

Josef Wieland,
Julika Baumann Montecinos (eds.)



Transcultural Leadership and Transcultural Competence

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Contents

Preface	7
Contributors	9
<i>Josef Wieland and Julika Baumann Montecinos</i> A Competence-based Approach to Transcultural Leadership – Introduction to a Research Program	11
<i>Josef Wieland</i> Transculturality as a Leadership Style – A Relational Approach	21
<i>Thilo von Gilsa</i> Operationalizing Transcultural Competence. An Analysis of Related Concepts and Methods of Measurements	43
<i>Antonin Salice-Stephan</i> Transcultural by Biography. A Comparative Study on the Transcultural Competences of ‘Biculturals’ and ‘Monoculturals’	75
<i>Sebastian Urthaler</i> Transculturality and its Focus on Commonalities	113
<i>Tobias Grünfelder</i> From Global to Transcultural Competence. Derived Findings for Transcultural Competence from the Global Competence Assessment by PISA	143

<i>Julika Baumann Montecinos, Elena Hunzinger, Preeti Singh and Sabine Wiesmüller</i> Transcultural Management in Global Firms	181
<i>Josef Wieland and Julika Baumann Montecinos</i> University Education in Transcultural Competence. The Example of the Global Studies Projects at Zeppelin University	225

Preface

The globalization of individual and collective action and the cultural challenges that this entails can be observed in many different contexts. Economic, political and societal developments, such as the increasing relevance of global value chains, lead to the continuous extension and aggregation of networks of cross-border relations, as well as to their constant transformation. Diversity itself is diverse – it can refer to different national, regional, professional, sectoral, generational cultures and many other dimensions –, and realities are described as being volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, particularly in a global context. This calls for a concept of leadership that goes beyond traditional assumptions on static cultural differences, but rather focuses on the determinants of practical cooperation and of learning processes with a view to creating commonalities.

Against this backdrop, the concept of transcultural leadership is gaining increasing attention among academics and practitioners. This volume presents the current state of research on this concept and the corresponding competence models. It contains a selection of articles written by scholars, research fellows and graduates at Zeppelin University's Leadership Excellence Institute. By combining innovative theoretical and conceptual approaches with topical empirical analyses, this book aims to offer a sound foundation for reflections on what it means to be a successful leader in today's and tomorrow's globalising environments.

We should like to thank all colleagues, students, practitioners and experts who have shaped our transcultural learning journey thus far by contributing to our research and teaching formats, projects and conferences in many ways. Our thanks go to Nils Geib for his considerable support in the editing process, and to all the authors and readers of this volume.

Friedrichshafen, July 2019

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A Competence-based Approach to Transcultural Leadership – Introduction to a Research Program

*Josef Wieland and
Julika Baumann Montecinos*

The interest in transculturality stems from the observation that, in a globalizing world, collaboration for mutual benefit can only succeed if people with a diverse background actually cooperate. The notion of cooperation lies at the core of the transcultural approach and marks both the means of, and the claim for, a specific quality of social interaction. It connotes that, by relating the involved actors, their interests and their resources in the event of a cooperation project, it is possible to form local, temporary and transaction-specific communities of practice and to base them on emerging cultural commonalities which may be stabilized and persist if they are developed in a joint learning process.

Against this background, questions arise as to what the prerequisites and framework conditions are for people to be able to form real and concrete cooperative communities and to create cultural, social or economic commonalities in a global context. Addressing these questions on enabling factors for successful transcultural cooperation has far-reaching implications for leadership and for insights on leadership-related competences. To work on and develop these topics is what we are doing in our research program on transcultural leadership and transcultural competence as part of a theory of relational economics (cf. Wieland 2018a), and what we would like to outline briefly in this introduction to the book at hand.¹

¹ Parts of this introduction go back to an interview between Josef Wieland and Julika Baumann Montecinos, which was published in the annual of the Forum Wirtschaftsethik (Wieland 2018b: 112-122).

I.

In order to understand the contributions the transcultural approach makes to the cultural and social sciences, it seems to be appropriate to distinguish it from other existing approaches. A central distinction is from the concept of intercultural management², which focuses on the question of difference in the sense of emphasizing the distinction between one national culture and others. Interculturality aims at the frictionless interaction of individual interests, which can be established via knowledge, tolerance and reconciliation of differences. It is based on identity theory, which means that it is based on a cultural belonging to a nation. The transcultural approach is not about conciliation or reconciliation of differences and thus about their neutralization. Rather, it suggests acknowledging differences, accepting them, even enduring them, but not judging them, and, on the basis of this, attempts are made to develop local commonalities and communities of practice as something new and third. This call for a non-normative and practical approach lies at the core of the transcultural concept.

From a transculturally-oriented point of view, a rather problematic starting point of the considerations that the intercultural approach undertakes is to look at national cultures. The decision for this subject of analysis inevitably goes hand in hand with a focus on conflicts and corresponding conflict resolution mechanisms, and this lies not least in the fact that a national culture can only be conceived as a contrast to another national culture from the point of view of belonging, of identity. Contrary to that, the research program of transcultural leadership considers not the nation but a specific transaction as its conceptual starting point. To this transaction, all actors attach an expectation of benefit and therefore a common interest in its realization. That is, the necessary starting point of this form of emerging community is already established, namely this specific transaction.

In summary, the distinction between both concepts can be condensed to the question of whether the reference is nations or transactions, imply-

² Prominent representatives of the intercultural approach include Geert Hofstede or Fons Trompenaars. For a comparison between the intercultural and the transcultural approach see also Welsch 1999, McSweeney (2015), Wieland 2016 and Baumann Montecinos 2019.

ing correspondingly different theory architectures. Besides, a further conceptual decision refers to whether one sees national cultures as homogeneous containers or whether one includes different levels of culture in the consideration, as we do in transcultural research. Following the claim to consider what we call “the diversity of diversity” implies looking not only at national cultures, but also at regional cultures, industry cultures, professional cultures, corporate cultures, as well as, for example, at different generational or gender cultures – and, at the same time, taking into account the fact that the individuals acting in these cultures also form multilayered cultural systems in themselves that can be very diverse and that depend on specific contexts for their manifestation (cf. Baumann Montecinos 2019: 74). As Swidler (1986: 273) puts it, “[c]ulture influences action [...] by shaping a repertoire or ‘tool kit’ of habits, skills, and styles from which people construct ‘strategies of action’”.

At the same time, we note that across all cultural differences and against the background of complexity and continuous change, there are very basic capabilities that all human beings have in common: in our research program, we look at pro-social skills such as empathy or inclusive rationality that can be attributed to all humans³ and that pave the way for the emergence of a transaction-related community in concrete cooperation projects. With the transcultural approach, by considering real transactions and thus the practice of different cultures, existing and, in particular, newly created commonalities come into view, in order to describe the conditions for success of effective cross-cultural cooperation.

Another distinction should also be mentioned at this point, namely that between the transcultural approach and the idea of a world ethos, which assumes that there are always certain globally agreed cultural values, such as humanity. However, according to our understanding, this approach does not adequately take into account the fact that a term such as that of humanity requires a specification, a local or context-dependent interpretation if one strives to cooperate because, as a thin, abstract concept, it is just not sufficient to enable a concrete community to develop – communities of practice rather refer to “thick” descriptions of values, which are always temporary and local.⁴

³ See the article by Josef Wieland in this volume (2019: 21-41).

⁴ On the distinction between thin and thick descriptions, see Walzer 1994. On the transfer of this distinction to transcultural research, see Baumann Montecinos 2019.

This issue of local and transaction-specific community, in order to cooperate in decentralized, global spaces, and the question of the required commonalities and their formation, which is ultimately about the development of a common, resilient, but always temporary, value basis, are some of the backgrounds and ambitions of this research program.

II.

Against the background of the complexity of reality, in order for cross-cultural cooperation to succeed, it is crucial to find a starting point for the corresponding processes of interaction and learning. After all, once cooperation has started and the mutual advantages become tangible, it can be assumed that it will continue, as there is a common interest in continuing the successful relationship. With regard to all the different cultural levels mentioned above, there may already be initial concrete commonalities of a particular group of actors with which one can begin cooperation. The decisive aspect, however, is to enable their continuation through shared practical experience. This can be traced back to the fact that values as well as ideas about what is meant by certain principles develop through practical interactions, in the course of which these ideas become constant and transform into expected behavioral norms. In this sense, norms of behavior are the result of evolution, not of deduction (cf. Tomasello 2016, 2019). This transformation of experiences into behaviours could be considered as a transcultural learning process, which allows experience to be transformed into behaviour. In order to facilitate this process of developing new commonalities, the community that emerges from successful transaction-related cooperation can be used. Such a community relates all those stakeholders who expect to benefit from the realization of a particular transaction and therefore actually cooperate across cultural diversity.

At this point, and in order to further elaborate on some basic notions of the transcultural approach, the question of how to integrate actual cultural diversity into a concept that focuses on cooperation and commonalities deserves some attention. As far as the economic consequences of cultural diversity within groups are concerned, both academics and practitioners often claim that diversity can be a productive factor in the sense that a variety of perspectives can increase creativity and innovative power

in problem solving.⁵ On the other hand, whether diversity is effectively more productive than homogeneity within a community is unlikely to be fully understood, given the costs involved. Actually, it is precisely these costs that are once again in the focus of transcultural learning processes, which aim to realize transactions as cost-effectively and as productively as possible. Accordingly, the interest in the most productive, transaction-friendly form of cooperation can be something that can be developed together and that creates community, motivating people to engage in these learning processes together.

