiby, 1987; Phillips-Martinsson, 1981).

I will summarize some of the ideas put forward by different authors. The presentation does not of course claim to be exhaustive. It can be seen as a personal brief summary of the aspects that I judge to be valuable to bring up for understanding of intercultural communication with the Swedes. It is knowledge that refugees and immigrants need to know and understand in contact with Swedes.

To show feelings
Several writers who dealt with Swedish culture seem to agree that the Swedes have little tendency to show emotions, especially in public spaces. For example, few Swedes who are willing to accept strong emotions from any close friend or relative in the bus, in the restaurant or on the street. To show emotion in public spaces has thus low status. This may contribute to politicians who show strong emotions often not taken as seriously as a
politician who "keeps his composure." Studying the Swedish parliamentary debates and compare them with the corresponding debates in the UK, Israel, Argentina or Italy can note a considerable difference. Strong emotional expression occurs much less frequently in Sweden than in the countries I just enumerated.

Differing approaches for the strong emotions between Swedes and non-Swedes can be a major cause of conflict and intercultural difficulties.

Conflict Avoidance
Conflict Avoidance behavior among probably linked with a tendency to not like to show emotion. Therefore it is not surprising that Swedish experienced conflict avoidance of many other nationalities. Instead Swedes want to strive for consensus. Concepts like "spirit of consensus" or "wide" solutions (eg in political/trade union context) are probably expressions of this tendency. In school, it is not unusual to which teachers would rather try to focus on what unites us than what divides. Expressions like "in principle, we have pretty similar views," or "let's not mess" is common among Swedes. People who are nonetheless willing to have differing opinions and additionally argue for them are not considered rare in Sweden as awkward and "rowdy". Therefore, it is not unusual that many immigrants of Swedes are regarded as troublemakers and difficult to deal with.

In many workplaces, especially where they have reason to believe that the staff is very heterogeneous regarding values, political discussions are very unusual. The reason for this is probably that you want to avoid conflicts. This tendency to avoid conflictive topics many immigrants perceive as indifference among Swedes. Many Swedes perceive instead that they show respect by not expressing dissenting views or by not touch on topics that may
become conflictive. (Lundberg, 1991)

Shyness
Especially Daun (1989) has noted that shyness among Swedes is accepted to a greater extent than in many other countries. Shyness in Sweden can be something quite positive, while in many countries it is perceived as something negative. As the effect can uncertainty and fear of social situations occur and uncomfortable speaking in front of many strangers.

Factual / practical orientation
Some ethnologists have called the factual-practical orientation in the Swedish culture "scientific performance of everyday life". This means that in many contexts in Sweden primarily scientific or factual arguments and that this has a high status. At the political level, this is expressed among other things the state power's efforts to implement changes in the factual-practical based arguments.

Sweden's extensive government investigation activities can also be taken as an example. There is a strong belief that these studies will lead to solutions to the problems being studied. Swedes have great confidence in rational solutions. Not infrequently we hear politicians, who do not want to answer a question with a reference to "an investigation looks included on this question". The politician often seems to mean by his dismissive response is that the investigation can be influenced by his view (that is not enough factual) or that it would be presumptuous to already have an idea without sufficient objective evidence. (Daun, 1989)

The belief that many Swedes seem to have that information and knowledge will reduce Ford learned and negative attitudes is probably also an expression
of the factual-practical orientation. It seems to reason that people will behave sensibly if they have sufficient knowledge. This effect is probably behind Sweden's extensive regulatory and prohibition systems. There are prohibitions against alcohol and tobacco advertising. Meanwhile, there are regulations requiring that tobacco products must declare the contents. Similar rules apply to car commercials. Advertising campaigns like "Social Board recommend 6-7 slices of bread per day" can also be attributed to this orientation. The kind of good advice and admonitions, which occurred on the Swedish milk packages, according to some ethnologists also express similar traits in the Swedish culture (Gaunt & Löfgren, 1984).

It seems, however, that several countries in the Anglo-Saxon world have followed after Sweden in this trend. Today, most countries in Europe must have facts advertising on their cigarette packets and bans smoking in public places.

Naturally, most of the rules are formed by Swedish conditions. This means that the rules are sometimes comes into conflict with other objectives that apply in Swedish society. It appears that local regulations often perceived as more authentic than the overall goals or! For example, when a Sikh refused to wear a regulatory cap that bus drivers in Gothenburg, for religious reasons, it was the local rules on public transport, which was considered the most valid. Meanwhile, there are laws against religious discrimination, and the parliament has decided to cultural freedom of choice for immigrants. The Sikh bus driver was threatened with dismissal unless he put on regulatory cap. One argument put forward was that "he had to cope with their religion in their leisure time. It makes all the others!" (Swedes)

*Positive outlook for solitude and nature*
Swedes appreciate being in nature is well known. More surprising is perhaps that many Swedes values loneliness positive.

The positive view of nature takes several forms. Swede's eagerness to spend weekends and holidays in the countryside in their own holiday house is an example. To walk (alone sometimes) in the wild is something that attracts many Swedes, while the majority of Southern Europeans would rather see it as a necessary evil. There will be an almost impossible task to face a peasant in India or Zambia and try to explain that you voluntarily (for example during the holiday) had left alone for a week to walk in the wilderness. Perhaps the astonished farmer regard you as mentally ill or that you had serious personal problems.

The positive view of nature is expressed in nursery school and school. There are a number of activities related to nature. In the nursery, it is not uncommon with themes like "our animals", "forest", "tree" or the seasons. Bad weather is no obvious barriers to venturing outdoors, while there are so many other countries. Studying the Swedish film, music, art and literature, one can also see that nature is a common theme, and that it is treated differently than in many other countries (eg Latin and African countries). Many immigrants and refugees is therefore surprised some Swedes' choice to use the holiday to wander alone in the wilderness for a week or to get up at 4 am one Sunday morning to see the birds.

This positive view of nature is also reflected in the language (Allwood, 1983) and how nature generally occurs as a positive symbol in our society (Allwood, Frängsmyr & Svedin, 1983). There are also many metaphors in Swedish. Many Swedish family names are also generated from our nature.
As regards positive view of solitude takes it may not be as clear expressions. Maybe it is because it is so obvious to us. The fiesta Swedes want the opportunity to get some privacy in different contexts. It may be expressed in the form of a wish to take a walk alone in the park, or to be alone in his room. In many cultures, for example, Arabic and Latin, this could very well be interpreted as meaning that the person has serious personal problems. Maybe these behaviors together with the Swede often expressed desire to not be someone to load, does not answer or interfere with their relatives, friends and neighbors. Meanwhile, one might venture to say that many Swedes are not completely comfortable in this voluntary social isolation. It is common for Swedes speak appreciatively of social interaction behavior in other cultures, where it is easier to introduce a social community.

Breakdown of private and public life
The split in the private and public life is as far as I can see incredibly important that to understand certain typical features in Swedish behavior and Swedish society. Not least, it is important for newly arrived refugees and immigrants to better integrate into Swedish society. According to some authors Luther "debt" to this clear division into private and public. Examples of how this division manifested in daily life is that public officials and power practitioners (eg politicians) should not be criticized because of their actions in private. Only when private events very clearly related to the exercise of public authority is allowed private events become public. It may e.g. apply a tax assessment president, who also is sentenced for aggravated tax fraud. The tendency is that it has become increasingly common that private business becomes public. In particular, the politicians, who increasingly seem to be audited on their personal life? (Lundberg, 1991)

Many Swedes become close friends with colleagues at their workplace but
have never actually spent time outside the workplace. This is something that surprises most of our immigrants, i.e., that one can consider someone as a close friend but never really hang out privately.

 Possibly our tradition not to make jokes so disparagingly of public figures is an expression of the breakdown in private and in public. This difference attention was recently in connection with the attack in Paris on a famous French satire magazine. The tolerance seems to grow for derogatory jokes about public figures. In the UK for example there is also a completely different approach. Where it is completely acceptable to joke impaired spirit (and it can be very debilitating) of politicians, royals and famous people in general.

