Bridges To The Future
- facilitating tolerance, intercultural dialogue and learning

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**Preface**

This report is a first attempt to let an EU-program undergo an examination grounded in learning theory. In 2007 the European Commission evaluated its former youth-program and stated that

“In a European context, intercultural learning and understanding can be used to describe European young people encountering and interacting with young people from other European countries”

This reports shows how such a learning concept is far from enough to measure successful “intercultural learning”. I hope this piece of work can inspire a debate about evaluation and that it will question whether “learning” always can be evaluated meaningfully by economists and social scientist, as is the case with the European Commission’s last evaluation of its youth program.

Since this is a problem on the European agenda, I have found it appropriate to write in English. Though I am not schooled in this language, it might cause a few inaccuracies. If this be the case and if it disturbs the coherence in my argumentation I hope the reader will confront me with questions to clear up any misunderstanding.

During my research I have received indispensable help from Elena Petrova with transcripts, Marie Louise Kold with the focus group interview in Russian and critics of my translations and finally Dr Alison Taysum from University of Leicester with general critic of the reports first chapters. Thank you to all of you!

Copenhagen 2008
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2 Neither the current staf nor the “expert network” seem to include a researcher with academic knowledge of learning.
Chapter 1: Introduction

In 2006 the EU decided to extend the “Youth in Action”-program for another 7-year-period financed by a new appropriation of more than 885 million Euros\(^3\). This amount of money corresponds to 10% of the costs of the Channel Tunnel or 200% of the budget of Roskilde University with its 8000 students. More than 50% of the money is spent on projects promoting and developing “young people’s active citizenship” “solidarity and tolerance among young people” and fostering “mutual understanding between young people in different countries”.

EU has gathered a brief description of all granted projects in 2007\(^4\). A reading of the document shows that a vast majority of the activities are different kinds of exchange programs where groups of young people meet for about six - eight days doing all kind of different more or less relevant activities in order to promote active citizenship, develop solidarity or foster understanding between young people from different countries. The question seems to be whether it is possible to learn something during a six days long program. First of all because six days seems to be a short period of time, for instance, to “develop solidarity”, especially when taking into account, how much time the established educational system spends on teaching young people to read and write. Any pessimists glimpse a huge waste of money.

In October 2008 I received the opportunity to get a closer look on an exchange project partly financed by the Youth in Action program (YAP). In six days 58 young people from Russia, Finland and Denmark was invited to discuss the concept of “tolerance” in a youth conference named “zoom:tolerance” (z:t). The organizer was a Danish NGO based in St. Petersburg in corporation with Finnish and two Russian NGOs. Together with a Danish teacher and two Russian senior lecturers from Herzen University in St. Petersburg I was asked to plan the week and carry out the program. The only specific requirement named in the task was to facilitate dialogue and discussions about tolerance.

From my spontaneous point of view the week was not very successful. First of all it was extremely unclear what the participants actually learned about tolerance. Secondly, it became more and more clear that we had based the program on some

\(^3\) http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc74_en.htm
incorrect assumptions about the participants. We simply did not know enough about their backgrounds to facilitate a common language and forward-looking discussions. Finally it was very vague what the success criteria actually were and hence, how to evaluate the week and the learning practice. It seems that there was a gap between the practice and the wishes in the YAP.

There are no reasons to believe that z:t should not be a typical exchange event within the YAP. Therefore it is interesting and relevant to describe the gap(s) between the objectives stated in YAP and the practice. This knowledge might give reason to recognize different possible pitfalls and hence give ideas how to avoid those in future programs. In order to create a starting point for the discussion of this knowledge and how to impact future implementations I will seek to answer the following question:

How to bridge the gap between the objectives stated in the Youth in Action program paper and the learning practice of exchange programs like zoom:tolerance?

How to answer the problem statement?
In order to answer the problem statement I will analyze and describe the practice of z:t after which I will discuss the results from the analysis compared to the objectives in the Youth in Action program. Both practice and program papers will be interpreted through the theory of Niklas Luhmann. To make my choices of theory and methodology clear, and to present a coherent argumentation I will touch on the following topics in the following order:

Chapter 2: Background of zoom:tolerance
The next chapter describes the background and course of the conference to make it clear what the rest of the report is actually about, and how I am positioned in the field (a methodological discussion of the latter is saved to chapter 4). Finally, the chapter offers a short description of the different cultural backgrounds that the participants and organizers of the project represent.

Chapter 3: Theory and terminology
Third chapter shortly present Niklas Luhmann’s system theory and explains the central notions and theoretic terms. The chapter presents and places the notion of
“learning” and the main general objectives of the YAP as systems within the broader framework of the educational, political and scientifical functional systems.

**Chapter 4: Epistemology**
When the theory is clear, it is time to present why I have chosen to base my research on four focus group interviews and a survey, and how this fits into the theoretical understanding outlined in chapter 3. The chapter also discusses how the fact that I have a double-role affects my research since this is an event that I am deeply involved with.

**Chapter 5: Presentation and Analyze of the interviews**
Chapter five analyzes the interviews as different social systems, and closely views the self reference in the communication and what hereby can be said about the gaps between YAP and z:t.

**Chapter 6: Discussion of the problem formulation**
After the analysis and based in the theory it is possible to discuss how to bridge the gap between the practice as analyzed in z:t and YAP.

**Chapter 7: Validity and reliability**
Before any conclusion can be made it is necessary to let the argumentation undergo a critical examination in order to make it clear whether it can be imposed into the system of science. This requires that the research is reliable and the arguments can be seen as valid.

**Chapter 8: Conclusion**
Finally it is possible to present a valid and reliable answer to the problem formulation and pinpoint important issues to which one should pay attention when planning and implementing intercultural youth conferences in the future.
Chapter 2: Behind Zoom: tolerance

I have chosen to place a deeper description of the planning and implementation of the camp in the beginning of the report. It makes it easier to connect the next chapter’s theory with the “real” world and it gives a basic understand of the field and the background for the problems which I will return to and address in chapters 4, 5 and 6. Hence, this chapter presents the organizational background of the camp, the course of the events and finally a short description of some of the cultural inequalities between the participants.

2.1 Organisational background:

Z:z was organized in corporation between two Russian, one Finnish and one Danish partner: Educational Department of Primorsky District Administration, House of Nationalities, The Finnish Cultural Institute and the Danish Cultural Institute (DCI). Originally the initiative came from the Russians but has mainly been carried out by the DCI who raised the money and was in charge of the planning of the camp. The Russian partners contributed with some labor force and found both the Russian participants and the center where the camp was held. The Finnish Cultural Institute found the Finnish participants and contributed with a trainee who was at the camp during the week. Finally the Danish Embassy in Moscow did send another trainee to observe and be in charge of parts of the program. The camp was financed by the YAP and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

Finding the participants:

The participants of the project were found in very different ways. The Russian participants were selected from different schools around St. Petersburg, apparently as a kind of reward to able students. In Finland there had been a kind of competition between high school and vocational school students and the winners represented different schools and both native Swedish and Finnish speaking Finns from three different regions in Finland. The Danes were selected because of their membership of a NGO in Hilderod, 40 km northwest of Copenhagen. The Russian students were aged 15-16, while the Scandinavians were 16-17 with very few students being 18 years old.

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1 This is based on informal conversations with the Russian participants.
2 When Youth in Action could not support the project unless more NGOs were involved the class founded their own NGO, TraTeTaToT (“TRAvelling TEenagers TAlking Tolerence and Theater”).
3 This difference again has to do with differences in the educational systems. The Russians enter university in the age of 17 when the Scandinavians still are in high school or other vocational schools.
The different selection methods provided the participants with very different starting points. While the Russian and Finnish students only knew 2-3 of the other participants, the Danes arrived as group with already existing norms, hierarchy and roles among the members. Each group was followed by two adults who were responsible for the participants outside the program. Again this made a difference between the groups while one of the Danish adults new his pupils pretty well. On the opposite the Finnish and Russian teachers did not have the same accurate knowledge of their participants.

The program:
The program of the week was planned by a group of four program coordinators: Andreas Bendtsen, Svetlana Grigoryeva and Elena Petrova from Herzen University in St. Petersburg and me. Grigoryeva and Petrova sat in St. Petersburg, while Bendtsen and I sat in Copenhagen. Bendtsen knew the Danish participants while none of us knew neither the Russian nor the Finnish participants. DCI did not make any other conditions than pointing out that the program should focus on tolerance. Since we had no objectives to direct our work, we agreed on the following three objectives but did not agree on any specific themes and split the program as outlined in box 2.1. The objectives were:

1. To make the participants think and talk as much about tolerance as possible.
2. To make the participants suggest their own understanding of tolerance and how to implement tolerance in society.
3. To make the participants share and spread their thoughts and considerations about tolerance in their home-network after the camp.

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8 Bendtsen had two roles: On one side he was responsible for the program and on the other side he was responsible for the members of the Danish NGO outside the program.
9 Den alternative skole i Hillerød. My translation
10 The themes in the program were more or less a result “of the possible”. Especially in “power play” we tried to highlight different conflict potentials but it was very much up to the participants to choose those themes they themselves found interesting when they worked in the tolerance committees. It showed up to be different variants of “individuality” and “cross-generational” communication (this seems to be themes where the students feel (re)pressed by authorities like parents, teachers, and the legal framework firstly respecting citizens when they come to age. Themes like religion, nationality, sexuality, etc. were not on the agenda of the participants.
Box 2.1: The program activities planned:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Activity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Bendtsen and Rasmussen</td>
<td>The participants are forming a common country (They made “Tolerancia”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Bendtsen and Rasmussen</td>
<td>Role play in Tolerancia / provoking conflicts and establishment of a common frame of references.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Grigoryeva and Petrova</td>
<td>Lecture on homosexual’s rights in Russia Formation of tolerance committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Excursion</td>
<td>Excursion to St. Petersburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Grigoryeva and Petrova</td>
<td>The tolerance committees propose how to implement tolerance in Society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Evaluation and closing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2: What actually happened

One thing is planning a program another thing is to run a camp. The program became object to a lot of changes through the week and to give an impression of the course of event here is a short summary.

Saturday: Representatives from the participating organizations met at the conference center and the program coordinators met and had a chance to see the facilities and correct the program to fit to the number of rooms etc. In the afternoon the Russian participants arrived and prepared a welcome ceremony for the Scandinavian participants. After the arrival and ceremony the participants were sent to bed.

Sunday: The program started with a lecture by a visiting senior lecture from Herzen University. Then the participants were divided into 9 groups who cooperated about the formation of a country (Tolerancia) with all its history, national symbols, hymn etc.

Monday: Monday morning started with a low attendance, apparently because of some rather heavily drinking the night before. The program consisted of a role play where different interest groups within Tolerancia were played off against each other. This gave a common experience of conflicts and intolerance. Monday evening the teachers arranged a meeting with the students about alcohol. It ended up with the conclusion that the students should propose their own rules.
Tuesday: In the morning the participants were divided into new groups where they solved some introductory problems in order to establish their tolerance committees. After this a representative from a homosexual network in St. Petersburg held a lecture on homosexuals rights in nowadays Russia. In the afternoon all the participants were send to a nearby city to make observations and interviews with the citizens about tolerance. In the evening the participants played a wedding as a kind of a role play.

Wednesday: The participants went on excursion to St. Petersburg. They had time for themselves, an official meeting at the House of Nationalities and a part of them went to the theater. The other part went drinking with some of the teachers and leaders.

Thursday: The participants spend the whole day working in their tolerance committees ending up with presentations about how to implement tolerance in society. In the evening a farewell party was planned at the conference center but it suddenly was cancelled. The teachers agreed to go with the participants to a nearby bar to have the farewell party there. The evening ended rather dramatically because a Finnish participant suddenly was attacked by asthma, and a Dane and a Finn were attacked and robbed by some unknown hooligans.

Friday: After the breakfast the participants gathered and received diplomas for their participation before saying goodbye.

As it emerges from the description lots of things outside the program might have influenced the participant’s perception of the camp and hence what they have learned. In addition to the description it should be mentioned that the full potential of having a total amount of 12 adults available, was never utilized because of a lack of communication especially between the teachers on the one site and the program planners and trainees on the other.