Unlike the intercultural approach, which assumes reconciliation in terms of reaching a static equilibrium point, transculturality describes a dynamic process in which one gets temporary and fragmented matches and then develops them further. The fact that this is a continuous learning process that does not end sometime in a point of balance of mutual understanding implies that heterogeneity is expected to remain. There will always be contradictory situations and also value conflicts, both within cultures and between cultures, especially if one considers the complexity of the different levels of cultural affiliation outlined above. At this point, it should be noted that it is a fundamental and irremovable property of values that one can deny their validity in certain situations and that they may conflict with other values. Here, we actually refer to the level of thick description, and, as Walzer (1994: 6) writes, “with thickness comes qualification, compromise, complexity, and disagreement.”

Against this background, this is where the non-normative attitude comes in which lies at the core of the transcultural approach and its focus on cooperation and mutual learning. The non-normative attitude is important because it is about the transaction-specific creation of shared meaning rather than bridging nation-based cultural differences. According to the transcultural approach, the starting point does not lie in discussions about fundamental definitions of values, but in a concrete problem to be solved, a transaction realized by players with pro-social skills in the form of empathy and inclusive rationality. These are the impulses and conditions for a learning process that is truly open to contributions and solutions from other cultural contexts.

⁵ Examples of such approaches in diversity management research are Hewlett et al. 2013, Alvarez et al. 2011, and Stahl et al. 2009.

Accordingly, such a research interest as we are pursuing here, inherently includes the study of cultural diversity and describes the relationship between transculturality and diversity as a relationship of mutual conditionality and enablement (cf. Baumann Montecinos 2019: 17f., 336ff.): Basic cultural ideas and pro-social capabilities that are shared at the thin level reflect themselves in concrete transactions and thus in varying local and situational manifestations at the level of thick description, as interim results of manifold continuous processes of adaptation and development. At the same time, the diversity of these concrete manifestations provides the context in which cooperation takes place, which, in turn, enables the emergence of new commonalities through a temporary transaction-related community and the learning processes associated with it.

III.

On the question of the practical relevance of such a transcultural approach, we note that transculturality is not simply a method of personnel development in international corporations, but also an element of private and public value creation. The reference to value creation applies in two ways: Firstly, we refer to reducing friction, in particular transaction costs, which of course requires a high degree of coordination. On the other hand, it is also about the question of successful innovation, which means a process of discovery for new products, new distribution channels, new ways of approaching customers and the like. While the transaction cost perspective is somewhat passive, innovation management emphasizes the active, productive aspect of private and public value creation, which, in turn, is of particular importance in the context of transcultural cooperation.

This is based on the observation that the reality of many large companies is shaped by the fact that a large part of the value creation process does not take place in the company's own country and the number and formats of cooperation partnerships diversify (cf. Wieland & Baumann Montecinos 2018). At the same time, it can be observed within organizations that, for example, teams are becoming ever more heterogeneous, and that, in times of digitalization, joint projects can be realized over large physical distances. In the framework of these developments, transculturality lies at the root of doing business globally and of creating value across borders as it facilitates economic performance by enabling coop-

eration. For example, we have outlined how this can be handled through a Transcultural Values Management System, which integrates normative decisions at the level of global strategic management on the one hand and local diversity at the operational implementation level on the other, describing the leadership competences that are required to successfully relate central and decentralised processes that shape global corporations, as well as to enable the corresponding organizational learning processes (cf. Wieland & Baumann Montecinos 2018). This focus on strategic management and on organizational learning marks some paradigmatic changes to intercultural management, which is traditionally considered to be part of HR management, that are very significant, not least because this new approach also has consequences for the selection and development of leaders.

If one understands a firm as a relational network of resources and of stakeholders possessing these resources (cf. Wieland 2018a), then cultural competence is to be considered such a resource, either of individuals or of organizations themselves. In this respect, cultural competence contributes to the value creation process of these organizations. Leadership in such networks must be essentially directed to realize and coordinate the relationing and the proportioning of resources, in order to enable cooperative processes of value creation. This can only succeed in global networks if the leaders' decisions are accepted voluntarily by their followers, as the relationships in such networks are not based on contracts in the classic sense and cannot be enforced via a directorate or status. Furthermore, it is undisputed that the innovative forces in such an organization cannot be mobilized through authority and status either. This means that leadership must strive to connect resources and people in such a way that they actually achieve the highest levels of productivity and value creation for those involved and for the organization – hence we call this approach “relational leadership” (cf. Wieland 2018a), and to look at this in the context of transcultural cooperation has its special attraction and relevance. Transcultural leadership is then both the prerequisite for, and the result of, social interaction, and transcultural competence thus becomes a question of the entire organization and not just of specific functions. Transculturality and leadership belong together; they develop simultaneously. Under the conditions of global value creation and the successful “relationalization” of the necessary resources, transculturality and leadership are two sides of the same coin.

IV.

The transcultural research program is still in its infancy compared to the intercultural approach. The intercultural discussion already has a long tradition, while the transcultural discussion is just beginning to take off. In the meantime, we have achieved some conceptual clarity with transcultural research, not least the publications in the Transcultural Management Series, and, in particular, the present volume on Transcultural Leadership and Transcultural Competence. The next steps are also already outlined: It is now necessary to further operationalize and apply the conceptual clarity in order to make the next learning steps from established practice. This involves questions such as the identification of the necessary skills and abilities of a transculturally competent person as well as governance mechanisms for structuring the complexity of possible transactions. Initial approaches can be found in this volume, including the results of an empirical study with two global companies and the description of the Global Studies Projects of Zeppelin University, which provide a concretization of the transcultural approach in the context of university education. Finally, this is where another important distinction from the intercultural approach becomes apparent: research projects such as those of the description of individual and organizational transcultural competence or of Global Studies Projects can only be realized with a transcultural method in the sense of interaction within a global network. While intercultural management can easily be operated from the perspective of one particular country, in the sense of “me and the others”, for the transcultural approach, on the contrary, “all others” must be brought together from the outset. It is certainly justified to call this a great challenge – and a great opportunity to get closer to a description of the reality of global cooperation relationships.

The fact that, despite all the abstraction and complexity, the subject of transculturality is nevertheless very accessible, has a high degree of individual and social plausibility and therefore offers a field for interdisciplinary research, can be understood as an encouragement. The assertion that it is not enough for successful cooperation to know the differences to the other, but rather that it is crucial to develop commonalities and community, seems reasonable – and thereby compatible with the research programs of various disciplines. We look forward to building on that, transculturally.

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Transculturality as a Leadership Style – A Relational Approach

Josef Wieland

1. Introduction

The discussion of leadership styles is concerned with the productive or counter-productive effects of individual modes of behaviour on collective performance. In the management literature intended for practitioners seeking helpful advice, relatively plausible or implausible combinations of these two parameters are logically condensed into standardised operational recipes that are attributed with a superior effectiveness for the success of the manager, their team or the organisation that they lead. This will not be the subject of the following considerations, however. Instead I will be trying to contribute something to a better theoretical and practical understanding of leadership activity and behaviour in the context of multiple cultural contexts. Culturally influenced values, convictions and traditions are crucial factors that determine individual and collective expectations of behaviour and their effectiveness in practice. This does not just apply in the context of international transactions, but also on virtually all levels of spontaneous or organised social cooperation. It is clear here that the aspect of difference plays a crucial role in any interactions that are based on cultural diversity. Yet cultural difference need not necessarily be attributed to any individual behavioural motivation in terms of identity theory. Instead it can be understood as an event in the context of a transaction that requires cooperation that, to successfully relate to other events in business, legal, moral or technical contexts, is essential for the productivity of a transaction and the efficiency and effectiveness of a cooperating team. Indeed, that is the approach I am taking here. Successfully relating

events to each other, using common ground to create a sense of belonging to a cooperation project based upon cultural differences, is an essential achievement of leadership. I call such interlinking of culturally different events “transculturality” and shall refer to the ability to achieve this as “transcultural competence”. Transcultural competence thus constitutes a leadership style.

Against this background I will first try to clarify some theoretical implications and challenges of my concept of transculturality. Without clarifying these terms it will hardly be possible to discuss its consequences for the leadership style of societal players. So the first part of this essay will be concerned with the question of *what constitutes transculturality*. This discussion will be kept at a strictly theoretical and conceptional level. The second stage is about *what constitutes transcultural leadership* and will concern itself with deriving some practical and applicable consequences for understanding transculturality as a style of leadership. This is based on the conviction, expressed by Kurt Lewin, that nothing is as practical as a good theory. For me, this is not just about the management and leadership of global value chains or international trade relations, although cultural diversity is paradigmatically significant for economic value creation. Rather, I shall attempt to fundamentally discuss the role of transculturality in cooperation projects. Global value chains are only one specific form that such projects may assume – and I will refer to them occasionally – but they are not the object of this discussion.¹ Rather, I shall aim at discussing and developing transculturality as a leadership style for any form of organized cooperation.

2. *What is transculturality?*

I.