*The case with homosexuality*

  In Sweden, and many other western countries the perception of homosexuality has changed dramatically the last 50 years. From seeing homosexuality as a disease or a terrible sin from a religious perspective we have (more or less) today accepted homosexuality as something acceptable and that all homosexual have the same rights as everybody else. You have the right to execute your sexual preference as a part of human rights. Partly this change in attitudes can be related to this tendency to separate private and public life. In Sweden we have basically no political opposition against homosexuality.

  But many of our refugees are coming from parts of the world, where very strong and hostile values are associated with homosexuality. This fact can create problems in relation to the integration of refugees and immigrants in the society. In some countries (like Uganda) there have even been proposals about death penalty for homosexual activities. It is easy to understand that
people who embrace these very strong negative attitudes about homosexuality can face integration problems if he/she tries to discuss the issue.

The case with equality of the sexes

As with homosexuality the values around equality of the sexes has changed dramatically the last 50 years. Many of our refugees have their roots in much more traditional societies where the sex roles seems to be similar to what was the case in Sweden for 100 years ago. Of course this is an area of complications for immigrants and refugees if we don’t have a mutual understanding. The case with sex roles are also an important issue for disputes within the refugee family. Sometimes the women are more willing to adapt to the Swedish values than the men.

To do the right thing

Some authors believe that Swedish culture is characterized by the requirement to do the right thing. At the same time there seems to be a trend in a partially opposite direction. 15-20 years ago, honesty and sincerity watch words. Today, these concepts sometimes within certain groups are synonymous to naivety or stupidity. A person who 20 years ago was called the horse rogues considered perhaps today as a smart businessman. Despite this, the Swedes among many immigrants have a reputation for wanting to do the right thing at all possible and impossible contexts. Many of our immigrants are surprised when Swedes want to pay for coffee (in the cafetera), cigarettes or petrol when someone drives them home.

Should we seek explanations for these changes is the answer most likely in the social changes that have taken place in Sweden. There is an increasing anonymity among the population when we for 100 years have moved from
small rural communities to large cities.

Other properties that sometimes usually mentioned as typical of the Swedes, which may partly be related to the processed so far, silence, seriousness, slowness and fear of social situations.

**Communication patterns**

In Sweden it is particularly linguists, who are interested in Swedish Communication pattern (Allwood, 1981). Some of the typical features highlighted is that Swedes have positive view of the silence, low tolerance for disruptions, thanks often, have the ability to say yes / no to breathe the air and use to get feedback signals.

Admittedly, they say sometimes in Sweden to an embarrassing silence ensued, but as a whole we are in Sweden beneficial to silence. Much, however, suggests that there is a regional variation within the country, so that silence is accepted and used more in northern Sweden than in the south. Saying that "Speech is silver and silence is golden" and "food silences the mouth" is not unique Swedish proverb, but illustrates this positive view of silence.

Probably contribute this positive view of the silence that most Swedes want a short silence during conversations between two or more people. It is not uncommon that Swedes say "let me speak to the point," or "it was I who had the word" when someone else wants to take over the word. Here there are big differences internationally. While we in Sweden say we give the floor to someone they say in France, "to take the word" from anyone. A positive review of a child in Sweden could be that it is "quietly". In many other cultures, it would be almost worrying to speak of a child in terms of that it's
quiet.

High voice is perceived in Sweden usually a sign of aggression or anger. In most countries where it readily accepts that cancel each other during a call, there is often a stronger voice than is common in Sweden.

This knowledge and understanding is of great importance for refugees and immigrants to have knowledge of their opportunities to integrate in a positive way in Swedish society.

A habit that many Swedes are to thank for everything possible and "impossible". It is not unusual for Swedes to be grateful when they get back money in the supermarket! Or to thank for a call when they end a call. Many Swedes believe it to be obvious to thank for the food, while it occurs in very few other countries. There are also reports that immigrants in Sweden interpret the Swedish behavior as insulting when Swedes just mention the food. The immigrant thinks the Swedes appreciate something obvious and indirectly belittle other elements of the social community.

What also is unique internationally seen are the Swedes' way to say yes and no and breathe in air. Immigrants are sometimes perceived this as the disease symptoms of heart or lung problems.

In some cultures considerably more feedback signals occur than in Sweden. Japanese tend e.g. to express "yes" for each utterance from the other caller. Iranians in Sweden often express "I know" as a confirmation that they understood what the other person said. This can cause misunderstanding and irritation.

In a study of Swedish and American children (5-11 years) fear of
communication with others, it was not surprising that Swedish children were more anxious than the American children (Watson; Monroe & Atterström, 1989). My hypothesis is that the major changes in Sweden. Today's rising "Kindergarten generation" will exhibit significantly less fear of social situations and communication apprehension than previous generations, who have not had the social training that day care environment means. People increasingly extensive contacts with people from other cultures ought to affect the Swedish culture in the same direction.

3. Methods

3.1 Object of investigation

Only 1000 m from Växjö city is a residential area with more than 5500 residents called Araby/Dalbo, which emerged in the 1960s and 70s called The Million Program (“miljonprogrammet”). This initiative was a political attempt to eliminate the housing shortage, but led to many social problems in many of these areas. Often they live in segregated and monotonous and unpleasant environments. Araby currently has social problems such as high unemployment, segregation and high sickness rate. High sickness rate is often measured days at home per month due to sickness. If real improvement and development should take place in Araby it is necessary with a holistic approach to the area including both physical and social action. Almost 70% has a foreign background, sickness level is much higher, and employment level is the lowest in Växjö. Even the local "fear level" (like fear for walking alone late at night) is much higher in Araby compared with other parts in Växjö. This is showed both in Bunars report (2012) and several master these and other reports and essays. But what has also been seen is that people seem to like their living area due to many activities and good social network.

City of Växjö seems very aware of the problems in the area and has also
initiated (partly with special money from the state) several projects and also supported initiative from people living there and from external researchers and practitioners. Suzana Mocevic at City of Växjö is working to coordinate work about integration and diversity issues. Recently City of Växjö has started an integration and diversity preparation council led my Lars Edqvist (MP) as chairman. Two other politicians, Malin Lauber (S) and Oliver Rosengren (M) are also involved. This reflects a serious attitude and approach to the issue. On the provincial office level there seems also to be an awareness and preparedness to meet the challenges of the new diversity society and the exclusion of some people from new cultures. Kornberg's County has a special inclusion officer, Gisela Andersson and also an integration developer, Susanne Hallström.

3.2 Actor - Network Theory (ANT) and Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

As I recently pointed out I see ANT as my main theory to analyze my "problem" in society, discrimination, segregation and exclusion with focus on the situation in a residential area in Växjö. Hopefully I will later carry out an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) I collaboration with Växjö community.

When I first outlined the project I wrote that the project is heavily inspired by Action Research and ANT, Actor-Network Theory and Appreciative Inquiry (AI). I thought that the planned project perfectly suited the intention of social change, improved social skills and living conditions (as often ANT and AI are based on). According to ANT all objects and people should be understood as an interacting network. The ANT includes also the subject of this interacting network gives me the opportunity to even see the non-human things that players in this context. If you start looking at connections and
networks you will confirm the notion that these are made up of smaller elements. These elements can be both human and non-human. To call all of them actors is a way to not establish differences and to treat all players equally in the network.

Bruno Latour writes in his book *Reassembling the Social* (2007) that the actors created in relation to each other. Using the word player makes, according to him you can never be sure of who and what is acting for an actor is never alone in acting. The actors act together as a group and should therefore be studied together. Without any action and some players will be no culture which according ANT is important to pay attention?

AI, represent an action research approach with generative capacity. It develops as long as social science is expanding its sphere of influence to embrace new types of issues that provide an innovative input into organizational life.