Participant and researcher – are you told the “truth”?
I have played an active role in the planning and implementation of z:xt and it is fair to ask whether my presentation is colored by my view and impressions. To avoid this, I have presented this description to the other leaders and teachers, and comments have caused corrections in order to guarantee a more objective presentation of the events. To ensure transparency and avoid unnecessary biases the
rest of the report rests entirely on the empirical material constructed through interviews and a survey. This makes it possible for the reader to read through the transcripts and the answers to the survey. Thus, no conclusion will be made on the basis of observations or other constructs not accessible to the reader. In chapter four I return to a discussion of my influence on the data from the interview and survey, and describe my observing perspective within the theoretical framework.

2.3 Cultural inequalities

Before the next chapter’s theory it might help the further reading of the report with a short introduction to some few major cultural inequalities between Russia, and Scandinavia. Some important are the use of the spoken language and the concept of individuality.

Spoken language:
The participants were rather clear about one fact: The Danes were the most talkative followed by the Finns, leaving the Russians as the most quiet (See chapter 4 and 5). According to the Danish participants this has to do with knowledge of English which certainly plays a role. Though, when confronting the literature other explanations see the light. Sveitsna Boym writes about Russian culture and manners that “to say a full word is to say too much; communication on the level of words is already excessive, banal almost kitchy”. She continues and compares this understanding of being sincere with the American (in this sense America seems to represent a norm valid in most western countries) metaphors for sincerity: “saying what you mean”, “going public”, and “being straight forward”. Boym continues over the next 200 pages to describe some of the broader and deeper outlines of Russian culture and ways of communication. Here the quotation is enough to state the fact that the Russians being more quiet not only has to do with language skills. This is also the case when explaining the difference between the Danes and the Finns. Tryggyason states in a study from 2006 that there are remarkable inequalities between Swedish and Finnish families counted on

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11 Of course there might be others and from other points of views history, economy or some third theoretic concept might be more important. The use of the two mentioned inequalities should be seen as an attempt to describe phenomena that explains problems and fits into the theoretical framework outlined in next chapter.
12 Boym is professor of Humanities at Harvard University. The quotes are from “Common Places”, an anthropologic approach to Russian culture. One should note that the book is from 1994 which means that it does only reflect the historical background of cultural phenomena and not habits and behaviors in nowadays Russia.
13 To me it seemed that the Finnish participants were the ones with the most correct English.
the amount of talk during family mealtimes (Trugvason 2006). Of course this fact cannot directly be transferred to the context of z:t where the social settings are different. However the fact stated by Trygvarson again emphasizes that the reason why the Finns speak less than the Danes cannot unconditionally be limited to “shyness” as suggested in one of the interviews. The point is important while cultural inequalities have a far less judging ring than “lack of English” and “shyness”.

**Individuality**

The participants also noted a major difference in their ability to work in groups and make them self clear. Later in the report it is discussed whether this as well as the use of language, has to do with culture and the understanding of individuality. In order to support later arguments here is a short introduction to the concept of individuality, how it has developed and under what conditions it is developing today in Scandinavia and Russia.

In Europe the concept of individuality was formed and spread during the Enlightenment and “conceptualized” in the legal framework especially the democratic constitutions arising in the 18th and 19th century. The right of the individual became protected and the development of democracies led to 20th century’s curriculums emphasizing the importance of discussions, awareness of political discourses and ideas and a more and more explicit expectation of one deciding one owns attitude towards this and that (Skillbeck 2005: 109, http://www.folkeskolen.dk/ObjectOtherShow.aspx?ObjectId=42159)

In addition to this, the economic development within the last 60 years has created more rooms for individuality. In Denmark the figures are as follows: 90 % have their own rooms where they can close the door and be alone, 99 % have their own cell-phones allowing them to have private conversations.

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15 Individuality is not well defined term and one could argue that this part of the text is more about “identity”. It is not important for the point if one use this or that word. Instead one should pay attention to the fact that different kind of individuality at the same time forms different kind of sociability.
16 Finland is an interesting place – it has as the reader maybe know, been Swedish from 1154 to 1809 and Russian from 1809 to 1917 where a civil war became the first step in direction of Finish independence. Here it is seen as a part of Scandinavia with more likeness with Denmark than Russia.
17 Though the Finnish and Danish histories differ quite a bit on this issue the conclusion seem to be valid for both countries.
18 The Roots of Educational Change International Handbook of Educational Change, Springer Netherlands 2005
19 www.cefu.dk/media/114236/jcn_medlemskonference_310308.ppt 90 % in Denmark
and in average they have 1,4 profile on internet social networks allowing them to have identities totally unknown for their parents\(^{21}\) – and finally they have money enough to express themselves and their choices through consumption\(^{22}\). Hence, the foundation and development of individuality and sociability can be seen as a threefold consisting of:

- A school system training the pupils in asking questions and formulate arguments
- A private sphere with plenty of room (physical, technical and economical) for expressing and exploring one's identity and hence, individuality
- A homogeneous historical context that emphasize the value of individuality and laws of property.

These circumstances produce young people who are used to and encourage to question everything and come up with their own ideas and proposals for improvements. In \(\text{z:\text{t}}\) this was seen in especially the Danish participants attitude towards the rules and the programs at the conference center. They gladly questioned rules and came up with alternatives improving the conditions for individual (I'll return to this later)\(^{23}\).

In Russia the history of the last 300 years has provided nowadays youth with another starting point for exploring and defining themselves. Though The Enlightenment was brought to Russia by Catherine II and reforms were adopted “private rights continued to receive little attention” (Moss 2005a: 309) and still today it is questioned whether the individual is sufficiently protected be the legal framework\(^{24}\). Nor the school system supports the development of individuality. Before the revolution the objective for the mass education in Russia was “to strengthen the orthodox faith and Christian morality among the people and to impart useful elementary knowledge”, and after the revolution the curriculum became “a weapon of the Communist rebirth of society” (Moss 2005b: 373). Both curriculums support other developments of individuality than the Scandinavian. Until the middle of the 80s “Schools, institutes, and universities offered few electives and little

\(^{21}\) http://www.forbrug.dk/fileadmin/Filer/FR08/Pdf/kapitel_3.pdf (membership of Facebook and Arto are not included!)
\(^{22}\) http://www.berlingske.dk/article/20071102/danmark/111021275/ (around 150 Euro / month)
\(^{23}\) Best quotation from a Finnish teacher. See chapter 5.
opportunity for discussion, instead heavily emphasizing the memorization and comprehension of fundamental materials (…).“ (Moss 2005b: 516). Gorbachev changed the system more humanitarian and after the breakdown of Soviet Union the curriculum was changed to help the new generations to live in a democratic society. Hence economic storms and breakdowns in the 90s undermined the reforms as well as the wages for teachers. Lack of in-service-training and new materials leaves it unclear how much the system has actually changed except from what teachers has done on their own initiatives.

Beside the school system the society and status of individuality has undergone a huge transformation. Contrary to the development of individuality as a fight for rights and protection through a legal frame work, individuality in Russia seems to be a fight for the right to consume. Commercials tell the story of personal freedom and individuality and the development of individuality therefore seems to go hand in hand with the economic development25.

Though, the development of individuality is influenced by other physical conditions as for instance in Scandinavia. Only 10 % of the population has a monthly income above 320 Euro (RR 2006: 571), Only 40 % of Russian households has a cell phone, and only 17.7 % of the Russian households has their own computer (RR 2006: 573). A majority of the Russians live in 1 or 2 room apartment / house, which means that more than 66% of the families live on less than 60 square meters and more than 85 % of the households have less than 80 square meters (RR 2006: 57426).

This illustrates that the Russians do have another room (physical, technical and economical) for the development of individuality and sociability compared to the Danes and the Finns, and the construction of individuality is to be understood in connection to the “duality” (triality?) between the expectations the Russians meet:

25 It is beyond this report to present an analysis of Russian commercials, and my key sources do not say this directly. Though “Real Russia” does state that the more individual values are supported mainly by people with money – and the young, especially students, who hope to get a fair income after their studies (RR 2006: 420).
26 Though the numbers mentioned above is statistics for every Russian households it might reflect the reality of the Russian participants in z.t. 8 out 20 participants gave us a mobile number, indicating that the other 12 did not have or at least did not remember their phone numbers when asked (or found it more appropriate to give the home number and make it easy to contact their parents). Considering the fact that the participants were from St. Petersburg it is most likely that the majority lives in rather small apartments, though the income of their parents might be higher than the 340 EUR. Never the less the interviews indicate that it is not wealthy youngsters compared to the Finns and the Danes who, and many of them had never been abroad (small talk during the week).
- In a rundown school system where you better do what you are told
- At home where you have to conform in order to make it possible for 2-6 people to live on very limited space and with a minimum of privacy
- In the public sphere where individuality is a strongly and visible articulated symbol of an attractive lifestyle but constantly questioned and negotiated in order to be meaningful in a historical context where a higher lifestyle were understood as an ability to understand the unsaid.

During z:t the Russian had a much more courteous attitude towards authorities and they were far less frustrated about the limited space and freedom at the conference center. At the same time they were far less critical in discussions and they did better (and liked them more!) in tasks that were more accurate in the description of what to do.

The picture is of course too simple and distorted but it illustrates the point: the starting point is very different for the participants and this gives them different strengths and weaknesses in different social contexts (according to Luhmann 2000: 316). This is explicated in chapter 4 and 5 and it gets very clear that these differences partly explains why the participants learn different thing, and why cultural understanding ought to be a part of the ”Youth in Action”-curriculum in order to widen understanding and get more balanced in the use of normative explanations of differences among the participants (like “lack of language”, “Shyness” and “less globalized” as stated in the focus group interview).
Chapter 3: Theory

In the rest of the report the empirical data will be understood in the framework of Niklas Luhmann’s System Theory. Therefore this chapter aims to present the most central parts and terms from the theory, and to place both learning and central parts of YAP in this theoretical framework.

Why Luhmann?
There are three reasons why I have chosen Luhmann’s system theory:

- It represents a less-value-laden theoretical framework that is suitable for describing different cultures without judging them (see for instance Luhmann 2000: 33f; 369).

- It is a rather new and untried approach to analyzing learning practices and empirical studies are needed to discover the potential of the theory (Vanderstraeten 2003: 134; Keiding 2005, Kaspersen 2004: 10227).

- I became acquainted with Luhmann while I wrote my dissertation and I am curious to find out if, and hence how, Luhmann can meaningfully be used in the field of educational studies.

Though when choosing one theoretic approach others are left out. I’ll return to a criticism of Luhmann in chapter 7 and present some few reflections about what maybe could be achieved with another approach or another point of observation within the chosen theory. But first I’ll present the theory and analysis in order to make it clear how the theory can actually contribute to the construction of knowledge.

System and communication
Imagine a chat window from the internet and one is good started in understanding Luhmann. In the window one sees a long list of utterances, for instance:

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27 Keiding and Kaspersen are both Danish Ph.D writing about education and teaching in High school and universities. Especially Keidings works has been inspiring because it goes very close to “learning” and is rooted in more of Luhmann’s works than I have had the chance to get acquainted to.

28 Vanderstraeten, faculty of sociology in Bielefeld.
P1: Hi mate! Have u heard it?
P2: Heard wht? That beer prizes r rising?
P1: No no no. That manU has been declared bankrupt!
P2: Really? What about their players?
P1: They r on sale! We can now get Ronaldo for nothing!
P2: Gr8t – then we’ll win the league this year!

The “chat window” above represents a social system. In all systems communication is the smallest dividable element consisting of “information”, “message” and “understanding”. In the chat above, “information” can be understood as all available knowledge about the current situation of Manchester United. The “message” is what is actually said, here “… has been declared bankrupt!” Understanding is that part of the message that further communication start from. Here the question “What about the players?” directs the conversation in a certain direction and the conversation would develop differently if another question would have been formulated (Luhmann 2000: 182ff).