Culture is a term that provides a joint point of reference, a lowest – if highly abstract – common denominator for many disparate elements (including language, customs, traditions, origins, conventions, values, beliefs, preferences, artefacts, interpretations of economic or organisational

¹ See Wieland & Baumann Montecinos 2018 for the significance of the transcultural concept for global value chains.

scenarios and so on). Hidden behind this, however, these events follow systematically different communicative codifications. With regard to the consequences for the manner in which players act and behave, language as well as moral, religious, economic and political values or beliefs and interpretations follow different decision-making logics. Manifesting itself in a specific context, every culture is characterised by the diversity of its events – not, as assumed by the theory of intercultural management, by its homogeneity.²

So if we want to consider transculturality in conceptual terms, we could follow Michael Walzer (1994) in regarding culture as a “thin” term with only a minimal meaning of its own. Consequently, culture is not a distinct decision-making logic but, instead, processes various decision-making logics such as legal, political, economic and ethical ones. In this sense, we can understand culture as an informal institution whose polyvalent events mark out the various unwritten rules of social coexistence. Accordingly, they enable cooperation and, at the same time, limit the range of socially desirable or simply habitual transactions and chances for cooperation available to any single player, because they define undesirability as an inverse value. These culture-based collaborative activities are not merely found at the level of nations, for example, as interactions between companies from various cultural areas described as nations. They are also found within and between companies from the same nation that are influenced by the culture of different regions, industries, professions, departments, families or individual leaders who can and should in turn be discussed as transactional actors or cooperation projects (cf. Wieland 2018: chapter 7). Transcultural leadership as a research strategy and practice is not just limited to the level of interaction between nations – this is one of the fundamental differences to the concepts of intercultural and cross-cultural management. It is about any kind of social cooperation where cultural events have an impact on the success of this cooperation towards an intended transaction.

One advantage of this relational understanding of culture (as a point of reference for a large number of diverse events within cooperative transactions) lies in the fact that its basic analytical unit is not based on an ethnic notion of culture. I do not argue that events defined by this notion do not exist on a national level or are irrelevant. Indeed, we all know that

² See McSweeney (2015) for an informative summary of the critical discussions.

the opposite is the case. But such a perspective is inappropriate for a theory of transculturality, because a concept of culture based on, for example, what unifies ethnicities or nations necessarily implies a difference from, and exclusion of, others. The “trans-”prefix on the other hand, aims at relating different events to each other: at creating of connections and building bridges between different events. Thus, our fundamental understanding of the nature and challenges of transculturality shifts from excluding the identity of individual players towards relational transactions that are attractors of polyvalent events (cf. Wieland 2018). This shift gives rise to the question as to how to shape the relationship of these events. “Interculturality” describes how various and distinct cultures encounter each other. Therefore, it is concerned with the static space between the closed cultures and the external consequences and conflicts associated with such encounters. Such events may and will occur in cooperation projects, but they are by no means their fundamental characteristics. “Transculturality” describes the dynamic process of relating discrete cultural events to each other, putting them in proportion with respect to a cooperative, joint, specific transaction. So it is about “belonging” to a discrete and temporary “mini society” (Alfred N. Whitehead) of reciprocal dependencies with respect to a local situation, and not about “identity” within a social group.³ I agree with Michael Walzer’s (1983) view that terms such as “belonging” and “relatedness” should be understood in a particularistic sense. Herder’s spherical model of closed national cultures, which is the paradigmatic point of reference of intercultural management, can be put into perspective with reference to both those cultures’ internal polymorphy and hybridity, and criticised with reference to the polymogenic potential of rival and incommensurable internal events of national cultures (cf. Antweiler 2011). However, from the angle of the transcultural concept discussed here, this is not the point. Rather, the reference point of our analysis is the success of cooperative transactions. This success is not possible without relating different, yet permanently interacting, cultural events to one another – not depending on – to give but one example – whether those transactions take place on a local or global level or whether they occur between or within companies. What

³ For the concept of “belonging” and its distinction from the identity concept see Appadurai 1990, Rutherford 1990 and Shotton 1993 for a cultural science point of view, and Wenger 2000 for the development theory aspects of learning theory.

interests us is the temporalization of the existence and the success of the cooperative transactions themselves, as relational transactions are, by definition, attractors of different identities and decision-making logics and, therefore, cultural events (see Wieland 2018: part I).

II.

Transculturality means that we allow new perspectives “observed, built and contested from reality” (Baecker 2017: 11, translated by Wieland) and are ready to come to a mutual understanding about their appropriateness and fitness for the real world. Transculturality is a social process that requires productive management of differences. Consequently, mutual understanding cannot exclusively be the result of communication about differences. What is essential here is a practical, non-normative approach towards cultural differences aimed at achieving the ability to act. Each side of a cultural difference is systematically neither good nor bad. “Good” and “bad” are normative judgements ascribed to differences. Difference is simply there and needs to be recognized, accepted, tolerated and, if necessary, also endured. Cultural differences in transactions are largely not solved through discussion but made manageable by means of practical responses in specific situations. In a way, the national cultural differences, which intercultural management is interested in, will become one, but only one, event in a shared relational transaction. Experience of difference will consequently not be understood as a threat to a discrete individual constitution, to a perceived static identity, but as a process of relating all the individual constitutions to each other with respect to a particular and temporary transaction. In the first instance, the productive encounter of different, but culturally equivalent, beliefs can only be facilitated through consciously forgoing any moral judgement and exclusive claims to the truth. Thus, it is by forgoing moral judgement that one aims at obtaining the ability to negotiate. The objective is to acquire transcultural competence for creating arrangements that facilitate the first and the second step within a reciprocal learning process. Without that competence this process does not exist. What subsequently determines the man-

ner and the pace of setting up the shared cultural capital⁴ of a transaction society, as expressed by Whitehead, are the course of a process and the stability of its continuation. These factors also determine whether, and how far, such transaction-specific capital may be generalised as “culture” in an abstract, “thin” manner, and whether (and how far) it may in this generalized form be transferred to other transactions without further transaction or relational costs being incurred. In this way, commonalities are found or developed; transculturality is a creative process of finding or creating and continuing cultural commonalities. These commonalities, however, can only relate to, and be achieved for, individual transactions, even if this is a multitude of individual transactions. It does not attain “the full moral significance of the other culture” (Walzer 1994: 17).

III.

One of the fundamental problems that challenge our earlier thoughts regarding collaborative transactions as productive attractors of transcultural events lies in the fact that a possible starting point for the transcultural learning process cannot be explained from the fact or concept of transculturality itself. I also maintain that it cannot be explained from the existence of universal moral values, such as those of a humanistic world ethos. Humanity as an ethos based on practice is a “thick” concept that belongs to a specific culture and can and does express particular interests. The perhaps “thinnest” interpretation of humanity (as an ethical term) means that we ought to treat humans as humans and, consequently, in a dignified way. Such a view may well find broad acceptance in all cultures. However, with respect to what is “human” and “dignified” in specific contexts (such as human rights as an individual or collective right or the issue of slave labour regarding certain social groups) cultures may differ in terms of whom they accept as “human” and which groups should be excluded. Regrettably, dehumanisation and the negation of human dignity for certain groups or in certain local situations is also a universal strategy of moral deviance (cf. Bandura et al. 1996). Historically, however, this strategy already assumes a shared concept of a dignity proper to

⁴ Baumann Montecinos 2019 offers a proposal for the conception of such cultural capital as moral capital.

all human beings. In this regard, too, we will also find different views of what is humane with respect to a specific practical transaction and what is not. To give an example, within the European Union there are at present different views concerning what is humane with respect to the challenges of worldwide migration. One interpretation implies that it would be humane to protect the population of one's own country and to keep potential migrants in their countries of origin by all means available (including banning them from crossing borders), the argument being that it is only there that future problems can really be solved. On the other hand, there is the view that the option to emigrate to a host country in conjunction with careful assessment of the situation would be the appropriate expression of humanity, as this is the only way to address the current plight of such people. Humanity as a term in identity theory, relating here to "European values", implies a universally effective and aligned motivation that leads to, or should lead to, shared views and corresponding actions. As with all practical conclusions based on ethical principles and moral values, one may dispute this. Michael Walzer (1994: 83) believes

"...that our common humanity will never make us members of a single universal tribe. The crucial commonality of the human race is particularism: we participate, all of us, in the thick cultures that are our own (...) we can at last recognize this communality and begin the difficult negotiations it requires".

But what is this commonality in experiencing difference that can start a shared process in a sea of particularisms if universal moral principles are not fit for this task?

IV.

Michael Tomasello (2016) has proposed that the pro-social capabilities of empathy and inclusive rationality, being a universal resource for all people, may serve as a starting point for such a process. Referring to evolution theory, he demonstrates that, during the transition from the animal kingdom to the human realm, morality emerged from the experience of practical cooperation in specific projects, for example, hunting. Cooperative abilities were subsequently developed by all humans, for without these abilities, the human community and the cooperation it requires and which

– like all of civilisation – is built on a sufficiently reliable sense of moral obligation among the members of society, could not otherwise have stabilised. A central notion for him is the “interdependence hypothesis” (ibid.: 153ff.). On the one hand, the interdependence hypothesis allows for a strict epistemological distinction between cost-benefit-analyses and a sense of moral obligation. On the other hand, it allows for the emergence of morality as a natural and self-regulating process of the creation and experience of commonality. Interdependency is defined as the recursive interaction of structure (socio-ecological conditions) and motivation (shared intention and cognitive adaptation) that leads to the emergence of an idea of a “second personal agency” and a “joint commitment”. Morality from its very beginnings is a form of collective cultural rationality and not, as some economists presume, a form of individual rationality. It is the pursuit of personal interests that, through recursive learning processes, lead to an objectively given understanding and acceptance of group norms and, consequently, cooperative behaviour. The binary “I – you – I” face-to-face relationship evolves into a multiple “I – You” as part of a “We” (ibid.: 62ff.), that means, into sociality which, as an independent agent of an “objective morality” (ibid.: 148), becomes a given norm of cooperative behaviour for the group (cf. also Tomasello 2019: 189ff.). Social interactions then turn into social institutions.

