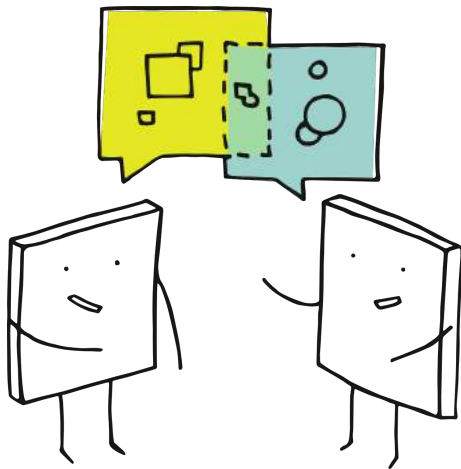




## Intercultural Competence: Drawing on the Swiss Experience

June 30 – July 19, 2019

Course Director: Dr. Danièle Klapproth Muazzin



### Learning Outcomes:

- Understand how communication works
- Gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, culture and identity
- Identify the main components that make intercultural interactions challenging
- Examine models of intercultural dialogue and coexistence in Switzerland's multicultural/multilingual contexts and discuss their strengths and weaknesses
- Draw on the experiences of expert practitioners in the field of intercultural negotiations to reflect on best practice
- Build skills for handling intercultural encounters in constructive, inclusive and effective ways



### Topics of this Summer School:

Intercultural communicative competence has become an increasingly important skill and valuable asset in today's world characterised by super-diversity and the global flows of people, goods and information. In this summer school we will refine our skills to interact appropriately and successfully with others who are linguistically and culturally different from ourselves. To do so we will engage with the following topics and activities:



1. Acquiring skills in discourse analysis and linguistic pragmatics
  - understand communication as an interactive process of meaning construction and negotiation
  - understand speech as action
  - learn how to apply conversation analysis
  - explore directness vs. indirectness in interactions
  - study face, relational work, and questions of power in language use
  
2. Working towards a deeper understanding of what we mean by 'culture', we will seek to
  - see culture as something we 'do' rather than 'have'
  - examine perceptions of self and others: seeing the 'I' behind the 'eye'
  - deconstruct easy stereotypes and essentialist descriptions of individual cultures
  - train our observational skills to see cultural formation 'on the go'
  
3. Exploring multilingual/multicultural contexts
  - draw on the Swiss example – with four national languages, a plurality of additional languages in everyday use, as well as English as a lingua franca – to reflect on questions of language and cultural identity, power relations and the politics of representation
  - explore the connections between language socialisation and becoming a member of culture(s), and reflect on our own multiple identities
  - examine the interrelationships between interculturality and English as a lingua franca
  
4. Meeting experienced practitioners in the field of intercultural negotiations
  - learn from the experiences of experts who have worked in such contexts as the United Nations, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the peace research institute Swisspeace, the International Committee of the Red Cross, as well as representatives of local NGOs, and engage with them to reflect on the challenges and potentials of working in highly diverse conflictual contexts
  
5. Working with stories
  - develop an anthropological-linguistic understanding of the role played by narratives in the construction of personal and cultural identities
  - examine stories' rich inclusive potential to build bridges as well as their darker side when used to entrench opposing conceptions of Self and Others
  - meet practitioners who use storytelling, creative writing, applied drama, and other artistic forms to foster intercultural understanding



## 6. Conclusions

- building the skills to identify the various causes that may lead to intercultural misunderstanding
- cutting through essentialist discourses of culture and understand the politics of how these get socially constructed
- using our own rich resources of (inter)cultural competence to draw threads of experience that can connect us with others

### Selected references:

Recommended preparatory reading:

- Holliday, Adrian. 2013. *Understanding Intercultural Communication: Negotiating a Grammar of Culture*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Hua, Zhu. 2014. *Exploring Intercultural Communication: Language in Action*. London: Routledge.
- Scollon, Ron, Suzanne Wong Scollon and Rodney H. Jones. 2012. *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

Further reading

- Duranti, Alessandro. 1997. *Linguistic Anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hua, Zhu (Ed.) 2016. *Research Methods in Intercultural Communication: A Practical Guide*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Paulston Christina Bratt, Scott F. Kiesling and Elizabeth S. Rangel (Eds.). 2012. *The Handbook of Intercultural Discourse and Communication*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

The program is coordinated by **Dr. Danièle Klapproth Muazzin**, English Department UZH, with distinguished guest speakers from government, multilateral organizations and academia.

Excursions to Bern (World Heritage Site) and other cities will enrich this 3-week block seminar.