It is notable that a system only consists of communication not on the people actually formulating the contributions. These people are seen as “environment”. The reason is that a system is self-referential and can only develop on the basis of former messages – no matter who formulated them. It helps the understanding to see communication as a list of chat-messages where only the messages are visible, not the persons writing them – or: It does not matter how many persons are logged into the chat – only the messages counts. On the other hand this means that the same person could be active in the environment of more systems at the same time (Luhmann 2000: 185). On a youth conference an example could be a participant just saying something in a plenum discussion about tolerance and in the very next moment saying something about football to the student next to him. Here the plenum discussion will be seen as one system where the communication is centered on one theme, and the small talk about football, as another, maybe competing system, centered on another theme.

When analyzing a system one should be aware of three levels of order:

1. Level: Communicative contributions
2. Level: Themes of the communication
3. Level: Objectives of the system
In the chat on the previous page the communicative contributions were clearly displayed. The theme in which the dialogue was centered was economy’s influence on soccer in order to answer “who will win the championship?” The objective of such a system could be “prediction”. In such case other themes would be “allowed” in the discussion, for instance results from last weekend – or policymaking as known from the Bossmann-case\(^{29}\). Hence, the objective of a system, prioritize what themes can be adopted meaningfully, and a theme prioritize what communicative contributions can be seen as meaningful (Keiding\(^{30}\) 2005: 109, parallel to Luhmann 2000: 205).

According to Luhmann society can be analyzed as different functional systems. Such systems could be the economical functional system where the objective is profit, the political functional system where the objective is power and the educational functional system where the objective is knowledge creation (Luhmann 2000: 526 – 528; Keiding 2005: 94).

This again shows that communicative contributions can also be formulated by “the market”, “countries” and for instance ministries of education or the European Commission. This report works with two functional systems: On the one hand it is a contribution to the functional system of science, which means it has to follow certain sets of rules and accuracy in order to deliver an acceptable construction of “truth”. On the other hand it analyses a set of events that took place inside the educational system, in order to improve the participant’s knowledge and understanding of tolerance (according to Luhmann 2005: 123).

**Systems of interaction**

Within the functional system of education one important system is found in the classroom or on the conference center where teacher and students meet face to face. Such systems are called “systems of interaction” (Luhmann 2000: 474, Luhmann 2005: 127)\(^{31}\). The system is still to be analyzed as chains of communication, with each communicative contribution being a synthesis of information, message and understanding. However systems of interaction differ from other systems by being

\(^{29}\) Bossmann sued his Belgium soccer-club and the sentence course new rules allowing countless number of EU citizens in the European national leagues.  
\(^{30}\) Keiding wrote her Ph.D. in 2005 and it includes a more than 100 pages long presentation and discussion of Luhmann’s understanding of learning  
\(^{31}\) Luhmann’s “Social Systems” was written before the development of internet. One could talk about systems of interaction in cyberspace but this discussion is not relevant for this report.
more sensitive towards non-verbal communication. Sitting with folded arms looking peevish at the teacher is a communicative contribution just as well as the message “I do not care what you say!” It also seems evident that though the individuals are not a part of the system, they play a vital role in the continuation of the communication (Luhmann 2000: 254, 303, 474). Z:t represents a system of interaction and when the students did groupwork, one could understand the groups as sub-systems of interaction (according to Luhmann 2000: 54ff). Also the focus group interviews – and even the survey-interview can be seen as systems of interaction.

**Systems of consciousness**

To understand the connection between individuals and systems of interaction, it is necessary to understand Luhmann’s perception of the human being. A body houses different kind of systems and according to learning the most important one is the system of consciousness. Now the basic element is not communication but consciousness. Again one can think about a chat window where the consciousness is expressed through chains of single thoughts. The environment is not only competing social systems, but also the organic system that can stimulate the system with consciousness about hunger, tiredness etc. It is very important to state, that consciousness can never be totally accessible for the social system as well as communication can never be totally accessible for the system of consciousness (Luhmann 2000: 318). The communication is not inside the students head, as well as it is impossible for the system of interaction to know what all the students think all the time. The membrane between the systems is “perception” and “language”. When communication can be perceived, it leads to production of thoughts that might lead to another communicative contribution (Luhmann 2000: 319 and 474 ff). This does not necessarily happen just because the individual is present. Most students know the feeling of daydreaming and not listen or reading a couple of pages without noticing what they say. Before the systems of consciousness and the social systems can support each other and develop new thoughts and communication, there might be a synchronous relation between them. Or in other words: The student and the teacher should think about and try to understand the communication which at the same time should be accessible for the student. This happens when the systems are interpenetrated or *structural coupled* (Luhmann 2000: 264; Keiding 2005: 114).

**Structural coupling**

To create communication in a system of interaction at least two persons are required. Each person places their consciousness, knowledge and expectation (or in one:
complexity) at disposal for the communication as long as the systems are structural coupled, or occupied by each other. When starting daydreaming, not remembering the text etc, the system of consciousness is no longer aware of the system of interaction, and if the system of interaction communicate in a way that is un-understandable the communication is no longer accessible for the system of consciousness (Keiding 2005: 276 ff). It is rather easy to find out whether the systems are coupled as long as there are only few individuals contributing to the communication. In classroom education or at z: t the situation is different. When a group is discussing how they understand tolerance, it is impossible to know if all the listeners are actually listening, or maybe under seriously influence from the organic system because of hunger, hangovers or something else. When everybody is not constantly contributing to the communication it is also impossible to find out whether the communication is actually accessible (this problem is especially important in exchange events where at least parts of the participants are talking in their second or third language). When students are sitting listening, the facilitator does not have the slightest chance to know if the level is too high or low, the students are daydreaming or if they are actually structural coupled to the system of interaction (Luhmann 2005: 128 f). To emphasize how unlikely structural coupling is in the classroom, one should take into account that lots of systems are always competing for the attention from the system of consciousness. This could be organic systems, but also other social systems where it might be easier to contribute to the communication (for instance small talk with the person next to you) (Kern & Rasmussen 200832). Hence, structural coupling is dependent on the competition from other systems and ability for the consciousness to make sense out of the perceived messages.

**Meaning**

Meaning plays an evident role in both systems of interaction and consciousness (Luhmann 2000: 76). Meaning is defined as "the presence of a surplus of references to further possible experiences and acts" (Luhmann 2000: 99)33. In the conversation showed in the beginning of the chapter P2 indeed has a surplus of possibilities. She chose to ask “what about their players?” but could have raised other questions: What about the ordinary staff, the stadium or the investors? On the opposite: If the information about bankruptcy was presented to a person who does not know

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32 As argued in my thesis “EU – kommunikation og dialog”.
33 “Fænomenet mening forekommer i form af et overskud af henvisninger til yderligere muligheder for oplevelse og handling” / LR
anything about soccer or money, it would have been meaningless – the person would not have a chance to use the information and drive the conversation forward. In social systems meaning is hence closely connected to the theme of the communication and objective of the system. If P2 had answered “Oh – that is why they now have snow in Kuala Lumpur!” it would force P1 to find out if P2 really understood what was said. Meaning is shown when the communication is moving forward, and communicative contributions that does not make sense according to the theme and objective, will be rejected (Luhmann 2000: 133).

In systems of interaction meaning has three dimensions: A social, a factual and a temporal one. The factual dimension has to do with the factual dimensions of, for instance, tolerance. The temporal dimension is important in order to connect the past with the future and thus emphasize the importance of memories and experiences on one hand and expectations to the future on the other hand. Taking last chapters description of cultural inequalities into consideration, it seems obviously that the participants have different starting points for creating meaning in the temporal dimension. Also the temporal dimension is important on a smaller scale: It decides how fast a certain event, communication or lesson is getting boring. This is the temporal dimension requires inconstancy. Finally the social dimensions points out, that meaning is negotiated socially, hence, very dependent on access to competitive systems. This intimates that the fact the Danish participants new each other on forehand while the Russian and Finnish did not, played a role for the constitution of meaning. (Luhmann 2000: 115 ff).

**Structures of expectations and double contingence**

Systems of meaning are all structured by expectations according to the three dimensions and the objective and/or theme of the system. The participants in z:t expected to work with tolerance and this explains why on the first day they created the country “Tolerancia” when they just as well could have created “Violencia”. On one hand expectations are encircling and render probable directions of communication or consciousness and on the other hand different expectations cause conflicts or at least disappointments (Luhmann 2000: 343 ff). The focus group interviews show a clear example of different expectations to behavior and talking. While the Danes expressed frustration about the Russian students being extraordinary quiet in the group work (enclosure 2), a Russian girl noticed that
sometimes the Danes repeat the same as just stated in the previous remark\textsuperscript{34} and therefore seemed very loud in the discussions without always pushing the communication forward. The statements show that the students have different expectations to each other’s behavior - the core in Luhmann’s definition of double contingence. Double contingence refers to the fact that persons in the social system’s environment never know, what the other persons are thinking and expecting of them (Luhmann 146 ff). This is the case in the discrepancy in expectations of behavior between the Danes and the Russian as when discussing. Whether discrepancies are transformed to common expectations or acceptances has to do with learning (Luhmann 2000: 343).

\textbf{Learning}

The basic notion of Luhmann’s concept of learning is a distinction between “cognitions” and “norms”. Those are the very two possible outputs when an individual or social system feels disappointed\textsuperscript{35} or surprised. One could treat the disappointment as a cognition which means you learn. In this case it would have forced the participants to realize that there are other ways to behave in a classroom situation which they did not do unconditionally\textsuperscript{36}. Instead their reaction indicated a normative treatment where the participants understood the others behavior as deviant. According to Luhmann a normative approach to disappointments results in a split between conform or deviant, whereas a cognitive approach results in a split between knowledge or ignorance (Luhmann 2000: 375 ff). Learning is then a question about how to form cognitions and how to transform norms to cognitions. This requires “(...) a critical mass of cognitions one can lean on”\textsuperscript{37} (Luhmann 2000: 385). In other words one have to know before one can learn which Luhmann takes to its extreme: “(...) acquiring of knowledge even where there is no knowledge requires a restructuring of the available cognitions”\textsuperscript{38} (Luhmann 2000: 384). This makes Keiding conclude that the message should always be associable with something already known by the students. Therefore it helps the understanding if an explanation is available in different forms. The mass communication and classroom education the consequence is that since every system of consciousness has different

\textsuperscript{34} “Да, вы знаете на самом деле они иногда говорят одно и тоже, просто мусолят одно и то же тему как бы и повторяют то же самое - предыдущие высказывания”. Enclosure 1.

\textsuperscript{35} Disappointed should simply be understood as unfulfilled expectations. This does not necessarily lead to the strong feelings one could connect to the word Luhmann 2000: 376

\textsuperscript{36} Which is also an unfair expectation. To do so the leaders should have facilitated the understanding

\textsuperscript{37} Det kræver omvendt tilstrækkelig alternativ viden, viden om miljøet, viden om noget sammenligneligt – kort sagt en kritisk masse af kognitioner, som man kan gribe tilbage til.

\textsuperscript{38} “Selv tilegnelse af viden, hvor der i forvejen ikke var nogen, kræver derfor omstrukturering af en forhåndsværende videnstilstand.”
masses of cognition to associate to, the message will always be understood differently (Keiding 2005).

In continuation of Luhmann’s distinction between norms and cognitions, Keiding distinguishes between simple and complex understanding. “Simple understanding” is the ability immediately to adopt new cognitions in the way you think or immediately adopt new thoughts into the communication and thereby the system’s self-reference. Complex understanding is when norms becomes objects of considerations and hence are transformed to cognitions39. Keiding draws a parallel to Argyri’s & Schön’s concept of double-loop learning (Keiding 2005: 83)40, and emphasizes that the ability to learn complexly is conditioned by the complexity available in “the mass of cognitions” (Keiding 2005: 205). I.e. you can only learn about your own norms if you have a sufficient mass of cognitions to draw parallels to and from.

3.1 Learning in the context of zoom:tolerance

With the conceptions explained above it is possible to operationalize the concept of learning in the context of z:t and hence in part 3.2 describe how the objectives of YAP in theory can be achieved.