“This sense of doing something together – which creates mutual expectations, and even rights and obligations – is, one could argue, uniquely human” (Tomasello 2009: 58).

Therefore, not universal values but the process of creating mutuality is the cornerstone of transcultural research and practice. A mutually understood “I and You as events of a We” that demonstrates a second personal agent leads to a commitment to an objectivised normativity (We) which can be claimed by the other and you yourself. It is a mutually produced and agreed “shared intentionality” both actors can refer to and which develops, in this way, a new collective relation based on a shared understanding of values such as respect, responsibility, trust and fairness. The unique motives and attitudes of shared intentionality thus enable humans to relate to one another in some new ways cooperatively, even morally. But these motives and attitudes do not come into being fully-fledged. They come into being through a developmental process, extended over

time, in which motivation, experience and execution of self-commitment all play constitutive roles (cf. Tomasello 2019: 10).

It is this sociality of an independent collective actor that the pro-social capabilities previously mentioned relate to. For one thing, there is the capability for empathy. However, empathy becomes a pro-social capability only through affection and care towards others and loyalty to the group. For, inversely, by putting oneself in other people's shoes, empathy can also be used to inflict the greatest possible damage to those people with the greatest possible chance of success. For another thing, there is the capability for inclusive rationality (individual rationality), meaning the ability to take into account the interests of others in the cooperation (co-operative rationality) and to allow a sense of integrity and fairness towards others to take effect (cultural rationality).

It is this mechanism, as developed and proven by evolutionary biology, on which the creation of new transcultural commonalities can be built and which makes another decisive difference to the concept of interculturality. Transcultural competence does not refer to specific different cultures, but it is a generalized competence that lowers the adaptation costs for each transaction including culture events. In the sense of Birger Wernerfelt (cf. 2016), it has an "excess capacity", which means possibilities of utilization with regard to a large number of cultural groups, without generating additional information or negotiation costs. In this sense, transcultural competence is "sub-additive" (cf. *ibid.*: 33, 75).

V.

If we apply Tomasello's thoughts to the subject of successful transcultural cooperation for mutual advantage as discussed here, we find that it is pro-social capabilities based on evolutionary biology that can trigger the process of developing shared cultural norms of self-interested and culturally different individuals: "the process of creating, following and enforcing social norms is almost certainly a cultural universal" (Tomasello 2016: 101). Social norms are parameters for expectations that are not moral in themselves. But in their practical interaction and mutual achievement of goals, people learn to attribute a "second-personal morality" to the "second-personal agency", thus developing affection and a sense of fairness towards others. In the process, it is the ability to form a "shared intentionality" that

can transform strategic, purely self-interested cooperation into the successive development of moral or, more broadly, of cultural convictions. Let us briefly recapitulate what we have said so far about the conditions for successful transcultural cooperation:

- Calculated or strategic self-interest is a necessary, but insufficient, starting point for realising stable transcultural transactions and cooperation.
- We can and must also build on the transcultural competence of empathy (affection, care and loyalty) and inclusive rationality (cooperative and cultural rationality) that is found universally in all cultures, as only in this way has the emergence, stabilisation and evolution of these cultures and civilisations been possible.
- A recursive basis for the two previous aspects of affection and inclusive rationality is “shared intentionality”, that is, people’s ability “to create with others joint intentions and joint commitments in cooperative endeavours” (Tomasello 2009: XIII), the ability to share intentions with others and, in order to realise these intentions, to enter into relationships with them. I define shared intentions between social actors in a strictly particularistic sense, related to a local situation or transaction.
- It is values, motives and behaviours that lead to “shared intentions” that enable people “to relate to one another in some new ways cooperatively, even morally” (Tomasello 2019: 190).
- The ability to enter into social relationships is, as Martha Nussbaum (2001: chapter 12) puts it, a relational good. Relationality is not just aspired to for the positive effects it might have, rather, it is something that is valued in itself. For this reason, we count relationality, together with strategic self-interest, pro-social capabilities and shared intentionality, among the fundamental components of transcultural competence as a leadership style.

I shall now continue discussing these conceptual and theoretical principles in a rather more application-based context. My aim is to examine, on the one hand, their conceptual explanatory power and, on the other hand, their practical relevance.

3. *What is transcultural leadership?*

I.

Now that we understand better what issues are described with the term transculturality, we can shed some light upon their significance for the leadership of people and organisations. In this regard, a lot depends on what we conceptually understand as leadership. There are various concepts, such as transactional, transformational and relational leadership (cf. Bass 1990; Wieland 2014a). Each of them has a different affinity with the subject of transculturality. For transactional-leadership concepts, shaping the relationship between financial incentive (income) and economic performance (turnover) as a contractually-based act of exchange takes centre stage. Transformational concepts, on the other hand, look at the significance of motivation, of meaning and of a shared value culture within the organisation informing the process of leading teams. Relational-leadership theories stress the societal process character of leadership (creating shared intentionality and mutuality) that results in followers voluntarily following the leader. It further results that leadership as a social exchange process is not based upon hierarchical positions and managerial authority. Rather, it exists at all levels of an organisation and may be assigned to actors interchangeably, depending on context and as a result of learning and negotiation processes. Although transactional and transformational leadership always also play a temporary role in transcultural transactions, the concept of “relational leadership” is – considering its underlying assumptions – the most suitable for understanding and shaping the management of transcultural cooperation. I have discussed this on various other occasions (cf. Wieland 2016, 2018: chapter 7).

However, the aim of the present essay is not to discuss transculturality as a leadership concept but transculturality as a leadership style. To do this, we need to look around for a different starting point for the discussion: a definition of leadership as an individual competence and skill. The following definition comes from James M. Burns (1978: 18), and is of course not the only one, but a suitable one for our purposes:

“Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse,

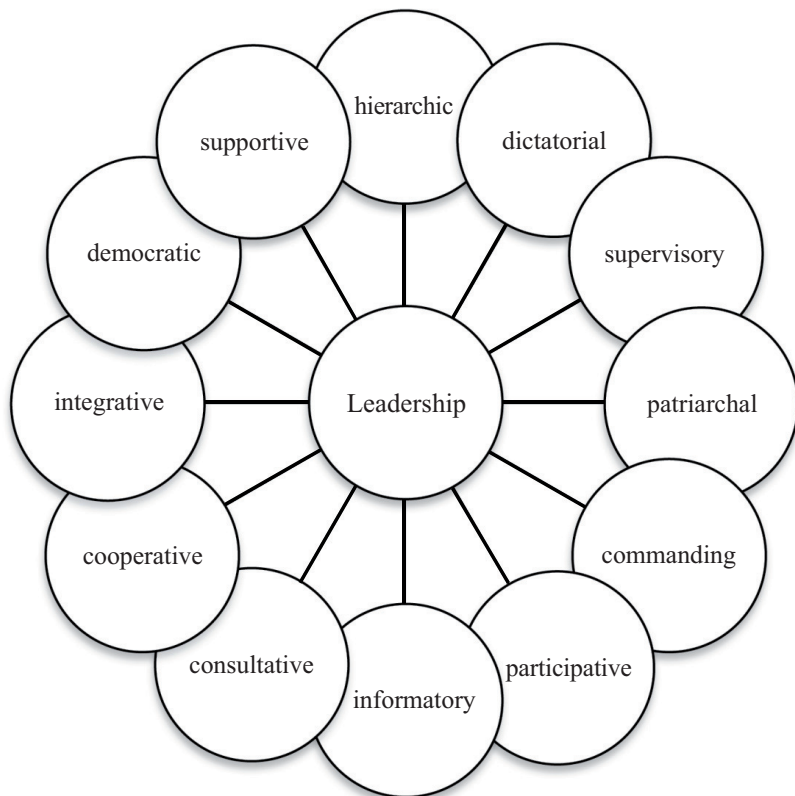
engage, and satisfy the motives of followers. This is done in order to realize goals mutually held by both leaders and followers...” (ibid.: 18)

The nature of leadership for Burns is power; power held by people to make other people pursue shared objectives in cooperative transactions that represent values, motivations (wishes, needs, hopes and expectations) and purposes shared by the leader and the follower alike (cf. ibid.: 19). This power of leaders is not the product of hierarchical positions, nor is it an ability or character trait leaders can force on followers. Rather, it is an expression and result of a social relationship between people. Leadership and followership have a relational connection with each other. In my view, this definition is particularly suitable for the purposes of understanding transculturality as a leadership style as, i) it takes a social relationship between two fundamentally autonomous and self-interested actors into account, who ii) must succeed in establishing shared objectives, motivations and values, that iii) puts them in a position to attain certain shared objectives or interests. It conveys the five universal behavioural hypotheses of a theory of successful transcultural cooperation, as developed in the previous section (personal interest, the ability to embrace empathy and inclusive rationality, shared intentionality, relationality) into the debate about those competences and learning processes that characterise a transcultural leadership style.

II.

Discussions of a leadership style usually examine the dominant actual behavioural patterns of an individual leader, consisting of character traits, beliefs, competences, strengths, techniques, habits, ideas and many other components. Initially the discussion is descriptive and tries to consolidate actual observable leadership behaviour into terms and definitions. In this manner, an inexhaustible and sometimes also arbitrary number of leadership styles have emerged over the last few decades. These are used by consultants and coaches to support their clients in the development of their leadership personalities and, thereby, in the performance of their teams.⁵ The most common of these are shown in the following diagram:

⁵ For examples of literature on leadership styles, see Litwin & Stringer 1968.

Figure 1: Different leadership styles

Source: Own representation.