Some scientists argue that the success of the AI process is based on the assertion of six freedoms; to be recognized in a relationship, to be heard, to dream with others, choosing to contribute, to act with support and be positive. The result is a winning combination of both improving relationships and results by people jointly innovating visions, missions, strategies, culture and identity in their organization or their community. Others point to the process strength from a neurobiological perspective where the interview processes in starting up change efforts are likely to give rise to a powerful current of positive markers in the brain of everyone involved. This in turn leads to a sense of security in the group and between the individual’s involved releasing energy for shared learning and exploration.
Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is based on the assumption that all organizations possess something that works well and that these forces can be a starting point to create positive change. This is something that works well and is defined as an organization's positive core. The AI is both a theory and a method for analyses, identify and disseminate examples of success. The AI can be summarized as a common knowledge seekers as well as a theory for system-wide change initiatives with a view to develop a group, organization or society's vision and will. (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2008).

In summary appreciative inquiry represents a viable complement to conventional forms of action-research; and finally, that through our assumptions and choice of method we largely create the world we later discover.

I see ANT first of all as a method for understanding the reality while AI is more a method for action. But both are based on a constructionist principle.

3.3 Qualitative methods

3.3.1 General aspects

Qualitative methods are used primarily when you need a deeper understanding of the target audience, or where you do not really know what information from the target group that might be interesting. It may be that the organization conducting the survey believes that a certain thing is important, for example, the development of a service and want to ask about this, but really it's something else that is important to your target audience. Through a qualitative approach it is more likely that this information will forward the understanding of the topic than when using a quantitative method. Qualitative method gives the target group more freedom to express their views, for
instance through an unstructured interview or focus group dealing with current issues.

The extent to which the audience participates and influence varies depending on the qualitative method used. The relatively tightly controlled interview templates person has little opportunity to submit additional information, but even this is often acquired a wider range of information than if the instance a questionnaire with set responses had been used. Through open consensus conferences increases the possibility that the audience get the information that you have not thought of before.

Here's a brief description of what should be considered when conducting qualitative studies and a number of qualitative methods. In connection with each method are reported advantages and disadvantages of each method. In general it can be said that a disadvantage of qualitative methods is that they are relatively expensive to implement such an extent that it is possible to draw general conclusions from the results. Therefore, it may be a good idea to complete a qualitative study with a quantitative.

Most often it is not possible to draw general conclusions based on a qualitative study. But even if so, it is important that the selection of persons to be included in the survey reflect the target population, based on the purpose of the survey. Of course this will not be a problem in our study. Further useful information, e.g. be obtained by calling parents of young children instead of pensioners, to a meeting about how early childhood education should be developed to meet users' demands. So based on the purpose of the investigation and try to include individuals in different ways represents the object to be illuminated.
In qualitative studies are governed usually not the discussion / questions in any substantial degree. But then it still takes a certain control, it is important that it is done in a neutral way. The leading discussions / interviews can namely affects the results of the survey. This can be done both consciously and unconsciously. With regard to this, the leading discussions or perform interviews have good experience in qualitative research and be neutral in the area to be discussed. Furthermore, the questions should not in itself be unnecessarily limited. They should also be neutral on the purpose of the investigation.

The analysis of the results of a qualitative research focus should be on finding abnormal data (one person thought ...), not finding recurrences (3 people said ...). It is more interesting to report what emerged in the survey, area wise, than to report how many people said X. A qualitative study does not usually have the amount of respondents required for it to be relevant to talk about proportions. To draw general conclusions from a qualitative study with few participants say the least, very risky. The results of a qualitative study may in turn lead to the need for and implementation of a qualitative study to see how large a proportion as such do something specific in a query.

3.3.2. Focus groups

To focus groups invited representatives from the target group discussion on a topic. These discussions led by a neutral moderator. The goal of the discussions is often to get as much information about the area as possible. Depending on how the debate evolves, the leading discussions need to be involved to different degrees. But the leader of the discussions will mainly listen and incorporate new issues when it suits them, to take the discussion forward. Focus groups are suitable if there are issues which need both broad and deep information from the target group. A clear advantage of focus
groups is that all participants contribute in real time to the discussion. Ideas that are born of what others say is taken up continuously, which contributes to the development of the discussions.

A disadvantage of this method is that the results, like the results of the interviews, often are not possible to generalize. This is because there are often relatively few participants in the focus group. There is also a risk that everyone in the group will not be heard to the extent that is optimal. The leader of the discussions will try to counteract such tendencies if they occur.

Work on a focus group can be said to contain four different phases. These are:
- The planning phase, producing objective and Query Wizard. -Recruit those who will participate in a focus group, and also if possible a moderator. - Document discussions and analyses the results of the discussions

Using focus groups have proven to be stimulating for those who participate in the discussions. This is in itself logically if there is a preponderance of people who want to discuss and would like to make something. It is generally easier to recruit those who are interested and engaged than those who are not as keen on discussing. Although focus groups are less useful to produce generalizable results; it may be of interest to get the opinions as widely illuminated as possible. If so, it may be important to recruit people who are less interested in participating in a focus group. Depending on what the goal is, with a focus group, it may be important that there is a good spread in the composition of the focus group in terms of gender, age, possibly user/not users.
3.3.3 Interviews

Interviews done by more or less guided questions, often to a single representative from the target group. A person can also be interviewed while the other representatives of the public will sit up and listen. That way extra listeners are affected by what has been said previously, which may provide some added value in the end. But it can also lead to interesting observations have not brought forward, if extra listeners consciously or unconsciously guided into other ways of thinking. Although the process of interviewing can be said to contain four different phases, roughly the same as for the work of focus groups.

- The planning phase, producing objective and Query Wizard
- Recruit those who will participate in the focus group
- Document the interviews
- Analyze the results of the interviews
- Compile analysis and discuss the results.

One advantage of the interviews is that it is easy to ensure that all views to be heard and to monitor that all respondents have expressed themselves in all matters.

One disadvantage of interviews is that it is often relatively expensive per respondent, which in turn often leads to the number of interviewees will get smaller. So much often that it is not possible to draw any general conclusions based on interview results.

"An interview is an exchange between two persons conversing about a theme of common interest" (Kvale, 1997: 27). The interview requires that the interviewer have a purpose for the call, i.e., a problem in the survey. The problem in turn results in bringing out issues around the theme, resulting to
an interview guide. The goal of a qualitative interview is that the researcher will investigate and produce the interviewees' own reflections, approaches, perceptions and experiences. A qualitative interview can be conducted in three different ways, unstructured, semi-structured and structured (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2011).

An unstructured interview is characterized by the interviewee determines the call structure and control the interview focus and content. The structure of the interview is not planned in advance exact wording and order by the interviewer. This approach is especially suitable for sensitive topics when it does not inhibit the interviewee talks and reflections (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2011).

When selecting a semi-structured interview based interviewer from an interview guide that has been made in advance. The call is based on a theme with a number of key issues but there is room for deviations from the interview guide of the interviewee chooses to take up something interesting. Scientists disagree whether to ask open questions to all interviewees or interview questions should be adapted to the next period (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2011).

In a structured interview design interviewer in advance an interview guide in which the issues and the sequence is exact. Open questions can be asked but it is more common with closed questions and defined the response options which the interviewer controls the conversation. This approach is similar to the arrangement of a survey (Justesen & Mik-Meyer, 2011).

3.4 Reliability and Validity

These two concepts are central to all research, particularly in the social and
behavioral sciences. The concepts become particularly apparent in connection with the testing of various types, e.g. intelligence test. First can you really test "intelligence" (however you can define it) and measured in a safe manner? The first is when the high validity (whether the test picks up "intelligence") and measuring it in a reliable manner (high reliability) if it will be very similar results for people with the same "intelligence". Ways to measure the validity and reliability can vary depending on the context and purpose. During the test, it is common to measure reliability by having similar issues or tasks, and should certainly answers / results to be virtually identical. In my study both validity and reliability are important. In the description and analysis how the situation is for refugee’s validity will be important. But both aspects are obviously of importance in my study. During interviews of course validity is of great importance. The reliability will be a little more difficult to control in a study of this kind. The validity will partly be secured by the people who will take part in this study and by the deep knowledge about the subject matter I have.