First of all z:t can be seen as an event within the educational system which mean that the objective of the system is creation of knowledge or ability to do something (Luhmann 2000; Keiding 2005). As already stated z:t should be seen as a system of interaction and the themes facilitated are described in the YAP papers. The learning process is closely connected to the formation of communication and therefore to the formation of structural couplings which is dependent on the formation of meaning, which again is dependent on the expectations of the participants. Therefore I will briefly come across those three levels:

- Usage
- Expectations
- Construction of meaning

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39 This is closely connected to Luhmann’s distinction between first and second order observations which this report does not have pages enough to go into.
40 Keiding do this when talking about orders of observations and also says that the double-loop model is far too simple.
Usage:
During the participants did a lot of work in groups where it was necessary with a certain level of English in order to understand both instructions from the teachers and the discussions in the groups. Hence the knowledge of English was necessary to facilitate structural coupling and delivery of communicative contributions, which are both important in order to facilitate learning.

Expectations:
Even though the participants speak and understand fair English, different expectations might make it difficult for the communication to center around a theme. In the focus group two boys clearly stated an example of different expectations:

DB 41 I see what you get, but it is not a vacation, it’s like school, there is not like a vacation where you walk around.
RB 42 Well, you know for me it’s kind of escape from school.

The quotations indicate very different attitudes toward readiness to contribute to the communication 43. If a person shows up expecting 6 days of “escape from school” he or she is maybe not as “motivated” as a person who shows up really eager to discuss tolerance. Luhmann explains how common expectations to the way a system communicate ease and speeds up the process of communication and hence minimize the risk that a system is getting rigid or boring to contribute to (Luhmann 2000: 359). A Russian girl expresses how the Danes and the Russians had far from the same expectations: “In Denmark they have got used to talk when they are not asked a question, but in Russia it is the other way around, so we are sitting and waiting until we are asked, and then we talk.” 44 (enclosure 1). In the analysis I will return to the fact how different expectations especially are important in the development of what Luhmann calls “programs”. This is “conditions for rightness of behavior” 45 and close to what other calls “norms” (according to Luhmann 2000: 372).

41 Not Deutsche Bahn, but Danish Boy.
42 Russian Boy
43 It should be mentioned that the boy actually participated very actively.
44 “У них в Дании они привыкли говорить, когда их не спрашивают, а в России наоборот, мы сидим и ждем, пока нас спросят, чтобы мы сказали”.
45 “Et program er et kompleks af betingelser for rigtigheden (hvilket vil sige den sociale antagelighed) af adfærd.”
Construction of meaning
In a group where everybody agrees on the purpose of the corporation and amount of efforts to put in a task, meaning still has to be constructed in order to facilitate structural coupling and learning. As mentioned meaning is dependent on the theme and the objective of the system and appears when the communication is driven forward. On z:t there are challenges existing in all three dimensions of meaning:

Temporal dimension
As already mentioned the cultural differences might cause some troubles negating meaning in the temporal dimension where the participants have totally different starting points for connecting the past with the future – and this again might course a slow progress that seems boring. It is clear that this especially frustrated the Danish students.

Factual dimension
The factual dimension is connected to the objective of the system and therefore very different in the formal program where the objective was “learning” and in the informal activities where the objective of being together is different. When discussing “tolerance” in a “formal learning” context the participants had very different expectations about how to communicate and they might have had different attitudes towards different topics that complicate the construction of meaning. When discussing more informally the objective might be “learning to know each other” and it is more convenient to pick out less controversial topics as football, how to say “I love you” in different languages or maybe which one of the teachers is better looking. These are examples of themes that most people can contribute to communication about and instead of exploring differences they are forming new social systems resting of common knowledge or experiences but not necessarily values nor programs (according to Luhmann 2000: 372 ff).

Social dimension
Different cultures present different “programs” for appropriate conduct. This complicates constructions of meaning while it is different what might be socially acceptable in certain social systems (Luhmann 2000). The Russians describe parts of the Danes behavior as “strange” and the Danes finds it “more difficult” to talk to the Russians (both examples are outlined in the analysis). So in order to create meaning it seems to be necessary to define common programs which might (only?) be a result of complex learning when at least the present cultures are different.
3.2: YAP – what to learn?

The problem formulation asks how to bridge the gap between YAP and practices as shown in z:t. Therefore it is necessary to interpret the most important objectives from YAP into the theoretical framework.

YAP describes five general objectives of what is relevant for exchange events like z:t where the participants do not represent any interest group or its like:

- Development of solidarity among young people
- Fostering of mutual understanding between young people in different countries
- Promotion of young people’s active citizenship


**Development of solidarity among young people**

This objective is deepened as an aim “to promote tolerance in young people”.

According to Oxford Dictionary of English “tolerance” is:

“The action or practice of tolerating; toleration; the disposition to be patient with or indulgent to the opinions or practices of others; freedom from bigotry or undue severity in judging the conduct of others; forbearance; catholicity of spirit.”

When interpreting this into the theoretical framework something interesting happens: Tolerance does only seem to be a reinforcement of a system’s structures that facilitates learning. It does not cause much system development itself. The reason is that “patience” and “indulgency” hardly can be expected to move or drive communication forward which is needed in order to create meaning in systems of interaction. Patience and indulgency should rather be seen as an attempt to “expect” slowness in the communication that is coursed when heterogeneous structures of expectations are present as they might be when the environment is intercultural or interreligious (according to Luhmann 2000: 359 ff). Hence tolerance is a survival strategy for systems of interaction, but is not in itself enforcing a negotiation of expectations and meaning. It is close to Luhmanns description of trust which “enlarges the potential of actions” and only can be achieved (if after all achieved!) “step by step” (Luhmann 2000: 169). This means that trust is pointing more forward than “tolerance” while communication hardly be driven forward as long as the
system is indulgent to all opinions and practices – therefore tolerance cannot be seen as an effective tool to bridge existing gaps between cultures - this requires trust and complex learning and changes of existing expectations which in one hand can be seen as the opposite to tolerance (according to Luhmann 169)! However, tolerance is a necessary tool to start and develop new systems where existing and maybe contradicting cultures are more unlike to provide the environment with expectations enough to provoke conflict. This might be facilitated by an environment capable of forbearance and catholicity of spirit.

**Fostering mutual understanding between young people in different countries:**
The objective “to foster mutual understanding” is according to YAP reached by “exchanges and intercultural dialogue between young people in the EU and in neighboring countries”. Here dialogue will be understood as communication in a system of interaction where the expectations on which the communication rests are heterogeneous. According to Luhmann communication will always have a purpose (objective) and therefore in most cases it will be communication about something. This is only possible when common expectations and programs are established – otherwise the communication will mostly be about how to communicate. Hence, intercultural communication requires strong efforts from the participants. In order to establish new programs they are expected to enter into bigger or smaller compromises with their existing norms – which according to Luhmann and Keiding require cognitions and hence complex learning. Therefore “mutual understanding” requires an intercultural competence which can be defined as an ability to compromise about programs that are maybe partly contrary to programs accepted by other social system in which the participant contribute with communication46. None of the participants or their Scandinavian teachers seemed to have this competence – or to acquire it during the conference.

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46 One could – interestingly enough – expect bilingual or cultural minorities to have this competence to a higher extend than “ordinary Danes”. Note that it is not recognized by the established educational system.
Promotion of young people's active citizenship

YAP specifies this objective into ten other “specific objectives” from where the following are the most relevant for z:t:

- Fostering mobility in Europe
- Developing intercultural learning

Mobility might be dependent on access to cyberspace or infrastructure. However, within the framework of the system theory mobility can also be seen as a question about access to social systems and hence the ability to know languages (according to Luhmann 2000: 183; 193f; 319). One can consider himself as more “mobile” when knowing at least one of the big European languages. I will not return to this 47

Intercultural learning will be understood in continuation of the above mentioned “intercultural competence”. This is a complex learning where norms are transformed into cognitions in order to negotiate expectations and programs and hence form new structures in social systems that facilitate development of common culture 48. One should note that this notion refuses the idea to bridge the gap between existing very different social systems 49 but instead built up new social systems forming new expectations and programs forcing participants to compromise with the existing. Hence Champions league and Britney Spears are expected to play a more important role in building such systems than interreligious dialogue between religious leaders. Liverpool and Britney creates a common starting point and does not point out the differences between people while dialogue based in existing conflicts are more likely to preserve the status quo. Z:t can be said to be an example of this.

47 The answers to questionnaire shows that the participants feel they have learned a lot of English whereby the objective seems to be fulfilled.
48 This might sound a bit political but common cultures could also be within the same country, bridging distances between for instance generations or “classes” in society.
49 In this sense religion can be seen as a culture.
Summary:
YAP outlines three levels of “learning”: A tolerance level where the main contribution is patients and will to communicate with other people not having the same culture as oneself. This strengthens weak social systems and helps them survive the difficult situation cross-cultural communication is. Next level is a level of understanding which requires more from the participants than just patients. Now complex learning is necessary in order to reflect up on one’s own culture and presumptions in order to form programs acceptable of participants with different cultures. Finely the last level is reached when new social systems are developed resting on a common understanding and hence has developed a common culture facilitating the system. The three levels have a likeness to the three concepts facilitating learning: Usage, expectations and meaning.
Chapter 4: Epistemology

Though the last chapter came across Luhmann and Keiding’s notion of learning I did not describe how systems observe and introduce observations into a system’s self-reference. This is what happens when I on the basis of the system theory in next chapter analyzes the empirical material and introduces it into the theory. This chapter explains the point of observations and what knowledge one can expect to construct from there.

4.1: Luhmann’s deontologizing of the world

According to Keiding Luhmann’s system theory can never describe the world “as it is” but will always be a description which makes it important to note who (what system) describes what system and what differences the descriptions are based on (Keiding 220 ff). This sounds a bit complicated but is well known from university examinations. Here the system of science represented by an advisor and external examiner describes the candidate’s performance based on the differences in the curriculum: Is the argumentation coherent or not? Can the candidate criticize or put his findings into perspectives? The description is a mark. If the system of art should describe the same performance the differences would be totally different: aesthetics, mediation etc. And the description could be “beautiful” or “unoriginal and uninspirational”. Hence I can never describe how to bridge the “real” gap between YAP and z:t but I can describe some gaps as they show in my interview and make clear what differences my descriptions are rooted in.

Identification of differences

The first important difference when doing scientific research is choice of theory. This single choice determines the perspective from which problems can be observed and the range of possible answers to the problem formulation. I’ll return to this in chapter 7. The next important difference is the problem formulation that outlines what themes meaningfully can be treated in this report. The point is not to outline every single choice this report is a result of but to make clear that all descriptions should be understood as a result of underlying differences (Keiding 2005: 220). The description of z:t rests on my choice of research design which includes four focus groups and an online survey. Hereby, the research is based on two differences: Time
and culture. Before I return to this I will briefly describe the empirical constructions.

4.2: Sources of documentation

The next chapter’s arguments rest on analysis of one main source and two sub-sources:
- Four focus group interviews
- Online questionnaire send to all participants and answered by 24
- Comments and thoughts from the other teachers and leaders

Focus group interview

The main sources in next chapters analyzes are four focus group interview conducted on the last day before departure. The groups were put together after nationality making one group with 3-4 participants from each country (a total of three groups), and one group with one participant from each country. See box 4.1. As the interviews were conducted in the breaks it is random who is actually participating – I picked out those who were ready and wanted to participate without having any favorites on forehand. Only the Finish students were specially selected after their mother tongue in order to let all the interviewees speak in their native language. Though the selection method unconsciously might have favoured participants to whom I had a better relationship I do not think this is the case. Rather active participants seems to overreperesented in the interviews indicating that their stories tells more about what you can learn, not what all the participants have learned.

The four focus groups can be seen as four systems of interaction observing other systems participating in z:t. By compounding the groups of nationalities each system will reflect certain cultural defined patterns of complexity (according to Luhmann 2000: chapter 1, 9 and 10) and thereby different points of observation. Hereby it is possible to describe the complexity these specific systems can handle and hence, to what extent this complexity does reflect the three levels of objectives in YAP.