As a rule, the discussion of leadership styles takes place within the context of transactional and transformational leadership concepts that derive leadership from positions and managerial authority. It focuses on the effect and quality of leadership with regard to the team's or company's achievement of superior, above-average performance. Leadership styles are resources on competences for the purpose of improving collaborative performance. For this reason, these styles can, and should, be trained, and they should be interchanged and combined to suit the situation. In the long term, purely dictatorial managers have just as little success as managers who make no decisions and leave everything to discursive processes.

There are no objections to this economic view of leadership styles. Pursuing one's own interests and the expectation of achieving an above-average yield from one's resources through cooperation form one of the starting points of transcultural transactions. This is a necessary condition for seeking cooperation, but an insufficient one for explaining it. As mentioned at the beginning, culturally embedding leadership styles is fundamentally important in the field of transcultural cooperation. Professional, corporate, and industry cultures cultivate different leadership styles (participative vs. directive; paternalistic vs. democratic; coaching vs. performance orientation etc.). These styles are assessed differently in different cultures. While in contemporary Western cultures, the acceptance of hierarchy and paternalism may be dwindling, this is not the case in Eastern cultures. Instructions can be used to govern production processes to a certain degree, but not the behaviour of partners in a joint venture or of scientists in creative innovation processes.

For this reason, I would like to propose that transculturality be understood as a distinct leadership style: namely as the competence to develop social interactions that are significantly characterised by cultural diversity in such a way that they produce mutual advantages for all stakeholders: values, motivations or objectives accepted by all. In a nutshell, this competence is necessary for the creation and stabilisation of productive transcultural relationships.

These values, motivations and objectives can relate to the performance of a cooperation project, but also to the way of achieving generally-appreciated communicative and cooperative behaviour. We ultimately need to define moral values whose "thin" descriptions are accepted in virtually all cultures.⁶ At an individual level, the following transcultural leadership values may fit this criterion. But note that those values do not form an exhaustive list but are intended to serve as examples.

The most significant transcultural value among the performance values seems to be the pursuit of mutual benefit as it is geared towards taking the concrete interests of all stakeholders as well as the equivalence of the actors involved into account. The fact that there should be a preference for creating practical solutions also derives from what has been developed so far, for the formation of morally consolidated spaces requires successive steps of shared, positive practical experience. To this end, a consid-

⁶ For the concept underlying the values matrix, see Wieland 2011 and Wieland 2014a.

erable degree of creativity is required as standardised textbook solutions for transaction-related decisions influenced by cultural diversity are rare. Performance values have a considerable impact on the development of actual, discovered or new commonalities.

Figure 2: Individual Transcultural Leadership Values

Performance Mutual benefit Practical solutions Creativity	Communication Non-normativity Listening Kindness
Continuity Reliability Conflict management Cooperation	Integrity Reciprocity Impartial fairness Morality

Source: Own representation.

The communication value termed “non-normativity” neither implies the absence of beliefs nor that they should be kept hidden. It simply means that one should not use one’s own beliefs as a condition for the implementation of a cooperative transaction. Such a situation may very well occur, but then the transaction does not take place. This value also implies that different situational interpretations are initially acknowledged as given and of equal value – and that there is no need to comment on cultural diversity either critically or to make comparisons to one’s own culture on every suitable and unsuitable occasion. The ability to listen and be friendly are the values that allow people to enter into conversations which, on occasion, may include more fundamental normative issues, too.

Values that are necessary for transcultural cooperation depend ultimately on whether a leader can demonstrate a credible preference for the continuity of the joint project or the joint transaction. Anyone who prefers endgames or zero-sum games is not suited to be a transcultural leader. Just how credible this preference for continuity is depends on the reliability of an actor as is experienced in practice. This also includes the leader’s ability to recognise emerging conflicts at an early stage, communicate this objectively and participate in jointly working out a solution that is ac-

Table 1: Dos and Don'ts for Transcultural Leaders

Do	Don't
1. strive for mutual benefits.	1. maximize only your own profit.
2. look for practical solutions.	2. discuss fundamental and controversial principles.
3. develop creativity in a mindful way.	3. ever change a running system.
4. avoid judging too early.	4. cultivate and communicate prejudices.
5. listen carefully.	5. promote your own opinion.
6. be kind and polite.	6. show a direct and harsh attitude.
7. settle conflicts thoughtfully.	7. get your own way, no matter what.
8. keep your promises.	8. be opportunistic.
9. establish long-term partnerships.	9. focus on aggressive short-term goals.
10. act with integrity.	10. act with hypocrisy.
11. treat others as you would wish to be treated.	11. apply double standards.
12. apply impartial fairness to everybody.	12. favour people according to self-centred criteria.

Source: Own representation.

ceptable for all parties involved. Seen through the lens of continuity, this does not mean that each individual conflict can be processed to the complete satisfaction of everyone. However, in the long term, a certain accommodation needs to be achieved.

Moral values whose “thin” interpretation may be universally accepted are integrity, reciprocity and the fairness of an independent observer. Integrity represents the ethical character of a leader whose specific qualities – though not the aspiration itself – can differ from culture to culture. We understand this term in the sense of a recognised capability for morally appropriate behaviour. Reciprocity is a universal element of all social relationships. This can be seen in the fact that the so-called “Golden Rule” (treat others as you would wish to be treated) has been common to and (in its “thick” interpretation) effective in all known civilisations since early history. The fairness of an independent observer evidently reminds us of Adam Smith’s “impartial observer” whose function in “Theory of Moral Sentiments”, is to make ethical decisions universal.

In concluding this discussion, we will transform the values matrix into recommendations: into “dos and don'ts” for a transcultural leadership

style that are perhaps useful for exemplifying the largely theoretical discussion we have conducted so far.

III.

The values of a transcultural leadership style discussed in the previous section are based implicitly on a notion of transcultural learning which I would like to elaborate on a little to conclude this essay.⁷

To begin with, it is important to understand and acknowledge that transcultural leadership is a continuous learning process. The systematic cause of this is not any assumed cultural deficiency on the part of the actors involved, but the dynamism, complexity and uncertainty in terms of information and expectations that characterise the atmosphere of transcultural transactions. A willingness and ability to embrace continuous learning, for both organisational and personal change, is a fundamental quality of a transcultural leader.

The first element of transcultural learning is the ability to make – ideally – non-normative observations and analyses of an actor's behaviour and of situations. We have already broached the subject briefly in the last section, when I noted that there is no need to constantly judge events in a specific cultural context and compare them with other contexts.

That is the pre-requisite for taking the next step in transcultural learning: the identification of commonalities beyond pro-social capabilities that already exist and that can be built upon. These are present at various levels, such as those of the individual and the professions. Appiah argues that people can have common emotional experiences or preferences – such as joy and sadness, types of conviviality and socialising, music and literature – that can be helpful in establishing personal relationships as well as in launching and fostering joint transactions. The same applies to the standards of professions as we see them among, *inter alia*, doctors, engineers, scientists or bankers. Shared experiences, preferences and professional standards are an appropriate starting point for a “moral conversion”, as this form of low-threshold moral discourse has been labelled by Kwame A. Appiah (cf. 2008: chapter 5, 2006: chapter 4). This gathering

⁷ See the literature on this, especially Argyris 1995 and Huber 1991.

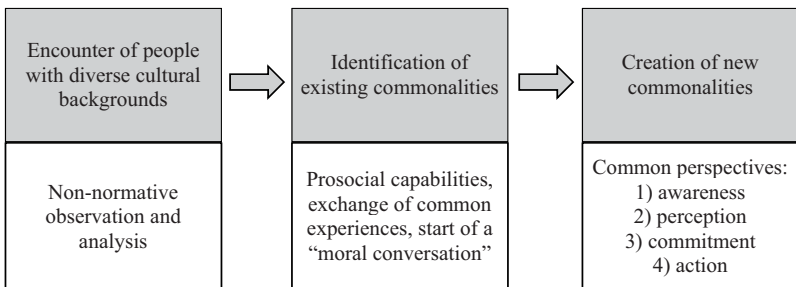
of, and reflecting on, experiences in the context of pursuing shared interests is a way of building a particular sense of belonging.

The third stage is about the integration of step 1 and 2 in the process of learning the skill of how to develop new commonalities. This requires the development of a shared perspective of the situation, comprising

- an awareness of the cultural challenges posed by that situation,
- a clear and precise perception of the factors and peculiarities of these challenges
- a sense of commitment to get involved personally with respect to these challenges,
- and, finally, a willingness to act in a practical way.

This APCA model (*a*wareness, *p*erception, *c*ommitment, *a*ction) is equally valid for organisational learning, as organisations can structurally both encourage and block the development of organisational and individual transcultural competence (cf. Wieland 2014b). But that is not our subject here. The following figure provides a summary of this briefly outlined mechanism.

Figure 3: Transcultural learning – the APCA model



Source: Own representation.

To conclude this discussion, I would like to stress once more that this recognition of transcultural leadership qualities and the necessity to acquire these qualities continuously in a practical learning process, will not or should in any way lead to a universal global ethic. I share the scepti-

cism of Michael Walzer cited above. All we can say is that we need to develop the competences for the transcultural leadership of people and organisations on the basis of the behaviour that actually occurs in a globalising world. We shall see just how far this takes us towards the development of global moral and practically effective beliefs. I share the following description of the situation by Kwame A. Appiah:

“And, it seems to me, the understanding of virtue required by a viable ethics is not the globalist one: so we can accept what is true in situationism. Individual moments of compassion and moments of honesty make our lives better, even if we are not compassionate or honest through and through” (Appiah 2008: 70).