3.5 Social impact?

This work is very heavily inspired by action research methods Actor - Network Theory (ANT) and Appreciative Inquiry (AI). At the same time, I have not included it in the paper normally included in particular the AI. I expect the social impact of my work. But it will be a very small scale. It will at best be done with those I interviewed and their families.

Hopefully, there will be a continuation after the paper has been completed. Then the work can proceed according to AI. I shall return to the discussion of the social impact of analysis and discussion section in the results.
3.6 Quality Criteria

Ultimately the purpose of this work is to improve integration and intercultural skills of refugees and immigrants in Araby / Dalbo in Växjö. Criteria for the integration and inclusion can be divided into subjective and objective. The subjective criteria deal with individuals positive and negative experiences of integration, discrimination and segregation, while the objective criteria relates to factors like accommodation statistics, sick leave, unemployment rate and academic performance. It will not be possible to any great extent measuring and examining these quality criteria in any greater extent in this study. Even here, I will return in the analysis and discussion section later.

I planned my empirical work I had these conditions: I had decided to conduct a number of interviews and at least one focus group. The idea was that I would conduct the interviews first and then finish with a focus interview. Initially, I had hoped that Municipality would help me with interviewees. Unfortunately that did not happen, but I enjoyed myself getting interviewees. The criteria I had set to be interviewed were. It could either be included in the category of 'refugee' (man or woman who is under 35 years old and speak Swedish well but came here as a refugee), or you could be any kind of official with extensive contacts with refugees in Växjö.

During the selection process, I have not had the ambition that it will be a representative sample. Partly it was practically impossible, and secondly, it was not crucial to get a representative sample. Rather, I wanted to find examples and mechanisms that are relevant to the problem of integration.

Before the interviews began, I conducted some tests interviews with acquaintances with the background that the "real" interview subjects should
have. The interviews and discussions in the focus group were conducted during a few weeks in March and April 2015. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed against the aims and issues for the study.

**First step**: I carried out interviews with “young immigrants/refugees” (25-30 years) who knows Swedish good enough and with own experiences as immigrant child and with knowledge about their parents intercultural and transcultural experiences.

I want to find out how refugees/immigrants themselves reflect upon their own or any immigrant friend's “exclusion”, lack of integration, unsuccessful schooling or reasons for unemployment. I think it is crucial that these interviews are “deep interviews” so I can reach the “truth” and not just “surface” arguments. The answers we often already know about. I must try to come behind the “persona” and reach the true “I” or inner self. If possible I also will try out “focus groups” as an alternative method to collect important information.

**Second step**: I carry out rather unstructured interviews with staff (which can be teachers, social workers, police for example). The important aspect is that they daily interact with refugees or immigrants.

I used my contacts within “Länstyrelsen” and my informal network within the refugee and immigration community. When I had collected my informants (I plan to interview around 10) I started to interview them. I used a kind of “deep interviews” with help of some basic areas of discussion. I spent a little more than one month for interviews and focus group’s discussions with young immigrants/refugees and staff.
During the selection process, I have not had the ambition that it will be a representative sample. Firstly, it was practically impossible, and secondly, it was not essential to get a representative sample. Rather, I wanted to find examples and mechanisms that are important for understanding different aspects of the integration process.

Before the interviews began, I conducted some test interviews, with similar background, as the "real" interview subjects should have. The interviews and discussions in focus group were conducted during a few weeks in March and April 2015. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed against the aims and the issues that the study is based.

A qualitative interview can be conducted in three different ways, unstructured, semi-structured and structured. In this work, I chose to use semi-structured interviews; because I had previously give themes that I wanted the person would reflect on. The aim of my study was that I would try to understand how young refugees and professional experience multiculturalism and integration. I wanted a reasonably open interview, where it would be possible for the interviewee to describe reality as he / she is experiencing it. The advantage of semi-structured interview is that it gave me the opportunity to steer the interview based on my theme so do not call derailed from the topic. The disadvantage is that as interviewers must add emotion and knowledge aside; this is not easy in practice. I recorded interviews with the voice recorder and then listen and write down on paper. It was difficult with this as it took a long time to transcribe the interview. This was a disadvantage at the same time it was an advantage because I had to listen to the interview material several times, which in turn meant that I could get a deeper analysis of the interviewee's statements. It is important to prepare before the interview by reading into the subject that you are
researching. Another important factor is that the main issues to be open enough to interview the person to be able to express them freely and that we will have the opportunity for a good result.

3.7 Ethical considerations

At the start of my research, I reflected on the ethical aspects I needed to take into consideration before I collected the data. The Swedish Research Council (Forskningsrådet, 2011) describes four main rules for the collection of data. They are information requirement, the consent requirement, and the confidentiality and use requirement. In the implementation of the interview, it is important to openly talk about the purpose of the investigation of the persons involved, the duration of the interview, what kind of equipment you will use, the interviewee's anonymity and who can take some of the work (Trost, 2010). The interviewees were informed orally because of the purpose of my investigation and who would take part of the recorded interview material. Anonymity was also an aspect that was announced, both in connection with the booking of the interview and during the interview to avoid misunderstandings.

4. Result and analysis

4.1 Introduction

I think most people agree about that one of the biggest threats against a prosperous world are the conflicts and hostility between humans and human groups. Differences in basic values, religious beliefs, cultural values and of course differences in living conditions and power play an important role in these conflicts and exclusion. Injustice between individuals and groups can
only be changed by slow political processes and as a result of strong political argumentation. But education and training about subject matters, which are not politically controversial, ought to be rather easy to carry out. And the result might even influence good political change, which can greatly reduce conflicts and segregation in the world.

Important reactants in this analysis of segregation and discrimination in Araby are among others: 1. Dominating values in society about refugees and migrants. 2. Values about refugees and migrants perceived through results from the election 2014. 3. Local political decisions concerning migrants and refugees. 4. Common human social psychological reactions and acting towards "strangers". 5. Specific local conditions, incidents and conflicts. 6. Internal problems within the ethnic community and within the family and the community of relatives.

4.1.1 Dominating values in society about refugees and migrants.

In the Swedish society there are strong indications that there is 10-30 % of the population who has hostile attitudes and negative values about non-European migrants and refugees (which has dominated as migrants and refugees since the War on Balkan with many refugees from Bosnia and Kosovo) Al-Baldawi (2014). Depending on how the questions has been formulated in different polls negative attitudes to receive refugees can grew as high as around 40 %. When it comes to how we handle the immigrants in Sweden very few (around 2 % in most political parties) think the government has made a good job. Not surprisingly the SD-supporters (Swedish Democrats) are the most negative. A circumstance, which can be of importance, is the rather new phenomenon of beggars (often poor Roma people from Romania and Bulgaria) outside many
shops in Sweden. Most likely the reactions towards these Roma people differs between our populations. But my experiences, from different countries in south Europe, indicate that the treatment of the Roma people is even worse than in Sweden. I was surprised during my first visit to Bulgaria, which has a big Roma population, when I often saw open discrimination and hostile behavior among the Bulgarians towards the Roma population.

4.1.2 Values about refugees and migrants perceived through results from the election 2014.

Even if we can see many negative attitudes towards refugees/migrants we can be pretty sure that voters for SD, The Swedish Democrats, represent a rather strong and negative attitude towards refugees in Sweden. If you vote for the SD you often don’t only are against expansion of refugees in Sweden but you also want to reduce the number and also to make it more difficult for those who has come. In the Swedish election on the national level 13 % voted for the SD party. In the Kronoberg County the figure was 15, 58%. In Växjö community the support for them were 12, 23 % while in Alvesta the support was 21, 55 %. In Araby the support was 11, 00 % and in Dalbo it was 7, 24 %. What might be interesting and a little surprisingly was that the social democrats (s) and the Left ving party (v) got more than 70 % support in both Dalbo and Araby. According to later polls 2016 the support for negative attitudes towards refugees and their presence in Sweden have not become less.