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50 It would be much easier for me to translate from Swedish than from Finnish
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Interviewer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Russian boy, two Russian girls</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Representative from the Danish Embassy and LR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Finnish boys, two Finnish girls</td>
<td>English (the participants were told to speak Swedish if they wished)</td>
<td>LR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Danish boys one Danish girl</td>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>LR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One girl from Finland, one boy from Russia and one boy from Denmark</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>LR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each interview I used the same guide consisting of the following questions:

- What do you remember from the camp in two months?
- When you come home, what do you tell respectively your parents, friends and teachers about the camp?
- If you should choose five words that describe each of the participating nationalities, what should it be then?
- Has something surprised you?
- What have you learned?

The questions try to thematize what event the system sees as important and to let the system observe zt based on the difference of nationalities. According to Luhmann an event will only be remembered when systems of consciousness have been structural coupled to systems of interaction and the answers their by tells something about what events have affected the participants and hence what might have been sourcing to learning and thereby fulfillment of the general objectives. I have categorized the participants after native language because Luhmann explains that language, culture and expectations are close connected (Luhmann 2000: 205; 359). One could argue that it could be just as interesting to introduce the difference between active and inactive students, or students good at English or less good in English.
As shown in the box I conducted all the interviews myself except from the interview with the Russians where I got help with translation from the trainee from the Danish Embassy. All the interviews were held in informal surroundings either sitting on the floor in the corridors (the Finns, the Russians and the mixed) or around a table in the canteen (the Danes). The transcripts from the interviews are enclosed. Quotations will be translated into English in order to raise the readability but with the original phrases written in the footnotes.

**Online questionnaire**

One month after the camp I send a list of questions to participants. Except from some background variables and rating of the activities, the questions was open ended. They were presented in the following order in a way so the respondent only saw one or two questions on the same page:

- What are your best memories from the camp?
- Have the camp somehow changed something in the way you speak, think or act in your life? Please describe what and how. If you can describe an example it is just wonderful!
- What do you think has coursed this change in the way you speak, think or act?
- When you think about the camp, what activities in the program impressed you most?
- Think about activities both in and outside the program. All in all, what do you think you have learned from the camp?

Here the social system has a very limited environment only existing of the respondent and me. This minimizes the effect of double contingency and courses a fall in complexity that makes it more “safe” for the respondent to answer (according to Luhmann 2000: 161). The reason to ask the questions are the same as above but now the past month from the camp ended to the questions are answered serves as a filter leaving mainly the strongest memories open for analysis.

Anyway, the survey will only serve as a source to confirm or to question conclusions proposed on basis of the focus groups interview. This has three main reasons: Firstly only 24 out of 58 participants have answered. This is not a problem in itself but it makes it untrustworthy to use the interviews in any statistic analysis.

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51 The entire questionnaire is available at http://survey.opinio.net/s?s=1233
Secondly, the answers all come from participants who have enjoyed the camp and – according to them self, been rather active. Thirdly the Finns are overrepresented with 12 answers followed by the Russians with 8 answers leaving the Danes with 4 answers. This is important in order to be able to comment on some of the cultural inequalities. Luhmann admits that such methodological considerations are important in order to construct valid and reliable observations (according to Luhmann 2000: 385).

**Comments from teachers**

Finally I have sent the first chapters of the report to the other leaders and teachers to get their comments and to give everybody a chance to comment on my description of the events. This raises the reliability of the report. A bit surprisingly the teachers’ answers emphasize the cultural “incompetence” present during the camp. I will return to this point.

**4.3: Orders of observation**

The empirical material all presents different observations. According to Keiding one should be aware of two levels of observation. Observations of first order are the difference between the observed and the not-observed. When a Russian girl finds it strange that Danes are sitting on the ground eating bread with chocolate cream, this can be seen as the “observed”. What she does not observe is her own starting point for making this observation. Most everyday observations can be described as observations of first order. We observe that a report is boring, a girl looks good or the soup is cold but the point from where we observe is “blind” to us (Keiding 2005: 80 ff).

Observations of second order can be described as observations of observations which are what most social scientists are doing. In next chapter I observe the observations of the social systems (present in the different interviews) in order to describe what differences their first order observations are founded in and hence, what structures of expectations and meaning one can observe within and across the cultural settings. Luhmann defines three kinds of observations that can be observed both in first and second order: Reflectivity, reflection and basal self-reference (Keiding 2005: 81 ff according to Luhmann 2000 506 ff). Reflectivity is an observation based on the difference between the present and the past. The interviewees make such an observation when they compare the last days of the camp with the first ones and
describe how they have gained access to social system and those systems have
developed complexity. Reflection is an observation based on the difference between
system and environment. The focus groups make such observation when they
articulate an understanding of “we” opposite to “the other”. Finally does the basal
self-reference refer to observations of communication. The interviewees make this
distinction when they articulate the importance of language skills. The aim of next
chapter is to observe the observations of the participants because this makes it
possible to discuss the complexity of those systems, and hence usage, expectations
and construction of meaning which makes it possible to discuss if the participants
have developed tolerance, “intercultural dialogue” and “intercultural learning”.

My influence on the answers
Before the analysis I should shortly comment on my influence on the empirical
material. First of all it is important to distinguish between the construction of the
material and the interpretation of the material. While it should play no role on the
interpretation (at least the reader can follow the interpretation from the transcripts
and the use of theory) it does play a role during the interviews that I know the
interviewees and they have an attitude towards me. On one hand the answers might
reflect some social positioning, either in terms of “friendliness” in the answers or in
terms of resistance. On the other hand it might have led to a “safer” environment
where it was easier for especially the participants of z:t to express their opinions
compared to a situation where they are placed face to face with a stranger
interviewing (according to Luhmann 2000: chapter 3 and 6). Especially in the cross-
cultural interviews it seemed to be an advantage to know the participants. The
mystery of double contingence was not that mysterious anymore. Though – it might
have been more difficult for the interviewees to raise critics and the interviews
might show a bit too positive picture – especially when talking about activities I was
teaching. With the chosen research design my relation to the sources might affect
the validity but since all the interviews are transcribed and all other sources also are
available the reliability should be intact.
Summary:
Luhmann refuses the idea that the social world is “real” which means that social science can never be nothing else than constructs based on observations. Empirical material will therefore always be analyzed as observations of certain social systems and their self-reference. The analysis gives arguments to discuss the structures of the systems, and hereby it will be possible to discuss whether the structures of the systems indicate that the objectives from YAP might have been reached.
Chapter 5: Analysis

Chapter five analyzes the interviews as different social systems and goes close to the self reference in the communication and what hereby can be said about the different expectations and constructions of meaning exposed by the participants. This chapter contains the following parts according to the three levels in YAP:

- Tolerance
- Intercultural dialogue
- Intercultural learning

5.1: Tolerance

As mentioned in last chapter, tolerance can be seen as a reinforcing structure that facilitates development of trust which according to Luhmann is necessary in order to construct “a more complex social order” (Luhmann 2000: 169). When the participants arrived at z:t there was no social order but one month after the camp, 22 out of 24 participants answered that what they remembered from the camp, was their friends\(^\text{52}\) and according to the camps Facebook profile, 10 of the Danes are now “friends” of the camp, 16 of the Finns and 6 of the Russians. The term “friend” as used in the questionnaire indicates trust and trust indicates tolerance in sense of patient and indulgency. In the survey 12 of the respondents also describe that they have changed in their attitude towards new people and are now more open\(^\text{53}\), for instance: “When I see new people I’m more open-minded and I do not make my own opinion before I know something about him/her”. This attitude is also clear in the focus groups. The first thing the Finnish students mention is friends:

FB1: Well, I’m sure I’ll remember all the people that were here, and the crazy ones like Simon and Christoffer,
FG: I think I’ll remember the day when we first arrived here and we were sitting waiting at the bus, and when we arrived here the first feeling was Wow,
FG1: I’ll remember the people.
FB: - Yeah, of course. It’s all inevitable.

\(^{52}\) Counted from the answers on the questionnaire, enclosed on CD-ROM
\(^{53}\) I have only counted descriptions of openness and patience, not answers like “I’m now more tolerant”.
The Danes put it differently:

DG: I remember how they were, the others. The Finns and the Russians, I think (…)
DB: I'll remember very few not-Danes. But some few. (…). 54

The Russians also mentioned the others:

RG: well, (...) we will remember for instance how we got acquainted with them, how we talked in English. 55

The quotations also indicate that though 22 participants miss their friends afterwards, it has not been easy to construct a new social system (The Dane will only remember few not-Danes, and the Russian stresses the use of English in same sentence as the meeting with the other). The best indicator is the interview with the mixed group. Here it was more difficult to keep the interview going and the system was not complex and trustful enough for instance to discuss differences between the different cultural groups:

FG: I don’t know, we are so different, we’ all so, don’t know which would be the same for us.
RB: Yeah, that’s true, it’s hard to find some common features of characters, in all of us
DB: You know it’s like 5 words for the Danish, for Finnish and for Russian yeah, it’s not the five words we all have in common.
RB: Oh, this way. For example if I say something like that I’d say shy, somehow unusual, because it was an unusual experience for me, then interesting to speak to, then …I can’t find anything so common. I think it’s very hard to speak on such things, let’s for example, pass to another question.
DB: It’s very hard put the Finnish students in one group, like they’re all shy, or they are all…(…)

54 P: “Jeg husker hvordan de var, de andre, finnerne og russerne tror jeg (…)” // D1: “Jeg vil huske meget få ikke-danskere. Men nogle stykker (…)”
55 “Ну. (...) будем вспоминать, например, то, как мы познакомились с ними, как мы общались по-английски.”
While the participants gladly categorize the nationalities while they are doing it with compatriots, they refuse to do so when they are mixed across nationalities. This can be seen as lack of complexity in the system and underlines how difficult it is to communicate when the participants do not have a sufficient common amount of structure or culture (according to Luhmann 231, 322ff, 369). It also questions to what extent tolerance and trust has developed through the camp.

In order to understand what systems were actually build and hence, what conditions the communication had for developing trust and tolerance one should look at the starting point, here described by a Dane:

DB1: (...) When we arrived in the buss everybody saw this [the buildings] - and there was this bar on the top. There was red light and curtains and it was like "Yuk, it looks disgusting! This is just how I imagined Russia". We were out in the forest and there was a house looking really repulsive. And then we went in.

DB4: No – then we got some Russians who gave us bread and salt.

DB1: Yeah, then there was “bread and salt? What is that for?” We stood and laughed at them 56.

According to Luhmann it is most likely that the Danes only laughed at the Russians because there was a well established system with clear expectations about how to communicate and behave (Luhmann 2000: chapter 3 and 6). The existing programs allowed the laughing and might hereby have increased the insecurity in the structure of the newborn social system. The Russians noticing the laughing might fairly enough wonder “why are they laughing” and the Finns have also been forced to consider how to contribute to the communication that the laughing forms.

Compared to the Russian understanding of the welcome ceremony the event might have given reason to misunderstandings:

RG: We really gave them a warm welcome. We had prepared a show where we both sang and danced. They arrived at eight o’clock while we

56 “Da vi kom der i bussen, der så alle det dér. Og så var der baren ovenpå. Der var sådan noget rødt lys og gardiner og så var det sådan: ”Ad, hvor ser det ulækker ud – det er lige sådan her jeg har tænkt Rusland. Vi er ude i en skov, og så er der et hus der er rigtigt ulækker og se på. Og så gik vi ind // D4 “Nej så fik vi sådan nogle russere der gav os brød og salt” // D1 “Ja, så var det “brød og salt – hvad skal vi lige med det? Det var jo sådan at vi stod og grinede af dem!”
arrived at two. We ran to the shop after sooshka [ring-shaped cracknel – the bread the Danes talked about].

It is unclear what consequences this single event has had but it illustrates some difficulties in the social structures at the beginning of the camp. The Danes new each other and could interpenetrate with an existing system placing social complexity at disposal for the communication. This system can be said to have a privileged position compared to much less complex systems available for the other participants who only new 1-4 of the other participants from their own country. Hence, the laughing can be seen as communicative contributions to an already existing social system, competing with all other systems arising during the week. One possible scenario is that instead of creating new systems, much of the informal communication between the participants could be seen as communicative contribution in a system that developed from the existing Danish one (according to Luhamann 2000: 150 f).