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Operationalizing Transcultural Competence

An Analysis of Related Concepts and Methods of Measurements

Thilo von Gilsa

1. Introduction

While, in the long run, nation states have lost their meaning (Toffler 1990), the increased cultural tensions after September 11, 2001 (Ang et al. 2011) served “as stark reminders of the malevolence of cultural misunderstandings, tensions, and intolerance” (Leung et al. 2014: 490). In contrast to most of the approaches of multi- and interculturality that start their analysis with the differences between cultures and try to find solutions, the basic unit of the analysis of transculturality is cooperation. Hence, interaction is at the core of the transcultural concept. As an approach-oriented concept towards cooperation, transculturality seeks shared experiences, commonalities, and how they are created. Transculturality is in line with Barmeyer’s and Franklin’s (2016: 200) call for a paradigm shift in the form of a “positive cross-cultural scholarship”. They outline that there is much less knowledge about the positive dynamics, cooperation and outcomes associated with cultural differences that are based on commonalities and mutual advantage. While discourse on the concept of transculturality and its consequences has emerged, the necessity for further studies on “the requisite qualities for developing transcultural executives and personnel” (Wieland 2016: 29) has been emphasized.¹

¹ This work is an abbreviated version of the Bachelor thesis, originally completed in May 2017.

2. *A Transcultural Approach towards Non-Normativity and Commonality*

The transcultural approach focuses on finding and creating commonalities, based on an unbiased approach, abstaining from a normative point of reference and gaining an ethno-relativity, called non-normativity. The following will elaborate the theoretical understanding, starting with Welsch rejecting interculturality and multiculturalism. He does so by revealing the underlying logic of “cultures as islands” (Welsch 1999: 195). In his logic, common intercultural research mainly focuses on raising awareness of the understanding of cultural differences. Paradoxically, differences are presumed and reproduced, while attempts are being made to overcome them (ibid.). Welsch’s insights can thus be seen as the starting point for the further conceptualization of transculturality (Wieland 2010). Welsch conceptualizes the transcultural approach as a result of hybridization, determined by heterogeneity, complex socio-cultural intertwinements and dynamic processes (Welsch 1992). Transculturality becomes a dynamic concept which rests on the refutation of the idea of a static and pure culture (Welsch 1999). Cultures² can be seen as open systems constantly interacting with each other.

In search of commonalities, Welsch can be related theoretically to the concepts of alterity (Knoblauch 2007) or intersubjectivity (Schütz 1991). The underlying assumption states that a human being is born into a functioning social system, accepts the existence of its fellow human beings as unquestionable and assumes that these fellow human beings have, as well, a permanent consciousness and can therefore be taken as something essentially relative (ibid.). Understanding the difference is based on the transfer of alterity. The assumption that the alter ego is ‘like me’ is not only an appreciation but can be seen as the starting point for social action. In social interaction, this appreciation will be proven or not. Without another, who is not relative to one’s own ability of perception, there is no possibility for shared values. The alter ego is thus no ‘alien’, but

² There are countless incomplete overviews on how to define culture. In order to define transcultural competence, culture will be defined as “a process of communication and thus a process of shared actions. Culture as a social network of meaning is constructed by the subjects of action, while the subjects are socialized in the same social network of meaning.” (Knoblauch 2007: 11ff.).

rather a 'relative' in the first place (Knoblauch 2007: 35). Certainly, various conditions influence the degree of the alterity perceived. The more anonymity, the more alienness. But nevertheless, there is a universal projection which can be described as the central mechanism for alterity and consequently as the foundation for social interaction in the search for commonalities.

But Welsch's approach alone will not be able to define the transcultural concept needed to determine transcultural competence, as it is often associated with cosmopolitanism: It is criticized for its seemingly radical ideal of homogenization, meanwhile ignoring the essential differences that continue to exist (Yousefi & Braun 2011). In fact, the contemporary definition of the diverse term transculturality excludes neither the cosmopolitan nor the intercultural perspective. Josef Wieland (2016: 18) describes transculturality as a "learning process for the relationing of different cultural identities and perspectives". Therefore, transculturality is not an identity, but it can rather be seen as a process of bridge building, of an "interactive, social generating of commonalities" (ibid.: 22) when dealing with intercultural interaction. With his metaphor of Musil's "Man without Qualities", Hagenbüchle (2002: 142) exemplifies the transculturally competent person. The metaphor does not have negative connotations, but defines a positive attribute, namely the possibility to think and experience freely and spontaneously, without being bound to one ideological solidified form. From the perspective of Musil, the human is not seen as a subject in the processes of life. The subject is rather an object of the forces which constitute transpersonal dimensions. From this perspective, Musil realized that contingency offers a variety of options to choose from, *i.e.* that there is no such thing as 'truth' and that there is no exclusively 'right' decision. The subject is created out of this contingency, and the chance for self-reflection and awareness is created. Every new situation can be the invitation to transcend oneself and one's individual perspective. Thus, new situations can become bridges and passages, which allow new perspectives on alterities (ibid.). In order to reach cooperation, transculturality is rooted in the quest for defining shared interests and common values, while the recognition and appreciation of another's cultural context is crucial (Wieland 2010). Transculturality uses an unbiased approach, abstaining from a normative point of reference to find and create commonalities. These commonalities are based on shared values, which can either be the result of a learning process or shared

without prior interaction. In their most basic form, commonalities consist of shared interests in realizing a mutually beneficial transaction.³

Critics insist that it is not possible to abandon one's own ethnocentric bias (and thereby the cultural dominant claim), however justified skepticism and knowledge of complexity and ambivalence should not prevent us from further developing it (Hagenbüchle 2002). The point made by transculturality is that having a distance to one's own cultural background and being able to refer to several cultural systems (Castells 2001, in: Pütz 2004), does not mean giving up one's own values, but gaining an ethno-relative perspective and embracing a situational non-normativity.

In contrast to interculturality or multiculturalism, transculturality does not aim to overcome differences, which always has the connotation of implementing one's own normative beliefs. The claim for non-normativity inherent in transculturality believes in a common ground⁴, which does not necessarily consist of globally shared values, but is the first of a social process. A common understanding of the situational significance of values is not given or stable, but instead has to be continually developed. Hence, humanity's shared moral bond is "not a metaphysical universal, but a discursive process of practical learning" (Wieland 2016: 15). Thinking about reciprocal exchange, Antweiler (2011: 99) introduces "pancultural universals", which are universal, not considering their local diversity but rather their function as structures that shape human interaction and enable humans to enter into a learning process in the first place. Examples can be music, happiness, love but also authority and inequality, which may all overlap sufficiently to start a conversation.

Some may see not giving up one's own values and still possessing a situational non-normativity as contradictory forces, which cannot work at the same time. Collins and Porras (1994) describe this leadership problem as the 'tyranny of the OR'. The OR accepts either one way OR another, but not both at the same time. This results in a cultural trap, due to the fact that alternatives are neglected. The Chinese dualistic philosophy and its concept of yin/yang is the ideal basis for seeing opposites as com-

³ For a discussion on transcultural learning and commonalities, see the chapters by Wieland & Baumann Montecinos (2019: 11-20) and by Wieland (2019: 21-41) in this book.

⁴ For a detailed discussion on this aspect, see Urthaler's text on "Transculturality and its Focus on Commonalities" in this book (2019: 113-141).

plementary. The so called ‘genius of the AND’ is able to embrace both forces of a dimension at the same time. Decision makers who follow the yin/yang philosophy figure out a way to have both A AND B: “Long-term AND short-term, profitable AND doing good, low costs AND quality are all possible if the OR can be replaced with the AND” (Glover & Friedman 2015: 63). The genius of the AND becomes possible because the characteristics and properties of other groups achieve a status of strength; this status of strength is based on a non-normativity which enables an ethno-relative recognition of the other. This ethno-relativity or cultural relativity can be seen as “not privileging any cultural difference as being inherently better or worse” (ibid.: 19). But how can an ethno-relative perspective be achieved? Similar to the yin/yang philosophy, a different theoretical stance on culture is taken by Han (2005). He shows that interculturality and multiculturalism are, in various ways, a Western phenomenon. Historically, they are rooted in the context of nationalism and colonialism; philosophically, they presume an essentialization of culture. In this understanding, culture possesses a ‘nature’, and cultural exchange is not seen as a process that forms culture, but rather as a special and ‘eligible’ act. The realization that one’s own culture is one of many: “no better or worse in a culturally relative way” (Glover & Friedman 2015: 91), not only includes a recognition of the other, but also of one’s own inherent cultural baggage.

Based on these remarks on the concept of transculturality, the following sections will suggest a first conceptualization of transcultural competence on an individual level. As the following considerations will reveal, intercultural operationalization and measurements can be treated as related concepts in order to further define transcultural competence, even though their perspective on culture might be different.

3. Conceptualization of Transcultural Competence

When thinking about the conceptualization of transcultural competence, it becomes clear that an approach focusing on characteristics alone may not be able to define transcultural competence, because “there can be no culture except where there is some consensus. Consensus is a matter of understanding. It is transmitted through communication, through example and through participation in a common life” (Park, 1920s). Therefore,

transcultural competence will be in line with the definition of the ‘Marginal Man’, which doesn’t focus on a personality type but on a social process (Park 1950: 376). Thus, the overarching goal while tackling transculturality on an individual level, should be to keep in mind that transcultural competence may be an inter-subjective accomplishment.