To sum up this it is for sure obvious for many migrants and refugees that a certain number of Swedish citizens are hostile (or at least not positive) towards their presence in Sweden. Of course this fact generates a wish to have other refugees around them even if most refugees hardly "choose" their area of living so much. They end up in living areas where they can find a free
apartment they can afford. In most cases it will not be in the most exclusive areas.

4.1.3 Local political decisions concerning migrants and refugees.
In the newly created integration and diversity, the preparation becomes Lars Edqvist (MP) who shoulders the role as a committed chairman:
- The pace of integration must increase. Those who come here have to learn Swedish faster and get to work. No one should be unemployed when there is so much to do. There must also be more meetings between natives and newcomers to Småland. It's fun to get to know new people. It seems that Växjö community has a rather positive and ambitious policy concerning integration of refugees and migrants. Beside that Växjö community has chosen 2015 to create a board for integration and multicultural issues Växjö has also in febr. 2015 evaluated the reception and caring of young unaccompanied refugees.

4.1.4 Common human social psychological reactions and acting towards "strangers".
As I have indicated earlier I perceive some of the hindrances for good integration as "natural". Intercultural understanding and competence are basically "unnatural". Ethnocentrism is more or less "natural" and can lead to fear or even hostility towards refugees and migrants. Also the refugees act in an ethnocentric way and will find many things in Sweden scary and strange. They will also find other immigrants as “strange”. The theories around postcolonial values are less "natural" but more "manmade" in relation to colonialism and power. Therefore these values ought to be easier to "fight back” than "natural" ethnocentrism. But both can cause severe problems for the integration process.
4.1.5 Specific local conditions, incidents and conflicts.

There have been a few conflicts (fights etc) in Araby both 2013 and 2014. There are a few gangs in these areas. If you search the Internet for "fights" and "Växjö" you get several hits for the last few years. Almost exclusively, they are about fighting and "riots" in Araby area. But it is difficult to say that these circumstances play an important role in the integration process. But for sure it does not improve the integration process by knowing that the police often come to Araby.

4.1.6 Internal problems within the ethnic community and within the family and the community of relatives.

Both experiences from the interviews and theoretical knowledge confirm that there exist both transcultural and intercultural difficulties and severe problems, which can create hindrances to develop good integration and can cause both discrimination and exclusion.

What became evident very soon was the importance of the family and relatives for the integration process. Even the contacts with relatives in their home country were often of importance in many cases.

The “screening” of social networks for several family members was also very obvious. Some young refugees (predominately females) often had to get “acceptance” for their choices of friends in Sweden. If it was a female, who had any interest in a male friend it became often more important to get acceptance from other family members. If there were conflicts with some relatives (in Sweden or in another country) it influenced the whole integration process in Sweden.
4.2 Interviews with officials

I interviewed a police officer, an official at the civic centre, another officer and an educator.

4.2.1 Specific working skills in multicultural environments?

No officer had received any special education or training to interact with the refugees. One official named however "seminars that addressed the different things in terms of traditions, religion, etc.” (IP 1) One of those interviewed, however, had a refugee background himself. Two officials said that they owned a certain competence through long experience of encounters with immigrants and refugees.

One had taken part in a seminar about “invandrarkunskap” (immigrant knowledge) many years ago during his training.

To the theoretical knowledge and understanding of intercultural relations and theoretical aspects of integration was low reflected in the responses (and the shortcomings of the responses) I got when I asked about the relatively basic concepts. No one understood what trans-cultural processes involved. One could neither distinguish between mono chronic and poly chronic time perception or the difference between authoritarian and democratic authority. They had neither any deeper understanding of the difference between individualist and interdependent cultures. Such a basic concept like ethnocentrism was not entirely comprehensible to those interviewed. Not surprisingly, they were also puzzled by cultural analysis tools as field independent cognitive style or cultural differences in paralinguistic (like high/low pitch) or strong/weak voice volume)
A simple summary of the officials' skills and training to work in multicultural environments shows that they – more or less - lack intercultural education and training. Moreover, they seem to lack good tools to understand and manage cultural variation and the trans-cultural processes the refugees go through.

This would perhaps not be any major problems, if it wasn´t for the fact that my interview victims, often consider themselves as knowledgeable and experienced. This says for example, one of my interviewees: "My many years of working in my profession and my contacts over the years with various groups of immigrants and that I have worked for several years in an area with high immigrant density has given me great experience and knowledge of how immigrants look at Swedish society but also knowledge of how various immigrant groups and cultures works". While expressing this the same person also express rather naive notions about cultures and cultural content: "I work with the intention that they should preserve their culture no matter where you come from” ... and "violence is common to use in some cultures... ". For me, the first statement indicates that the person does not see the natural connection between existential life conditions and cultural content. The person seems to have a notion that culture is something static that people can take with them and preserve. For me that is a rather “naive” understanding of culture. This official does not see that the cultural content is something dynamic that is constantly changing and is influenced by the new life conditions and experiences. Furthermore, the perception of violence would be something culturally very doubtful. Possibly, one could argue that in the upbringing of children physical punishment contain "cultural" elements. Otherwise, the propensity to use violence is linked to the personality and experiences of a certain social environment (e.g. among criminals).
Another official expressed rather typical stereotypes about muslim arabs and their perceptions about women. When I asked if they saw any differences in behavior between shia and sunni muslims they (honestly) said they did not know the difference or where the different muslim groups lived.

4.2.2 Barriers and opportunities for integration?

The most obvious argument for successful integration for refugees is to learn the Swedish language. It highlights in all the interviewees. One individual mentions that this is also strongly influences Swedes' positive willingness to "accept them." For many Swedes, good Swedish work as a signal that the refugee "accepts the Swedish society" and want to be a part of Sweden. This would lead to mutual acceptance and inclusion. Other important factors for successful integration are "higher education" influencing the ability to get a job. As examples of the highly educated being easier to integrate one of the interviewees mentions Iranians who fled during the revolution. The person also believes that European refugees can be integrated more easily. Willingness to avoid that immigrants do not close completely within their own group and live in "their" area is also addressed as important for successful integration. An official with a refugee background puts it like this: "To sit at home and think of home, watching the home country TV channels, etc., then it is only my body here but my soul is at home." He said this most as a kind of neutral observation than as a critical remark.

Ethnicity is both a choice and a mirror of one's background and upbringing. Therefore, ethnic discrimination is difficult to "defend itself against". Even ethnic identity may change, but the stigmatizing image others may have on one's ethnicity can be difficult to change. I heard a few of such comments during my interviews. Even about my own ethnical background (being a Kurd) I got some stereotypical generalizations. Even if some of these
stereotypes can contain some truth about the culture I find it not professional to express these stereotypes in a situation like this. These kind of stereotypical “knowledge” should just be used as point of references in intercultural encounters.

As barriers to successful integration is also mentioned "fear of the unknown". It can both apply to the Swedes (one person mention this) and to the refugees (2 mentions this). Another obstacle that a person brings out is the Swedes shyness and caution. The Swedish society's poor ability to utilize refugee’s competence is taken up by two interviewees. Some others mentioned the general difficulty of getting a job. An interviewee brought up “the poor language training”(SFI). Another pointed out that the long waiting to commence language training hampers integration. The latter had a refugee background and had to wait six months before he could start the SFI teaching.

4.3 Interviews with young refugees

4.3.1 Introduction

In total I interviewed nine young refugees, in individual interviews and a focus interview. They came from 5 different countries but represent 7 different cultures; Iranian, afghan, Kurdish, Iraqi, Yemeni, Somali and Syrian. All were Muslims except one who was a non-believer.

Which specific skills are needed to manage the intercultural interaction in Sweden?