However it is the case or not, it seems evident that the Danes were better off the first couple of days, giving them an advantage in forming the programs available for the rest of the participants. One of the Finnish participants puts it like this:

FB: Well, first of all Danes are crazy. And they are really talkative and now they are really from the beginning. But I guess that’s because they knew each other pretty well from the start.

And one of the Danes is close to agree:

DB: I do doubt if it plays a role that we were not the same. That we were a big class already close-knitted. And the others simply was not. I do not know if it has played a role but I think it has.

And earlier in the interview two other Danes concluded:

DB: On the other site it is also the Danes – we are like taking the front
DG: Yaeh – we are taking the initiatives.

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57 "Как-то мы их тепло встретили, мы им готовили представление, мы и пели и плясали, они сюда приехали часов в восемь, мы сюда приехали в два. Бегали в магазин за сушками.

58 This number is not confirmed.

59 "Jeg er lidt i tvivl om det har gjort noget, at vi ikke var samme slags. At vi var en stor klasse der allerede er fasttømret. Og det er de andre bare ikke. Jeg ved ikke om det har betydnet noget, men det har jeg lidt på fornemmelsen at det har."

60 "Det er til gengæld os danskere der – vi tager ligesom fronten //P: ‘Ja, vi tager ligesom initiativet"
Though, the Russians and Finns liked the Danes. They described them as “A little crazy, in a good way. (...) loud, friendly” (Finns), and “very clever, very sociable, and not shy”61 (Russians). The point is that this self-assurance of the Danes might be partly rooted in the safeness of an existing, well known social system that has a privileged status compared to new systems arising during the camp.

In addition to a privileged status according to admission to an existing social system, the Danes and the Finns also had an advantage when it comes to their level of English. The Danes agree that the Russians had the lowest level, but are not totally sure about the Danish level compared to the Finnish:

DB2: The Finns speak as good as we do.
DB1: Not quite
DB2: But good enough. The Finns has approximately the same English level as we have.62

The Finns do not compare themselves to the Danes but they agree in defining the Russians:

FG: I think [they] are not very good at English, compared to most Finns and Danes, and maybe shy, most of them, some are really social, but most of them are very shy. There are few Russians, that I haven’t heard a word from.

The Russians seems to agree on having a lower level:

RG: The whole week has been difficult for us, I think, because in our schools we are, apparently, not taught English as well as in Denmark and Finland. It is like they are speaking more easily in English – and we do not. But it has been very interesting63

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61 “очень умные, очень общительные, не стеснительные”
62 “For finnerne snakker lige så godt engelsk som vi gør”/“D1: Ikke helt” //D2 “Men godt nok. Finnerne er nogenlunde på niveau med os på engelsk.”
63 “Целую неделю это для нас было очень трудно мне кажется, потому что у нас в школе не так хорошо преподают английский, как, мне кажется, в Дании и Финляндии, потому что они как будто общаются легко, как мне кажется, на английском, а мы не можем так легко общаться. Но это было очень интересно.”
And they also agree that the Danes might be the best:

RG: Yeah - I think so. The Danes know English better than anyone else.

This shows that there has been a language barrier limiting the formation of and access to the social systems. But as already mentioned this has not always to do with the participant’s level of English. Both Russians and Finns express how it was difficult to put oneself together to speak English the first day. This might as well have something to do with certain social systems requiring not only a certain level of English but also recognition of themes in order to form qualified communicative contributions. If the communication in the beginning is more centered on existing Danish systems, contributions will be refused if they not fit in to a “Danish” pattern of structure (according to Luhmann 2000: 226 ff). The point is that on one hand the level of English has played a role in the communication between the participants both inside and outside the program. On the other hand the combination of the Danish participants’ level of English and access to their own existing systems has made it easier and less risky for Danes to access the communication, or in another way more demanding for the Russians and Finns.

The results of especially different language levels and differentiated access to the social systems are for instance higher risk of misunderstandings. A Dane explains:

DB: There was one from my group who did not know what a political party is. And I heard a conversation (...) where a Russian explained a Dane about the American presidential election. He did not know anything else than Obama did not support his country and he was not frank. He did not know why. And he did not know anything about the Russian revolution.

In this example it is impossible to know whether the Russian participant did not know or did not manage to make himself clear while it is pretty clear that he is understood as ignorant. This might happen because the dominating system has the

64 Да, мне кажется, Датчане лучше всего знают язык, лучше всех нас знают английский. Датчане.
65 Other theories would describe this as cultural codes or social capital.
66 "Der var en fra min gruppe der ikke vidste hvad et politisk parti var. Og øh jeg overhørte også en samtale hvor der var nogen der talte om ... Der var en russer der forklarede en danskere om det amerikanske valg, hvor han ikke rigtigt vidste noget som helst andet end at Obama han stod ikke for sit land og han var ikke oprigtig. Og han vidste ikke rigtigt hvorfor. Og han vidste ikke noget om den russiske revolution"
power to define and interpret – a “power” that is maintained for those for whom the system is accessible.

Summary:
At least some of the participants of z:t have had an exciting experience and their answers in the focus group interview and on the questionnaire indicate together with their contact on Facebook that z:t have build up social systems that have developed a certain level of complexity in form of openness which indicates trust hence tolerance. At the same time some preexisting structures have hampered this development and given priority to certain cultural structures that together with a lower level of English have given the Russian participants a harder starting point than the others. While the focus groups only construct social systems with “strong” participants in its surroundings it is impossible to say if the preexisting structures might have worked contrary to the objective. This might have happened if for instance the talkative and laughing Danish participants have scared less talkative participants who have had difficulties interpreting the Scandinavian behavior.

5.2: Intercultural dialogue
Though social systems arose it is still unclear whether the camp facilitated intercultural dialogue in the sense presented in chapter three. This is a dialogue based on programs accepted by the environment and in the context of z:t developed and negotiated not between existing systems and cultures but in new system with its own culture.

On the second day of the camp there was a meeting among the students where they as one big group were told to find a common attitude toward alcohol – or to negotiate and form a common program. In this case it ended as a conflict. As the Danes mentioned alcohol as an important part of the camp, the Russians had a different attitude. A Russian answered that the camp had learned her about “the bad effects of alcohol”. In the focus group the Russians describe their position:

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67 The focus group mentions “parties with the teachers” and “drinking sprees” as good things.
RB: Of course it raised controversy when we were told that in Denmark they could drink from the age of 16, and why they could not drink here? But we said that Russia – that is Russia, and better...
RG: That they better follow Russian law, that in Russia laws should be respected.
RB: Well, they live in Russia and I think they should live according to our laws.\footnote{\textit{Конечно}, возникли противоречия, когда нам сказали, что в Дании они могут пить с 16 лет, и почему они не могут здесь, но мы сказали, что Россия – это Россия, лучше …}\

Due to the Russians the meeting turned out without any conclusions though it was pretty clear that the drinking continued the rest of the week. Therefore the situation can be seen as forming a conflict where the Russians felt disrespected. On the other hand, during the week the Danes and the Finns felt attacked on their right to be free and individual. One of the teachers describes it like this:

FT: The atmosphere in the sanatorium was perhaps too tight for “western” (sorry for the expression) young people, who are not used to doors closing up between 23.00-06.30, porters and floor-guardians, no smoking areas inside, when not allowed to go outside… One can easily understand the organizers concern for the security of the students, but at the same time it developed an obvious tensity among the Finns and Danes.\footnote{Letter from Finnish teacher.}

And a Danish teacher describes similar problems when stating that:

- The place had no facilities required for a conference like this. And especially no facilities required by young people.
- The participants (at least the Danes and the Finns) felt locked up in the sanatorium. And they were, actually (…).
- The program was too conducted by adults and did not leave enough space for improvisation and influence from the participants. (…)
- There was a certain lack of understanding of teenage conditions. Some of the events seemed too childish.\footnote{Letter from Danish teacher.}
It seems that there has been a conflict dividing the participants. On one hand the Scandinavians have felt “locked up” and victims of a “lack of understanding of teenage conditions” (according to their teachers). On the other hand the Russians have not felt respected on their laws. According to Luhmann a conflict is “when a communication is contradicted” (Luhmann 2000: 449). The Scandinavians contradicted the communication “it is illegal to buy and drink alcohol” and the Russian rules at the conference center contradicted the Scandinavian communication “as free individual we are free to buy alcohol and go outside the conference center”.

Conflicts has an “destructive power” (Luhmann 2000: 452) and might course mistrust (according to Luhman 2000: 168 ff). Luhmann describes how conflicts can be seen as a parasitic systems present as ghost in other social systems environment (Luhmann 2000: 450). This means that the conflict and disappointments observed by the Scandinavians and the Russians have hampered the development of mutual understanding in the sense of s self-referential re-describing of one’s own programs and culture in order to create a common set of understandings how to communicate. According to the problem about alcohol no “common set of understanding” were developed clearly exposed on the last day of the camp, where a Danish teacher presented the rules for the farewell party: The Danes and the Finns were allowed to drink, the Russians were not. This might actually be seen as a sign of tolerance towards each other’s attitude but at the same time such a decision can be expected to create a structure freezing the differences between the participants instead of developing them towards a common understanding. In this example tolerance makes intercultural dialogue difficult.

The empirical material does not indicate that the participants have developed the basis needed for intercultural dialogue and hence, intercultural learning. Much of the communications in the social systems were communication about communication (or usage - according to chapter three) and it does not seem that the systems reached a level of complexity where they could negotiate common expectations hence facilitate complex and intercultural learning. Next part shows some examples of the observations articulated by the participants.

71 Which according to Real Russia is a value (respect of law) important to around 80% of the population.
72 “Vi vil tale om konflikter, når kommunikation bliver modsagt”
73 Conference Center area would be a more fair description.
5.3: **Intercultural learning**

As mentioned in chapter three intercultural learning is complex learning that forces the participants not just to be environment for social systems with common expectation about how to speak but with a common supply of culture. Signs of intercultural learning could be if the interview systems articulate some second order observations on culture facilitating a change from norm to cognition (according to chapter three). This did not happen and it seems like the intercultural experience has shown them that other people behave different but when it comes to norms none of the participants start discussing or question their own norms as far as the interviews observe.

The Finns are not that explicit as the Danes and the Russians but this little quotation shows how it anyway is more convenient to expect the others to change instead of oneself:

LR: What have you learned about the communication, about people from other countries?

FB: We have to see how they act and react on what you say and little so you get to know how they’re thinking, at least small pieces of how they are thinking so if you can cooperate with them. Maybe get them to open.

Here it is the very last sentence “maybe get them to open” that indicates that “my way” is the right way (at least to a higher extend the other’s). A Danish example could be:

I often say “good morning” or “hi” or something else to some Russians or someone that I do not know where they do not answer. It is simply a total different culture for what is polite. That of course makes me think “shit they are annoying that they do not want to say hi”. 74

Here the expression “they are annoying” shows a lack of consideration of one’s own culture and how it could be understood and negotiated. Finally, also the Russians have their wonderings about the others:

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74 Der er tit hvor jeg sidder good morning eller hej eller et eller andet til nogen russere eller nogen jeg ikke kender, hvor de ikke svare. De har bare en helt anden kultur for hvad der er høflighed. Det gør selvfølgelig, at jeg kommer til at tænke, hold kaeft de er irriterende at de ikke gider at sige hej.
RG: To us they are strange — this is they are walking around in socks or walk barefoot in the cantina where everybody is walking in their dirty shoes. This is strange for us. And at the time when we were in Sestroretzk, in the supermarket. They were hungry, we understand that, but they went out of the shop and sat right down on the grown and started to eat bread with chocolate creme. Just outside the shop. This was also strange. And for those passing by, it seemed very strange!75

Again, instead of using the event as a reflection on one owns norms, the feeling of girl is transferred to “those passing by”.

The point in those examples is that the participants did not change their own norms during the program. Their observations were not followed by a reflection about one owns cultural point of observation and no common program nor values developed in the system. The others are “strange”, “annoying” and it is better to make the others open.