Griese (2005) gives a short introduction to competence regarding intercultural interaction and distinguishes it from education and qualification. While education usually has an end in itself, qualification carries a professional usability. Competence connects education and qualification. But there is no consensus concerning what competence actually means (*ibid.*). By reviewing measurement and operationalization concepts of intercultural competence, Matveev and Merz (2014: 123) are able to deliver a broad – and therefore agreeable – definition of intercultural competence: “Intercultural competence is one’s knowledge and ability to successfully deal with intercultural encounters”. The divergence in particular contents is high. Recent reviews “include more than 30 intercultural competence models and more than 300 related constructs” (Leung et al. 2014: 496). The goal of intercultural competence assessment is therefore to understand at “what level a person is at the given moment, what their knowledge level and abilities are” (Mažeikienė & Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė 2007: 74). Importantly, Deardoff (2006) states that intercultural competence is a lifelong process. Due to the fact that transculturality does not focus on static snap-shots, but rather on a dynamic process, an assessment of transcultural competence can only be a stopover.

When analysing the short- and long-term influences on components of transcultural competence, it becomes clear that there is a distinction between different competency dimensions: They can be divided into cognitive, affective and behavioural components. Even though there is no agreed-upon definition of intercultural competence, most of the concepts can be analysed with the underlying distinction as well. (1) The cognitive dimension is about people’s thoughts, attitudes, and interpretations: Culture-specific knowledge, cognitive attitude, open-mindedness/flexibility, critical thinking, personal autonomy and motivation. (2) The affective dimension is about people’s feelings, moods, and emotions. It includes: Cultural empathy, emotional stability/control and affective attitudes. (3) The behavioural dimension is about action and social exchange. It includes: Experience, social initiative, leadership, and communication dimensions (Matveev & Merz 2014: 129-132). Consequently, outcomes of (1) cogni-

tive components, (2) affective components, and (3) behavioural components can be (1) knowledge and attitudes, (2) attitudes and (3) skills, and therefore impact again on all competency dimensions. Knowledge enables one to understand aspects of cultures and may often be acquired in the short term. Attitudes enable one to see members of different cultures, and experience interaction with them, with different attitudes, from different perspectives and with different values, and may be acquired in the medium to long term (Spencer & Spencer 1993). Attitudes like new thinking, openness and valuing of differences are among cognitive competencies, while other attitudes like emotional strength, inner purpose or spirit of adventure are more strongly related to affective components. Therefore, attitudes are affective and cognitive in nature. Skills as an outcome will enable the participant to do something in the intercultural context effectively and appropriately (like experience, leadership or communication) and may be acquired in the short to medium term (Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009: 201). In order to assess transcultural competence in a comprehensive manner, it may be developed as a tool addressing the three competency dimensions introduced. Hence, this tool may be applied to different contexts and disciplines. The distinction between cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions can be a starting point for scholars and practitioners to build on, with the goal of a transcultural competence definition which is more nuanced and detailed.

When transcultural competence is divided into cognitive, affective and behavioural components, various (sub-)competencies can be defined and developed via different pedagogical activities such as training, coaching or teaching. At the same time, they can develop over time, based on the personality, socialization and experience of the person in question. Leiba-O'Sullivan (1999) differentiates between stable and dynamic competencies. Dynamic competencies are the ones that can be trained better and that are also context- and task-dependent. Stable competencies are usually defined in terms of personality traits or predispositions. Furthermore, stable and dynamic competencies can be categorized in terms of long-term and short-term competencies. To give an example: Two (sub-)competencies of most conceptualizations of intercultural competence can serve as an orientation towards transcultural competence: Active listening can be acquired and improved in the short or medium term through training and practice, because active listening is a skill and belongs to the behavioural dimension, which is the most dynamic dimension. On the

other hand, openness is rather linked to the personality and to the cognitive dimension, and it is more difficult to develop in the short-term. Openness may develop over space and time i.e., by simply living in societal contexts, or by educational activities (Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009: 200).

Accordingly, the difficulty encountered in the individual development of transcultural competence is that it depends highly on attitudes, affective qualities and a cognitive dimension which can only be developed in the medium or long term. However, Fowler and Blohm (2004: 46) imply that perceived long-term changes may partly be initiated even in the short-term: “If the outcome of the training is that trainees will modify their attitudes, methods need to touch trainees’ belief systems, often intensely”. As a result of the globalizing world, developing transcultural competence becomes more and more important at an age when values, attitudes and other qualities are generally developed, which links transcultural competence to personality. “Transcultural competence is not a one-time episodic phenomenon. Rather, it is a long-term learning and practicing process” (Ting-Toomey 1999: 263). Some individuals internalize more than one linguistic and cultural reference system and can therefore be considered bipolar or multipolar.⁵ Their “insider outsider status” can be described as “polycentric, *i.e.*, able to apply diverse meaning and action systems and to take up more neutral meta-positions [...]” (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016: 202). This status is usually acquired via immigration or mobility, while Erikson (1973) defines youth as the crucial stage in the development of an identity, which would be in line with the long-term process of learning and practicing. Regarding transcultural competence as a crucial component for international management, Leung et al. (2014: 508) state:

“The literature on leader and executive development suggests that 70% of development occurs through direct, on-the-job experience, whereas training accounts for less than 10% of development, and coaching and mentoring account for the remaining 20%.”

Hence, there is an advocacy for on-the-job experience as a strong development tool. On-the-job experience can also be called ‘situated learning’,

⁵ For the concept of biculturalism and a study on the transcultural competencies of biculturals, see Salice-Stephan’s text in this book (2019: 75-111).

and the argument is that “doing” is not separable from “knowing” (ibid.: 509). One way to combine both concepts is learning communities, which enable participants to exchange their cultural practices, solve collective problems, and reflect.

To summarize, the conceptualization of transcultural competence may be distinguished between cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions in order to make it more nuanced and detailed on an individual level. Most of the decisive (sub-)competencies may be acquired in the long-term learning and practicing process i.e., during a person’s youth as the crucial stage in the development of an identity. Nevertheless, long-term changes may partly be initiated even in the short-term focusing on on-the-job experience. Against this backdrop, in the following the theoretical understanding on how to measure transcultural competence will be developed.

4. Measuring Transcultural Competence

De Munck (2000: 50) is right when he criticizes the fact that culture “cannot be reduced to a list of traits [or] variables but must be studied holistically. A culture or a self is not equal to the sum of its parts [...]”. But justified scepticism and knowledge about complexity cannot prevent us from further developing our understanding of transcultural competence, and thus, the critique leads to the emphasis that the cultural and environmental context – and not just the individual’s competence – are decisive for the successful outcome. Moreover, transcultural competence can be seen as an “incremental learning journey whereby [...] communicators learn to mutually adapt to each other’s behaviours appropriately and flexibly” (Ting-Toomey 1999: 263). In contrast, many of the coherent cultural concepts conceive practice as predictable. In this case, culture becomes a “re-enactment of values” – a pure “execution” (Bourdieu 1977: 25). Because of its coherence, culture is considered to be static, and as measurable and comparable through quantitative analysis, such as self-assessments. This can be seen as the primary unit of analysis in understanding culture today. And yet, Oyserman et al. (2002) make the point that the dimension of a national culture is not appropriate for explaining the variance of individualism. Transculturality acknowledges a contingent outcome during the process of interaction, rather than predicting out-

comes based on the “re-enactment of values”. Consequently, comparison between averages does not enable us to transfer a finding to a specific cultural situation. In every cultural specific situation, some patterns may be identifiable, but the “evidence of diversity in values, descriptions and in practice” (McSweeney 2015: 27) is stronger. If an individual is simply assigned to the values/attitudes or disposition associated with a country, the stereotyping and its uniformity could even be described as ‘racism’, if the ‘genes’ of a certain culture are supposedly inherent in a respective individual.

Different perspectives on culture lead to different ways of acquiring knowledge of culture. Thus, Glover’s and Friedman’s distinction of psychometric and cultural metric (2015: 107) help us with regard to how we distinguish methods of competence measurement:

- In the psychometric approach, the individual is seen as the basic unit of analysis, and quantitative methods are therefore more valuable than qualitative ones. To assess an individual’s competence, self-assessments are commonly used. However, social desirability, especially across cultures, questions the validity of self-assessments. Depending on the specific cultural context, there could be a tendency to agree rather than to disagree or to behave culturally appropriate. Nevertheless, the psychometrics approach makes it possible to analyse large amounts of data effectively. An important shift of the psychometrics approach towards an operationalization of transculturality is made with the introduction of the so-called socio-cultural encounter: “Our focus is not just on individuals as actors as much as it is on the socio-cultural encounters themselves, which always involve at least two actors”, stated Glover & Friedman (*ibid.*: 47). Due to the simulation of a complex cultural situation, questionnaires can create an interaction situation, and thus the potential for more complex answers. The following case shows how interactive measures, based on actual socio-cultural encounters, are operationalized (Friedman et al. 2013): Socio-cultural encounters occur whenever one social actor meets another, and each socio-cultural encounter has a specific context and specific stakeholders with probably different cultural-value orientations, as well as other dynamic dimensions, e.g., power differentials. The research approach of the socio-cultural encounter may be a way to operationalize transculturality, because transcultural competence is “an intersub-

jective accomplishment, and thus highly qualitative in nature” (Glover & Friedman 2015: 107).

- Another approach is the cultural metric, which refers to a more holistic approach to culture, defined by numerical, narrative or mixed methods. Qualitative focus groups, observations (informant-based measures), individually structured interviews, and quantitative surveys can give a complex view of the performance of an organization. In informant-based measurements, informants report on the behaviour, and hence the competences, of the respective person. Critics emphasise that the informants may differ in their possibility to observe (Hoffman et al. 2010), and in their particular qualifications (Woehr & Huffcutt 1994). Multisource ratings can be a way to minimize potential biases by asking informants to rate based on recall (Conway & Huffcutt 1997). Cultural metric approaches are rarely used, due to the associated costs and the resources and time required (Glover & Friedman 2015).