Not surprisingly, these young people have not received any special education or training to live in Sweden. Or perhaps more accurately, they have no special intercultural education or training. However, they have obviously got
a pretty extensive training in the Swedish language and indirectly the culture. Most had been in the Swedish school and had just passed the SFI and adult education.

It's a little more difficult to "measure" their intercultural competence. But all of them understood the difference between an individualist and an interdependent culture. Even though they did not directly use these two concepts. However, the understanding of why there are cultural differences is very low. Many see the cultural differences "traditions" or possibly as a consequence of religious conviction. One person even brought up the old idea of “climate” as a reason for cultural differences.

The area where the understanding is the greatest of cultural differences is individualism versus collectivism / interdependence. In Sweden, one experiences the family's influence on the individual is small. All interviewees clearly see that they are more dependent (strongly influenced) by their parents (than young Swedes). Even those who are 30 years today say that they are willing to submit to their parents' preferences (even in such private matters as choice of partners). No one would like to conduct a marriage without their parents' acceptance. Ideally, they want their parents' direct support.

Although they were aware of the family and relatives being much more important in their parents' home countries so they saw no direct connection to the development of society and the social fabric of their countries. It was understood, however, that the modern Swedish welfare system with sickness benefit, unemployment insurance, social security etc. actively contributed to making the individual more independent and autonomous. But they did not point it out automatically as a reason for the big difference in the degree of
individualism.
One girl told me that she acquired a Swedish boyfriend. Early in their relationship she made clear that they could only be together if a relative was also present and that there could be no sex before marriage. Already after she met the Swedish boyfriend, she informed her parents and her relatives that she had met a Swedish boy and asked for their acceptance. She could never consider to meet a Swedish male friend without acceptance from parents and relatives.

Most also had an indirect knowledge and understanding of the vision of authority differed between Sweden and their homeland. They were all from cultures, which usually are named as an authoritarian authority view while Swedish culture is termed as a democratic authority view. However, they had no direct understanding of what these orientations represented, but saw their own culture as "more stringent". Two of them said that it was much more important to obey people like a boss, a teacher or an older male person in their home country than in Sweden. They also said that it does not seem so important to respect and to obey people with power and authority in Sweden. They did not understand the difference between the Swedish form of "to conquer authority" (through democratic elections or shown competence) and their own cultures' ways to have a given authority by having a certain role or position (e.g. oldest male member of the family, a teacher or boss).

They had a vague awareness of the differences in the perception of time between their own culture and Swedish. When I asked them to explain, it was, however, most of the differences that buses and trains do not have the same accuracy of the schedules in their home countries as in Sweden. It also pointed out that social time arrangements (e.g. visit at the home of a family) had the same meaning. This means that they had a vague awareness of
4.3.2 Obstacles and opportunities of integration?

The biggest obstacle to good integration into Swedish society of young refugees, according to themselves, is the discrimination and negative stereotyping from the Swedish majority society. Even the mass media attention on "Muslim" terrorism constitutes an aggravating circumstance according to most young refugees. Even those who are not Muslims note these negative stereotypes.

One of those interviewed told of an example of discrimination. The person (from Iraq) had received information that he should get an internship at a Swedish company. He got the address and should begin the practice. When he appeared at the company and would speak to the contact person they announced to him that it must have occurred a misunderstanding. There was no internship they said. A woman (from Somalia) had a similar experience. She had contacted a landlord, who told me that there was an apartment she could get to watch (to see if she was interested). She decided a time when she would come. When she showed up the next day, the landlord looked surprised and said that she unfortunately already had let another person to get the apartment. She provided no explanation why she was not told that to my interviewer before the visit. Several of the other participants announced similar experiences they themselves or close friends had experienced. It concerned e.g. during visits to clubs, restaurants and other public places. But many also said that it sometimes felt as more unpleasant than the direct practical discrimination is indirect and unspoken. Not to feel welcome, not to
be invited, not to be received in the deal as "other customers" or o be 
discriminated by the police or government officials. But at the same time 
most of the interviewees experienced to be well treated in secondary school 
and in college.

The discrimination (conscious as well as unconscious) of young refugees are 
exposed to, can easily be understood and explained using the concept of 
ethnocentrism and even theoretically based on postcolonial theory. Both from 
the theoretical concept of ethnocentrism and postcolonial theory, one can 
understand that many people are xenophobic (or xenophobia) and therefore 
discriminate refugees. The degree of discrimination will search probably 
gradually due the "different" look and fugitive occurs. Skin color, dress, 
behavior (such as language) is probably superficial "markers" that decides. 
Outer religious attributes can also be crucial.

According to several researchers (e.g., Bennett (1986), intercultural 
competence fundamentally "unnatural" (but necessary) and instead is 
ethnocentrism natural state. Understanding and respect for other cultures 
must be conquered with experience and cognitive skills. The old colonial 
structures (which were created by Europeans) founded the pronounced racism 
(especially against Africans and Arabs) which still persists in many societal 
structures.

Another area where the young refugees showcase a fairly common approach 
is trans-cultural and intercultural issues. They have a pretty clear awareness 
that there are wide cultural differences and understand even parts of the trans-
cultural problems. However, they do not possess any deeper understanding of 
transcultural problems their parents most likely experienced the first years in 
Sweden. The concept of "culture shock" told them e.g. nothing directly.
When I discuss more deeply with young non-European refugees they agree that trans-cultural processes is also an important hindrance for good integration processes in Sweden. They also agree that they (and most of their friends) are mostly unaware of these cultural differences and transcultural processes. But regarding some of these cultural differences they also say that they are not willing to adapt. For example they agree that they are more attached to their families (for good and for bad) but they say that they are not willing to become so "independent" (or "selfish" as they perceive it) as most of their Swedish friends are. But at the same time they also confirm that their own ideas and need for "personal freedom" and independence did not match with their parents wish to support and "control" their lives. They realize that their own experiences in Sweden have made them a little more "Swedish", more individualistic, and independent than their parents who most often has lived most of their lives in their "home-countries". Especially during their teenage years they felt that this often caused a lot of conflicts and friction. Especially those who grew up in Sweden during their teenage years often felt they lacked the freedom they saw around themselves. Often it was common issues like “freedom to dress, to visit friends, to take part in parties, disco, school travels or even freedom to arrive one or two hours after school finished”, which cause irritation and small confrontations. But for none of our participants has this led to total breakdown with their parents. But three of our interviewees had friends where the conflicts between themselves and their parents had led to total breakdown and no communication. In one case it even led to threats about punishments.

One of the refugees mentioned another story, which most likely can be related to individualism and personal integrity. Once he was outside a supermarket and a very old lady came out with two very heavy bags filled with food. It seemed to be very heavy and difficult for the old lady to carry
the bags. But she started to walk home (there were many houses with flats nearby so he assumed she lived rather close to the shop. Therefore he approached the old lady and offered her to carry her bags to her home (he came from a culture where it is very important to show respect for elderly). But instead of being thankful for the nice offer the old lady acted as she was insulted and refused to accept any assistance. What puzzled him also was the fact that he knew he spoke very good Swedish and hardly looked like a "foreigner".

When it comes to difficulties and conflicts between themselves and Swedes (including some immigrants who has lived here for a long time) it is sometimes difficult to sort out what might be "cultural" conflicts from ethnic/cultural/discrimination or pure personality conflicts. But after discussing more in depth about what has caused severe irritation or conflicts between themselves and representatives of the Swedish society there are some clear indications. The problem was that they themselves had limited resources to be very outspoken. The reason is simple. They have often not the cognitive and verbal tools to indicate the real reasons. But after given them some tools there are some obvious results.

First it is the obvious differences in the dimension individualism versus interdependence. But I have already discussed that dimension but first of all in relation to the family. *Three young refugees said that they have felt "lost" and without orientation in life due to the fact that they lost relatives and close friends in Sweden (relatives and friends that they had in the country where they were born). They meant that they could not discuss and reflect about daily issues as they were used to. Sometimes they have felt embarrassed several times to tell Swedish friends that they lacked their cousins, grandmother or an uncle. Often they did not even reveal their thoughts or emotions. They also meant that their own family was negatively influenced by*
this fact. The whole family felt more vulnerable in Sweden they said, despite the new security they experienced in Sweden.