75."Для нас они странные, то есть они ходят в носках, ходят босиком в столовую, где все ходят в грязной обуви, вот это для нас странно. И когда мы ходили в Сестрорецк, в супермаркет. Они были голодные, мы понимаем, но они вышли из магазина и прямо там сели на землю и начали есть батон с шоколадным маслом. Прямо при входе в магазин. Это тоже для нас странно. И для тех, которые мимо проходили, очень странно."
Conclusion of the chapter:

It does not seem that z:t facilitated neither intercultural dialogue nor learning in the sense outlined in chapter three. The empirical material leaves no signs of common expectations on other levels than what is needed for negotiating how to communicate. Though, this does not necessarily means that z:t have not facilitated intercultural dialogue and learning at other places. The systems of consciousness have as far as they have been structural coupled to negotiating social systems “tasted” the conflict potential and might have formed memory/expectations about how difficult intercultural dialogue is that strengthens other social system that the participants interpenetrate in the future. According to Keiding such learning is impossible to prove while the “disturbances” coursed by z:t will lead to different self-references in each system of consciousness (Keiding 2005: 110). In some cases it might be lead to learning in a sense of facilitating future dialogue; in some cases the opposite outcome is possible. Since I have no chances to follow the participants and observe how they contribute to other cross-cultural communications it is impossible to say that z:t have facilitated this or that.
Chapter 6: Discussion

After the analysis and based in the theory it is possible to discuss to what extend there actually is a gap between practice of \( z:t \) and YAP. The chapter will be organized according the three levels of learning required by the YAP as it was the case in last chapter. This is tolerance, intercultural dialogue and intercultural learning. Each of the three parts will 1) define the gap, 2) outline theoretic perspectives and 3) suggest what to do practically.

6.1 Tolerance

The analysis shows that the camp actually succeeded in promoting tolerance at least for a part of the participants and maybe a rather big part. Though, it is clear that the social systems arising or developing through the camp could have had better conditions. There was an asymmetric structure favoring especially the Danish students in forming cultural defined access to the systems. Hereby, the Russian students were left with a less attractive starting point while they were less good at English and might have had harder to contribute to the communication as visualized by two Danish students:

DB: I just think that you can feel that there is a lot of things that they do not know. Things it is easier to talk with the Finns about. Not because they are different [the Russians] but because we have more things in common [with the Finns]. And I think – I do not know how come, but there is more things that Europeans, or West Europeans it should be, has in common. It is difficult to talk to Russians. It is simply something different. It is not them, it is their...

DG: It is the culture and the society.\(^{76}\)

6.1.1 How to improve the development of tolerance?

In terms of Luhmann’s theory several things can be done in order to improve the facilitation of tolerance. First of all: the more likely misunderstandings are, the more unlike is trust and tolerance to develop (According to Luhmann 2000: 150 ff; 168 ff). In context of youth exchange where different systems of consciousness and existing

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\(^{76}\) D1: “Jeg synes bare man kan mærke, at der er mange ting som de ikke kender – hvor det er nemmere at tale med finnerne. Ikke fordi de er anderledes (underforstået, russerne) men fordi vi har mange flere ting til fælles. Og jeg tror det er – jeg ved sgu ikke hvad det er der udløser det, men det er sådan en masse ting som flere europæere – eller vesteuropæere må det være – har til fælles på en eller anden måde. Det er svære at snakke med russere. Det er bare noget helt andet. Det er ikke dem, det er deres...”

P: “Det er kulturen og deres samfund.”
social systems are brought together trust can be supported in different ways: First of all, trust are more likely if the systems brought together already have something in common. This might be language, culture and values in order to let the systems develop to a high level of complexity (according to Luhmann 2000: 368 ff). In cross-border activities this is rarely the case. Here the starting point for the systems is less complex and therefore more sensible to competing systems (according to chapter three). Therefore the exchange should be organized in order to minimize or equalize the access to such systems. In z:it one could argue that the either three equal systems should have been brought together, all consisting of existing programs and values – or even better: all the participants should only know very few of the other on forehand. This would mean less competition from other systems than those arising during the exchange.

Also trust could be supported by avoiding disappointments or in other words: build up common expectations before the meeting (according to Luhmann 2000: 250; 31ff)77. One of the important expectations that ought to be cleared is about the fact that it is more difficult to communicate in a foreign language. Especially the Danes expressed frustration about the “low level” because so many efforts had to be put into communication about communication instead of communication about tolerance:

DB: I would say that the language barrier has been huge. It has meant a lot. It really irritates me.78

But also frustrations about the conference center, the food or the high level of English could be reduced if the participants had a chance to know what to expect on forehand.

Finally, the development of trust “is referred to further support” (Luhmann 2000: 169)79. This is: rules and clear information can decrease the complexity and amount of misunderstandings that a system has to deal with. Luhmann refers to the legal framework for the way it frames trust, and something similar can be articulated within the framework of an exchange program. First of all clear rules can make clear whether drinking is allowed or not and hereby neutralize all potential conflicts coursing by the doubt. But also when facilitating communication as a part of the

77 Henvist til yderligere støtte,
79 Er henvist til yderligere støtte
classes, doubt should neutralized. During z:t it seemed like the teaching was too deeply rooted cultures. The Danish students liked the activities ran by Danes more than the lessons ran by Russians – and the Russian participants liked the lessons ran by Russians more:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Introduction by Russian teacher</th>
<th>Tolerance committee by Russian teachers</th>
<th>Creating a country by Danish teacher</th>
<th>Powerplay by Danish teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>6,8</td>
<td>6,4</td>
<td>6,2</td>
<td>5,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danes</td>
<td>1,75</td>
<td>2,67</td>
<td>4,25</td>
<td>5,67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finns</td>
<td>4,58</td>
<td>4,25</td>
<td>5,92</td>
<td>5,75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In the questionnaire the respondents rated the lessons on a scale from 1-7. The numbers in the table is the average values for each country.*

In other words: The teaching did not neutralize the cultural differences – it exposed them. And therefore did not reduce complexity.

**Consciousness supports tolerance with complexity**

While the development of trust and tolerance is supported by less complexity in the social system, it is at the same time supported by more complex systems of consciousness (according to Luhmann 2000: 277ff). Here complexity for instance is the ability of speaking in English but it is also “a mass of available cognitions” that facilitates learning as mentioned in chapter three. The more complex the systems are, the easier will they have constructing meaning and observe the environment as more complex (according to Luhmann 2000: 231ff). Before drawing any precipitated decisions one should remember that complex systems of consciousness not necessarily lead to trust. It is easy to imagine “clashes of paradigms” represented by very smart people – and it is easy to imagine a playground on a campsite where very not complex systems of consciousness develop trust while building a sandcastle.

**6.1.2 What to do in real life?**

On the basis of the above mentioned arguments it seems likely that it facilitates development of tolerance if the participants are ensured equal access to social systems and if unnecessary complexity is neutralized.

**+ Ensure equal access to social systems**

The first thing to do in order to facilitate development of tolerance is to give the participants equal access to the social system where tolerance and trust should be developed. Equal access is ensured when the participants one the one hand have
similar prerequisites in form of knowledge of languages and knowledge of each other’s cultures. On the other hand equal access is ensured when the participants are exposed for similar competition from surrounding systems. In z:z the Danes were had access to an existing system ready to “take over” if the communication in the common system were too demanding. The others did not have the same opportunity from the beginning but participants with less good English skills might have felt pulled in direction of forming new system where the common language and understanding were for instance, Russian. Similar competition can be ensured by taking together for instance three classes – or picking out the participants from more schools so that no one know a lot of the other participants in the beginning of the exchange event. The consequence would be that from the beginning there would only one system, and no programs at all. Programs and culture would have to be developed from the beginning. On the one hand, demanding complex systems of consciousness, on the other hand eliminating any competition from other social systems. Ensuring equal access to social systems should not be confused with an ideal of choosing equal participants. One could easily imagine that z:z could have been more interesting if some of the participants had dark skin, another religion or openly said about different sexual orientation. The simple point is that participants (in all their diversity) should have equal access to the common system in order to promote tolerance.

+ Neutralize unnecessary complexity

On z:z there are several ways that the complexity in the development of the social systems could have been decreased. First of all, something could have been done in order to provide the participants with more homogeneous expectations. This is information about the conference center (rooms, food etc), the program (objectives and content) and the rules. Secondly, the complexity could be reduced in some the planned activities. The teachers during the program should know about their target group: What they are used to, what they are good at, structures of motivation, and creation of meaning etc (according to Keiding 2005). Though there was activities were it is not necessary to reduce complexity: This is for instance the evening where the participants were invited to a concert. This activity was highly rated and it seemed rather easy for them to dance with each others. This indicates that it is most important to reduce complexity in activities where different cultural understandings raise the risk of double contingency. This might be very different from this or that youth exchange.
6.2 Intercultural dialogue

The analysis did not find any indications of intercultural dialogue based on common expectations and programs. Quite the reverse the analysis showed that different conflicts might have coursed mistrust and prevented the intercultural dialogue from developing.

6.2.1 How to facilitate intercultural dialogue?

As mentioned a program is a “complex of conditions for rightness of behavior”, and according to Luhmann programs are easier to negotiate if this happens in the light of value consensus (Luhmann 2000: 372 f). When the negotiation of a common attitude towards alcohol failed, this might be because the controversy was rooted in contrary values: Respect of laws contra personal freedom. But also the participants had different attitudes towards the negotiation itself. The Russians almost laughed when describing how the Danes one after one raised their hands, stood up and “repeat(ed) the same as just stated in the previous remark”\textsuperscript{80}. It seems like the system was heading a task it was not complex enough to carry out.

This shows that a long list of requirements should be met before one can expect intercultural dialogue to arise. Systems have to develop a certain level of complexity, this is some common expectations about how to communicate, a certain ability to handle disappointments (which requires trust!) and finally articulation of a theme that does not cover for conflicting values in the environment. In the light of this argument it seemed a bit too ambitious to ask a two day old, multi cultural social system to solve a problem that required a common language that did not exist, not just negotiating, but creation of a program and finally agreement on values, which would require complex learning.

Instead of challenging the participants with such a task that ended up provoking a conflict, intercultural dialogue should rather be facilitated through communication on less dividing themes requiring less complexity from the system\textsuperscript{81}. From a learning perspective, it seems important that the systems provide the communication with trust in order to develop the programs that might base the intercultural communication without forcing too many and serious disappointments. Especially

\textsuperscript{80} "Да, вы знаете на самом деле они иногда говорят одно и тоже, просто мусолят одно и то же тему как бы и повторяют то же самое - предыдущие высказывания". Enclosure 1.

\textsuperscript{81} Here it seems like there is quite a gap between theory and practice. It was important to solve this problem and taking the very divergent expectations among the participants into consideration this conflict seemed unavoidable.
in youth exchanges with competing systems in the environment. In z:t the competing systems seemed to be ready to confirm their own programs questioned by the system trying to develop the dialogue. Some of the Russian boys confirmed each other in the strangeness of homosexuality\textsuperscript{82}, and sometimes it seemed like some of the Danes confirmed each other in the strangeness of other lessons\textsuperscript{83}. This shows that facilitation of dialogue not only should be designed to mediate the complexity of the system but also take the environment into consideration. It seems that one can arrange the environment due to the strategy of choosing the participants while it requires some analysis to challenge the system with right tasks.

6.2.2 What to do in real life?
On this basis it is possible to present some further arguments and point out some difficulties that should be overcome in order to facilitate intercultural dialogue.