Which cultural "conflicts" were more important than others, and more problematic for integration, are difficult to judge but there are some areas of importance. One is for sure how to handle and express emotions. Two informants mentioned first that many in Sweden had often misunderstood their emotional state of mind. Sometimes they had just been talking with relatives in their mother tongue and Swedes often thought they were angry on each other.

Most likely the reason was simple: In my own culture we like to speak rather loud and to interrupt each other when we have interesting and intensive discussions. But in general they found Swedes very sensitive to emotional expressions, esp. negative. Five informants’ meant that they had had severe problems with Swedes due to differences in expressing emotions. Two thought that they lost Swedish friends due to this. They meant that they had just been honest but from their perspective Swedes were just too afraid to handle a small difference in opinion. Even in meeting "officials" (like at school, social welfare or people at "arbetsförmedlingen") my informants meant that Swedes seem to "panic" when strong negative emotions are shown.

Another area of difficulties to "adapt" to Swedish values and behavior seems to be how to relate to authorities. Most of our young refugees and immigrants seem to have come from cultures where authority often comes from position, age, power, sometimes wealth or education. Often you are "given authority" due to your given position or background. In the literature I think that is called "authoritarian" authority. In Sweden we support a more democratic authority, which you must "earn" through knowledge, experiences or has received democratic support or confidence by others. The refugees and
immigrants has noticed that sometimes as "lack of respect" towards "authorities" in Sweden but also as "lack of guidelines" from authorities in Sweden. Sometimes they also felt insecurity in front of authorities in Sweden. They could not read the "communicative signals" as they were used to. And to act very obedient towards authorities in Sweden they understood was not always something positive. Indirectly they confirmed that they were also rather uncomfortable to take own initiatives and to act independently in relation to bosses, teachers or other authorities. They sometimes expected clear directions and demands from authorities but got none. Two of the young adults said that this had happened in the beginning of their schooling time in Sweden. They were used just to repeat what was written in the books or what the teacher had said. But they realized after a year or two that Swedish teachers were not happy with that. In Sweden they understood (in the hard way with bad grades) that they must analyze and make own conclusion about what was written in the books.

5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This is an attempt to put the phenomenon of segregation / integration based on my theoretical framework ANT and my "help theories". The first thing that is important to establish and assume is to realize that segregation and globally and locally, and that everything is done in a social psychological discrimination rests on the basic psychological mechanisms, basic value orientations context.

Thus, ethnocentrism is as an important basic explanation due to the negative behavior toward "strangers" and foreign behavior. This benefits, of course, ethnocentrism and discrimination. Postcolonial theory contributes to a further
explanation of discrimination and racism. Many of the incidents that my informants have reported can be explained by ethnocentrism, which can be almost by some seen as a natural law. I consider ethnocentrism as completely natural and the most important "ACTANT". Meanwhile, today racism is no longer politically "correct" why very clear xenophobia and pure racism is countered by current political values.

Unconscious and including clarity victimization and discrimination it can, however, live its own life often hidden and clothed in other concepts and terms. The reason is the same as for limited xenophobia and racism. What I basically want to say is that ethnocentrism is natural and that both xenophobia and racism can be "derived" from ethnocentrism. Then it is another story that there have been political and historical movements and developments in favor of these orientations. I argue that the whole European colonization of the world was built on racism. Most people consider distinct ethnic or cultural discrimination as politically and ethically wrong and even totally unacceptable.

The special negative treatment of immigrants and refugees suffered by people from Muslim countries can be understood by theories regarding islamophobia. The negatives treatment of Muslims in Sweden can be historically traced back as far as the Crusader-movement for almost a thousand years ago. (But as far as we know, no one from todays’ Sweden participated in the crusades!) But that the very negative stereotypes was very common in Sweden some 5-600 years ago you can still evidence for. In very old churches in Sweden you can still find small drawings of Muhammad as a devil!!! It was not so long time ago as all muslim religious expressions were forbidden in Sweden. Perhaps the difference in treatment and prejudice against other religions is not so surprising given that religious freedom introduced as late as in the 1950s in Sweden.
An important "ACTANT" that contribute to physical segregation is the so-called million programs that were carried out in most major cities in the 60s and 70s. It was an attempt to eliminate the housing shortage. Many of those who lacked housing were poor or young. This led to many such neighborhoods receiving over time low status. When young people got a little better economy they often moved to other areas that were perceived as more attractive. At the same time more and more refugees and immigrants came to Sweden. Usually it were (and still are) these areas where it is easiest is to get a home. This has led to an increasing share of "non-Swedes" inhabiting these "Million program areas". In many such areas are foreign born constitute a very strong majority. Växjö is no exception in this regard.

Another important "ACTANT" is definitely the "political and economic environment. This applies both locally, nationally and globally. It is perceived almost as a matter of course that unemployment and poor economic development promotes negative attitudes and values towards the" strangers. "In several European countries has strong xenophobic and anti-immigrant parties developed. Sometimes it has been combined with strong nationalism. In Sweden, there was no such party until New Democracy came on the political scene in 1991. They had a clear anti-immigrant image but the party crumbled inside and lost parliamentary influence already 1994. The Sweden Democrats was formed in 1988 but lacked significant political support for the first 10 years. It was mainly through the 2006 parliamentary election, when the party got close to 3% of the votes, which the party came to have a political role. Today, with about 13% of the voters behind it represents SD's political image as a refugee hostile and nationalistic a new political "reality" that indirectly and directly affects the segregation and discrimination in Sweden.

Many of the examples that I received from refugees' experiences of
exclusion, discrimination and difficulties to be included can be related to the different "actants" I reported. However, it is of course impossible to specify causal relationships and the strength of them. Most of the actants I identified so far are actants that contribute to segregation, exclusion and discrimination. Furthermore, I have identified a number actants that contribute to transcultural and inter-cultural difficulties within the refugee family. These difficulties and problems will probably also contribute to segregation and exclusion relative to the majority population.

The factors that can contribute to positive changes that improved integration, inclusion and reducing discrimination is harder to identify. Some of them are also factors that are difficult to influence. This applies e.g. economic development locally and nationally. Political value entries are of course difficult to influence except perhaps indirectly. The project’s starting point was from the start an educational project where I had great faith in intercultural understanding and skills. After interviewing a number of young refugees and professionals who daily interact with refugees’ remains my conviction that intercultural competence is an extremely potential change factor. My interviews revealed that awareness, knowledge partners limits and competence is very poorly developed at all interested, I come in contact with. Therefore I am still convinced that raised awareness, knowledge and competence about intercultural and transcultural issues are a strong factor for change. But it will need training and education at many levels, in school, in SFI-education and through public media, like radio and television. Of course you can also do it locally through specific projects. The best should be if it could be carried out in different languages.

5.2 Results

First, it is perhaps important to note that maybe I did not get the answers to all questions I asked even though I feel that I have fulfilled my purpose.
Descriptions and subjective images of the lack of integration in Sweden are reported in the results section. Extensive descriptions of trans-cultural difficulties, which are of great importance for integration, are also available in the result section.

But what I initially was most interested in, namely how education and training about intercultural understanding and interaction, I got no clear answer. There are indicators in a positive direction, but it can hardly be argued that there is evidence that training and education on intercultural issues actively promotes integration in the short and long term. It is mainly theoretical arguments and previous individual experiences that speak in this positive direction.

If you make an analysis according to the Actor - Network Theory (ANT) presented the following model, I think.

The starting point for the analysis is the social structure, the economy and the political system. Both the structure of society and the political system should in principle encourage integration. Today's urbanized society with extensive contacts both physical, social media and the mass communication should promote understanding and respect for other people's living conditions. The economic system should to some extent also foster integration. But today's economic situation, including very high unemployment, is definitely not favoring positive integration.

A circumstance that has an important role and "reference point" for integration policy is Sweden's historical circumstances with regard to immigration and refugees. If we limit ourselves to the period after the Second World War, we note that Sweden has been a fairly open country in terms of immigration and refugees. During the war, a lot of refugees (sometimes
children) arrived from neighboring countries. Directly after the war refugees arrived to Sweden mainly from Germany and the Baltic countries. Almost immediately came migrants from Italy, Yugoslavia and Spain. Swedish society and the industry was intact by the war and could now produce maximum when the needs of wood, steel and manufactured goods was very widespread in Europe and other countries affected by the war. A large supply was labor. This led to growing labor immigration until the 1960th. Until then there was basically free immigration to Sweden. In the early 70s took Pinochet over in Chile after a military coup. In Greece there was also a military coup. Then began a growing stream of refugees coming to Sweden. They came from Argentina, Uganda (Indians expelled by Idi Amin), boat people from Vietnam and an increasing number of refugees from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. In principle, we accepted all refugees from the communist countries after the Iron Curtain had been established. You got refugee status automatically if you came from a communist country. Especially many refugees came after the Hungary crisis in 1956 and after the Prague Spring in 1968.

This historical background of immigration and refugees in Sweden should be a positive force for integration today. But one should remember that the vast majority of these immigrants came from European countries or cultures. Moreover, the majority of these immigrants and refugees were directly requested on the Swedish labor market. It facilitated probably this integrative process considerably. Since the 1990s, the vast majority of the refugees have come from non-European countries (Kosovo Albanians and Bosnians are an exception).

Another factor that probably does not favor integration is the "structural change" which is happening in society in terms of accommodation. Newcomers today are usually economically a "disadvantaged group", and
also lack good networks in the Swedish society. Usually newcomers (especially refugees) must settle down in "low status area" (which was built to combat the acute housing shortage in the 60s and 70s), which often are socially vulnerable areas. These areas are mainly in medium and large cities. The second mortgage option is the former industrial communities or small communities in rural areas. This accommodation benefits rarely positive integration into society.

The current political governance is of course of great importance. Especially in terms of political power insights and understanding of the integration policy mechanisms and opportunities. The political will seems to be both of today's government and the one that existed before the 2014 elections. The only party that equate between integration and assimilation, is Sweden Democrats. All other parliamentary parties have abandoned this policy. Since it is a different matter that there are probably political voters from all parties that comprise this thought.

It seems however that awareness of integration complexity to be absent from most political parties. Jobs and Swedish language skills appears to be the standard response of all parties. The only political variations seem to be how to create jobs and develop quickly a good Swedish knowledge.

At the same time it seems as almost all parties try to develop strategies for how to reduce the number of refugees and relatives can come to Sweden. It would, inter alia, gradually increase the demands on the refugee. This makes it likely hoping to counter the Sweden Democrats successes and at the same time that they are extremely keen to distance themselves from the Sweden Democrats' policies on refugee policy.

For me perhaps the most important factor (which is directly influenced) is
knowledge in school and in society as a whole in terms of understanding and capabilities to manage immigration and the encounter between groups and individuals with very different existential, cultural childhoods and benchmarks.

There have been some attempts to influence knowledge of the situation on these issues. As far as I could learn, there are mainly two important initiatives. Both were about the same, namely in the 80s and 90s. In 1984 the Swedish parliament voted through a motion to an intercultural perspective should permeate all education in Sweden. This decision had no clear conceptual or cognitive content but led gradually to intercultural education and the display came to be established as a concept. It is unfortunate in this context seems to be that the concept was very different content. It was written often in different educational documents. But not infrequently given the widely varying content.

Immigration and Refugee Board started in the early 80s a project on "immigrant knowledge". They wanted to get that as a subject in secondary schools but it was never so. However, you had to start a series of courses and pursued actively its message in schools and colleges. It also produced a variety information material, writings and some books. Immigrant Knowledge had not focused on the integration problems or human interaction between people with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

To understand the integration possibilities and limitations for individuals must go down on the family and individual level. This applies both to the new arrival's willingness and ability to be integrated and the "Swedish family" or the individual's willingness and ability to become an integral part of the new arrival's day. Where society does operates very much like the individual's actions. Skills, willingness, social resources, networks, attitudes,
values, etc. are all of great importance.

My starting point and the adoption of the whole essay remains. Intercultural awareness, understanding and skills are an unproven resource and opportunity to radically improve integration in society. The individual refugee family can conquer that competence. But it will only marginally improve the integration as a whole in society. But the more the members of society who conquers these skills, the stronger will the integration process be affected as a whole.

My study and its results confirm this assumption, I believe firmly. But to prove this causality is almost an impossible task. Even if one manages to get started large-scale training with mass education in schools and through radio and TV programs will always be able to question the causality in these events that is not cultural skills leads to better integration. But it is a very plausible assumption of integration is improved by a large-scale effort is not cultural competence.

6. Conclusions

Of course a natural question to ask yourself is: What have I achieved with my study of investigations? What conclusion can I draw and which recommendations can I give? Even if I was not able to fully test some of my assumptions and hypothesis I think there are several important results I hope responsible people will take advantage of.

1. For example Växjö community ought to develop educational programs at all their homes and housings for refugees. They should try to give competence in these issues both for all staff, parents (which now takes care of
refugee children) and all refugees.

2. The schools ought to have qualified teachers who can teach about transcultural and intercultural understanding. In schools (esp. with high rate of refugee children) teachers ought to teach about transcultural processes to improve family relations and integration in society. My interviews with young refugees strongly support this need.

3. Staff working with immigrants and refugees ought to get qualified training in intercultural communication, understanding and transcultural processes. From my studies it is obvious that the persons I have interviewed lack basic understanding of these issues.

4. What was maybe most surprising during my interviews were the fact that most young refugees lack self-awareness of their own culture. The same was also true about Swedes and other nationals who interacted with refugees. They were not able to characterize their own culture in any rational way in terms of cultural dimensions.

I think and hope that this understanding is used in a good way by the authorities in Växjö (and elsewhere). I will do my very best to communicate my results to people I was in contact with when I prepared my study. But I have noticed, even within my own organization ”Arbetsförmedlingen” that the awareness of the importance of intercultural and transcultural competence is low. I saw a proposal recently about how to promote integration among recently arrived refugees in Sweden. They had a proposal about ”knowledge about Swedish society”. But everything (except one thing) was related to ”hard facts” in the Swedish society. The only exception was ”Allemansrätten”. But nothing about the ”software” in Swedish culture. And
absolutely nothing about self-awareness about their own cultural heritage and what it means in contrast to the Swedish culture.

I also went through a great number of advertisements (from municipality, well-known companies who arrange lodgings for refugees, “landsting” and small private organizations or companies) who were looking for staff for working with refugees, both adults and young people. NOT ONE SINGLE advertisement asked for intercultural competencies. Some advertisements for “flyktinghandläggare” at municipality had such wishes. But even here it was unusual. So it seems rather difficult to convince people about the need for intercultural competence in this area.

I one sense this can be seen as rather surprising when we know that the Swedish parliament already 1984 took a decision about that all education in Sweden should contain an intercultural perspective. But still most teachers I have come across lack awareness of what intercultural education

So I am afraid that is a long way to go before intercultural education and training will be an important and compulsory element in integration work.

One way to understand the results is from the intercultural perspective itself. One of the most challenging tasks in intercultural training is to realize, understand and identify (and hopefully overcome) your own ethnocentrism. And that is not easy. What characterizing ethnocentrism is the fact that you are not aware of it in most cases. And the most dangerous forms of ethnocentrism you assume that your own culture is superior to other cultures. Therefore it is also difficult to see the need for intercultural training, which among others will challenge your cultural assumptions and value orientations. Cultural assumptions and value-orientations you hardly are
aware of you have.

7. References


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