+ Ensure the necessary knowledge
No matter what the environment is like, it is not just possible but also necessary to provide the system with the right tasks. On one hand it is a task that does take the complexity of the system into consideration and on the other hand it is a task that forces the communication to drive forward – this is, supports the development of meaning. This can be done through clear formulated tasks that define the theme and thereby reduce and produce complexity at the same time. It reduces complexity by filtering a lot of communicative contribution and it produces complexity in the way it forces the system to decide whether it should accept the task or not, and secondly how it has to develop in order to fulfill the task if accepted. It requires analytic sense and understanding for both cultures and communication to formulate such tasks. One important question is if the development of intercultural dialogue necessarily has to be a result of organized training. The answer might be, that this depends on the on the complexity of the system, the conflict potential and the sort of competition provided by the environment. Off hand, the it seems naïve to expect the participants of z:t to develop dialogue on their own. Even without the conflicts the diversity in values, the existens of competing systems and the not very complex

\textsuperscript{82} Informal conversation with some of the boys after the lessons about homosexuality.
\textsuperscript{83} Confirmed by this statement: men jeg har det virkelig sådan at hos de danskerne der brokkede sig over programmet og brokkede sig over hvordan det var, og blev gjort til grin og sådan noget – jeg synes det er fint nok, at man siger det i pauserne, for det kan være lækkert at komme af med at ”hold kæft man det er noget lort”. Men jeg synes ikke det er ok at komme ind til et nyt program og sige ”yd – det gider jeg ikke, det andet var dårligt” Jeg synes det er helt vildt fedt hvis alle kan starte med en god indstilling hver gang man kan starte igen. Og så brokke sig i pauserne hvis man virkelig synes det er så slømt.
social system are reasons why the participants needed this to be organized, framed and supported. Though it seems like that the analytic competence to realize this was not present at z:t. Therefore analytic knowledge and competences to formulate the right tasks should be present at youth conferences aiming at developing common programs and hence intercultural dialogue.

+ Ensure the support

Even if the knowledge about how to organize the development of intercultural dialogue is present, there might be a long way to the finish line. In the evaluations I received from the teachers it was remarkable how clear they supported the programs of their own students. The Finnish teacher described the conference center as “too tight for “western” young people” and according to the Danish teacher,

(...) it seems to me that the young people of Zoom acted exactly as most young Europeans would have done wanting to have a good time in spite of the strict rules of the sanatorium. In that sense they acted as young people always have done: breaking the rules and drinking.84

This underlines the importance of also a common understanding among the leaders and teachers. Apparently this was not the case and the organization could have been strengthen with a responsible leader85 in charge of ensuring support of some basic principle about the camp on forehand, and a clear hierarchy and acceptance of competences among the adults during the camp.

6.3 Intercultural learning

According to chapter three, intercultural learning is complex learning that requires norms to transform into cognitions. The analysis did not indicate that this happened during z:t and therefore it is even more relevant to discuss how to facilitate it.

6.3.1 How to facilitate intercultural learning?

On basis on the notions in chapter three it seems clear that intercultural learning is depending on common structures, programs and maybe values to develop in the social system. So intercultural learning is facilitated by a continuation of the

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84 It is very important for me to note that this is not a critique of the teachers but an attempt to suggest what can be learned from the way the camp were organized.

85 It is also important to stress that this is neither a critique of the responsible organizers behind z:t. Three weeks before the camp z:t was close to cancelation and the circumstances did not allow this to be much different.
intercultural dialogue based on a theme that forces the system develop, its complexity taken into consideration. But this is not enough in itself. In order to accomplish the learning especially two kinds of observations should be facilitated: Reflectivity and reflection (according to chapter four).

**Reflectivity**
As mentioned reflectivity is an observation based on the difference between the present and the past. The social system facilitating the complex learning can be forced to reflectivity but it seems important that such “evaluations” are constructed in a way that forces the system to describe changes in its complexity and development of programs. This forces the system to reflect on its starting point and hereby to create observations of second order.

**Reflection**
Reflection is an observation based on the difference between system and environment. The value of this observation might be easier to understand for the participants if it is carried out in different social systems. In exchange programs like z:t this could be done by facilitating the reflection in both the common social system and in other systems that provide other kinds of complexity. This could be groups where the participants can speak in their native language. The reason is that the differences between system and environment might be easier to capture in both communication and consciousness if it is observed from different perspectives.

**Evalutation is never enough**
The above mentioned suggestions might sound like a suggestion of evaluation but it is not that simple. Keiding notes that evaluations or “self-observing” is rather conservative because it can never reach beyond the complexity of the social system and the surrounding systems of consciousness (Keiding 2005: 203). In order to form this complexity, intercultural learning should be thematized early in the process and maybe structures capable of understanding different cultures and the development of common ones could be founded already before the exchange. This requires knowledge both about cultures and intercultural learning processes. It seems like this knowledge was a bit rusty among the teachers at z:t. Also the planning and facilitation of this knowledge is dependent on the way the participants are recruited. If they come from different school, it might be hard to teach them on forehand.
6.3.2 What to do in real life?
This leads to two suggestions:

+ **Be aware of progress**
Intercultural learning is almost unachievable if not intercultural dialogue is already facilitated. At least the intercultural dialogue creates a new program and thereby a complex system that makes it possible for the participants to observe different systems from different perspectives and thereby get a broader impression of culture, and hence the transformation from norms to cognitions. Therefore it again requires analytic skills to decide whether reflections on norms meaningfully can be a part of an evaluation, or if it just would lead to disappointments in a system not able to do such observations. The word “progress” also indicates that the temporal dimension plays an important role in order to construct meaning. Some evaluations should maybe be done after the exchange program has actually finished.86

+ **Facilitate knowledge and observation**
Though intercultural dialogue is necessary in order to facilitate learning it is not sufficient. First of all both participants and organizers and teachers should have a certain pre-understanding and complexity to transform norms to cognitions: When this is the case the learning might take place when the participants are offered the possibility to observe both changes over time, and the relationship between systems and their environments from different perspectives. In z:t this could happen if special designed evaluations were carried out both in groups consisting of participants with different nationalities and in groups where the participants speak the same language. It requires analytic skills to organize such evaluations and it requires knowledge among teachers to facilitate the needed complexity in the environment.

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86 It seems fair to some research to if it what so ever is possible to facilitate this learning on such a short period of time.
Chapter 7: Validity and reliability

Before any conclusion can be made it is necessary to draw a picture of the report’s validity and reliability in order to make clear to what extent the results are important for anything else than my own curiosity.

7.1 Validity and reliability

Validity should be judged on the theoretic interpretation of z:t and YAP and the coherence in the argumentation. Reliability has to do with the construction and interpretation of the empirical materials and the choice of theory (Luhmann 2000; Keiding 2005; Flick 2006).

Through the report findings and arguments has constantly been conducted back into the theory and the number of references indicates that this has been done. The biggest problem might be that I have chosen to write in English which on the one hand make the report less fluent and the argumentation less coherent because of my language skills. On the other hand it eases the access to the findings and facilitates a broader debate about how to organize and evaluate youth exchanges in the future. In continuation of this, meaning might have been lost in the translations from the focus groups. To avoid this both translations from Russian and Danish into English have been double checked by other university students with a high level of the languages – and the original phrases have been stated in the footnotes in order to give the reader the chance to triple-check.

In order to make a second order observation on the validity one could also ask if the findings would have been more valid if using another theory. The easy answer is that this in unknown and I cannot do much more than present a short critic of Luhmann’s theory.

My first and most important claim is that it is very difficult to draw a clear line between different systems and systems being subsystems to each other. This makes it difficult and a bit inaccurate when interpreting the practice of z:t into systems. What more important is, that there might be important systems that the observations have not observed. For instance the interviews draw a picture of the informal systems as important – but the report does not describe the communication in those systems. This criticism is analog to Kaspersens criticism of a low usability
of the concepts in Luhmann’s theory (Kaspersen 2004: 100). In his Ph.D Kaspersen presents 6 sections of criticism based on Ditlev Krause’s Luhmann-lexikon. Except from low usability, Kaspersen only recognize the criticism that at some points the theory seems to emphasize the social explanations of behavior too much (Kaspersen 2004: 100ff). It is beyond this report to take this discussion of theory and philosophy of science here. It is enough to note that choosing a more psychological approach to learning might lead to other definitions of intercultural learning, and hence change the argumentations and recommendations of this report quite a bit. Though the differences will not be visible before they are interpreted into the system of education: This is in concrete programs, letters, booklets, web-pages, introductions or in other words: Actions.

7.2 Generalization and limitations
When doing a case study there are some clear limitations in the way the results can be interpreted and realized. First of all: other cases might have emphasized other problems and suggested other solutions than this study of zt. When generalizing one should always be aware of similarities and differences in the context. Luhmann provide a theory and a set of notions that helps interpreting other contexts and hereby facilitate a analysis and discussion about whether the findings in this report are transferable. It also means that the suggestions provided in next chapter never can be seen as exhausted. When stepping back and observing the blind spot of this report, the choice of theory, one should be aware of exactly the same: Using other theories will provide other perspectives and suggest other solutions. Though when transferring the findings from the system of science to the system of education the differences might be very limited. I cannot imagine theories that would not agree on the importance of planning, knowing the target group and establishment of a common language. This does not mean that such theories do not exist but it point towards the third limitation: This report a communicative contribution to the system of science, not the system of education. The result is that the answers to the problem formulation cannot be seen as an action orientated recommendation. Further investigation is needed to make a proper interpretation into the system of education.

88 The teaching resource "EU – kom godt i gang" is an example of a material developed on the basis of Luhmanns system theory (EU – kom godt i gang, Kern og Rasmussen, Erhvervsskolernes forlag 2008)
89 Of course, it is actually a contribution to the system of education while I am still a student, but it should primarily be judged on its ability to meet the demands from the system of science. In best case the fact that this is a contribution to my education can justify that I write in English which may course a less satisfactory argumentation but develop my skills more than if I wrote in Danish.
where the criteria for success are not “correctness” according to scientific principles but “effect” according to the certain context (according to Luhmann 2005).

When taking those three limitations into account it my impression that the results are valid and reliable enough to contribute as arguments for other program implementers both in the European Commission and “on the ground”. The report actually does raise a serious criticism of the measurement of intercultural learning in the Commission’s last evaluation (mentioned in the preface).
Chapter 8: Conclusion

With the methodological reservations mentioned in last chapter in mind, it is finally possible to give a trustworthy answer on the problem statement:

How to bridge the gap between the objectives stated in the Youth in Action program paper and the learning practice of exchange programs like zoom:tolerance?

++ By defining what is actually meant in the YAP
In this report the arguments rests on my interpretation of the YAP into the system theory. This interpretation prompts a procedural understanding of the development of tolerance, intercultural dialogue and -learning where the former level is necessary but never sufficient for reaching the next level. This is in polar opposition to the understanding outlined in the Commissions last evaluation.

++ By being well prepared
If accepting the interpretation it is clear that serious preparations are necessary in order to bridge the gap between the objectives stated in YAP and the outcome of youth exchanges. First of all, the participants should be chosen carefully in order to facilitate social systems to develop with equal access for the participants. It is also important that the participants can contribute to this development with a sufficient level of complexity of their systems of consciousness. Secondly the participants should be well prepared with knowledge about the exchange in order to have realistic expectations. In order to facilitate intercultural dialogue and learning the participants could also be taught about these processes. Finally it is important that both teachers and program planners are prepared. This includes knowledge about the participant’s language level, pre-understandings, culture etc. But also knowledge about the physical conditions on place where the exchange is to take place, in order to do as much of the program planning on forehand. During the exchange event this emancipates capacity to carry out the necessary analysis in order to impact the development of the social systems.

++ By sufficient knowledge about intercultural dialogue and learning
During the camp the program planners should facilitate a common language, common programs and some social structures that allow self-observations from
different perspectives. In order to do so, the program implementers need a high level of analytic skills and intercultural competences. This raises an important question: Does it require professional training to organize effective exchange-programs, or can teachers and others in the youth sector do this if just the awareness about the objectives of YAP and the relation between them is raised?

++ By access to didactic creativity
No matter if these recommendations are to be carried out by teachers or more professional trained staff it is clear that it requires didactic creativity to interpret the findings in this report into the system of education. Nobody knows what it means in a terms of specific actions in specific situation to “facilitate dialogue” in order to challenge the “complexity of a social system”. This is to be interpreted into some actions and tasks that are funny, challenging and motivating for the youngsters who are bridging today with tomorrow’s Europe with tomorrow’s values.

Bridges to the future
This conclusion raises some new questions that are to be examined on different levels. In order to improve the results of the YAP actions are to be taken both in political system, the system of science and the system of education. In Brussels a clear statement is needed in order to understand YAP. Universities can provide more knowledge and better descriptions of the learning potential in youth exchange program. Together with schools and NGO’s university could also carry out action research in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice. All this together might facilitate more intercultural dialogue and learning and make people understand each other in other ways than what they are used to.
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