It has been shown that socio-cultural encounters may be an important shift of the psychometrics approach of predicting outcomes based on the “re-enactment of values” to acknowledge a contingent outcome during the process of interaction.

5. Analysis of related Concepts and Methods of Measurements

The derived theoretical aspects determined the selection of three related concepts, which will be presented in the following. Naturally, this analysis could include other concepts.⁶ Throughout the analysis, the following questions will be considered: 1. What are the respective definitions of competence in the concepts? 2. Is there a paradigm shift to positive cross-cultural scholarship? 3. How is the concept operationalized? 4. What does it measure? 5. What are the differences compared to the derived theoretical aspects of Transcultural Competence?⁷

⁶ The original work includes the analysis of the Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness program (GLOBE), as well as the analysis of The International Profiler (TIP).

⁷ The first publication of this work was in May 2017. In December 2017 the OECD announced that Global Competence will be a part of PISA. This may be highly relevant because youth is seen as the crucial development stage to the development

5.1 Intercultural Competence Profiler (ICP)

The Intercultural Competence Profiler (ICP) is one of the tools offered by Trompenaars-Hampden-Turner Consulting. They do not publish all their know-how, which makes analysis more hypothetical. In fact, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner have rarely been the subject of investigation of researchers not associated to them, which makes it difficult to estimate the extent to which the instruments are valid or reliable. Hofstede's article "Riding the Waves of Commerce" (1996) provides a correlation and factor analysis of data used by Trompenaars and presents serious concerns about the conclusion, method and content validity of an earlier tool of the ICP. Even though they might compete against each other, both approaches, Hofstede's and Trompenaars', have several things in common: Both analyse non-verbal communication, both focus on 'national cultures' and compare them to each other, and both build their quantitative dimensional approach on the basis of values surveys.

Trompenaars' essential concept of reconciliation can be considered to be relative to the outlined approach of the genius of the AND. In the concept of reconciliation the first step is to identify commonalities (*i.e.*, shared meanings):

"Thinking about situations in your own life [which] might help you to understand that behaviours that seemingly differ are often different only in terms of the type of situations in which you observe them, not in terms of their function. This will prevent you from prematurely valuing a behaviour as negative and, more importantly, help you understand what the other person is actually trying to do" (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2012: 198).

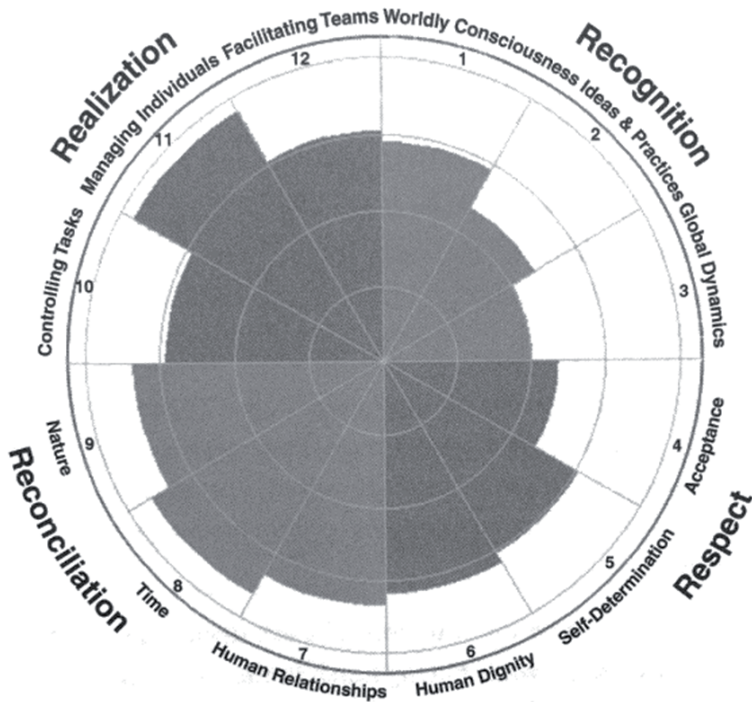
This quote emphasizes that, in order to be able to find commonalities, it is important not to necessarily stick to the sole solution which one might have in mind at the beginning of the intercultural interaction. Trompenaars et al. argue that a difference can also be seen as a complementarity when elements interact in the right way. They state that there are no needs for polarities such as either/or or right/wrong (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016). With reconciliation they may have found a way of seeing com-

in the long-term learning process. Further studies may analyze this new and promising global assessment tool.

monalities, also in differences. In addition, and comparable to the socio-cultural encounter approach of Glover & Friedman (2015), Hampden-Turner (1990) developed his dilemma theory. A dilemma represents a situation in which the individual has to choose one from various options, each entailing advantages and disadvantages. Similar to other concepts, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner work with bipolar value dimensions based on nations as units of analysis, which are generally regarded as a possibility for solving interactional problems. In contrast to others, values are not regarded as absolutes but as virtues (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016). Dilemma theory leads to a dynamic and circular understanding of intercultural competence by reconciling differences. The foundation of reconciliation is self-awareness as well as an ethno-relative approach: Being aware of one's own mental models and cultural predispositions, respecting and understanding the predispositions of others by knowing that they are legitimately different. This can be particularly useful in practice and for finding solutions to management issues with more than just one and the only 'best way'. Trompenaars-Hampden-Turner Consulting offers a variety of profiling and assessment tools. In addition, to tools focused on organizations and teams, there are various instruments "for determining cross-cultural orientations and preferences" (Trompenaars Hampden-Turner Consulting 2017) on an individual scale.

Against this backdrop, the focus of this analysis is on the ICP, which is based on the process of reconciliation. The ICP attempts to describe and measure certain modes of thought, sensitivities, intellectual skills and explanatory capacities that might, in some measure, contribute to the formation of intercultural competence (Trompenaars & Woolliams 2009: 166). Twelve components define not only the process of reconciliation but also intercultural competence (Figure 1). Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner state that the ICP is a business tool focusing, unlike other competence tools, on a spectrum of cross-cultural awareness and not on a basic area of knowledge or behaviour. The self-assessment can be conducted online, and the tools provide information on the level of interculturality in which each of the twelve components can be considered on their own even though they are dependent on each other.

Figure 1: Four Aspects of Intercultural Competence



Source: Originally from Trompenaars & Wooliams, adapted by Glover & Friedman 2015: 9.

The idea of reconciliation firmly believes in the need for real partnerships, meaning that partners can be themselves while interacting. Reconciling differences is to “be ourselves, yet see and understand how the other’s perspectives can help our own” (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2012: 247). Even though the process of reconciliation has strong commonalities with the conceptualization of transcultural competence, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner still build their analysis on internally coherent cultures and consider the nation as the basic unit of analysis. This becomes especially clear when the business advice is made not to rely on cultural “hybrids”. “Foreign cultures have an integrity,” Trompenaars claims, “people who abandon their culture become weakened and corrupt”

(in Breidenbach & Nyri 2009: 321). McSweeney (2015) notes understandably that this “view is methodologically, analytically and prescriptively problematic” (McSweeney 2015: 39). In contrast, managers who are “hybrids” are more often successful than those who have just experienced one country (Brannen 2009; Shenkar 2012; Tung 1998, in McSweeney 2015). This goes in line with Salice-Stephan’s findings as presented in this book that “biculturals show a higher degree of ‘metacognition’ than monoculturals” (2019: 105). The idea that most people ‘belong’ to one culture shows that the conceptualization is based on islands rather than networks. Even more objection occurs because Trompenaars’ cultural incompatibility is not based on empirical work but was solely deduced from the basic unit of a nation and its supposedly coherent internal culture. Furthermore, the concept does not specify how to actually communicate in daily situations, even though the process of reconciliation shifts the culture-comparative approach to a culture-interactional perspective.⁸

However, despite all the criticism mentioned above, as a business tool, Trompenaars’ and Hampden-Turner’s ICP focuses on a spectrum of cross-cultural awareness (including characteristics) instead of a basic area of knowledge or behaviour, which distinguishes it from other competence tools. The cross-cultural awareness in combination with reconciliation and the genius of the AND, may be the first step towards a non-normativity. Even though the static dimensions do not guarantee high face validity, values are considered as virtues, which leads to a dynamic and circular understanding, which makes reconciliation possible. In doing so, the self-assessment applied by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner has two remarkable aspects. First, the process of reconciliation is based on the dilemma theory which includes socio-cultural encounters, which forces individuals to explain their behaviour and gives further details on their cognitive and affective dimensions. Second, the tool gives a level of intercultural competence in which each of the twelve components can be considered on its own. Even though they are dependent, this enables the user to get feedback and work on developing specific competencies.

⁸ For a more detailed way of achieving Reconciliation, see pp. 200-211 of Trompenaars’ & Hampden-Turner’s book “Riding the Waves of Culture” (2012), in which they summarize the culture-interactional perspective in ten steps.

5.2 *Intercultural Competence Assessment (INCA)*

The research project Intercultural Competence Assessment (INCA) (Kirchberger 2009) is co-authored by Byram and based on his theoretical approach to knowledge discovery. It is, moreover, enriched with components identified by Kühlmann and Stahl (Culture-Interaction) and by Gudykunst (Mindfulness) (1988). Kühlmann and Stahl (1998) use the notion of “can do” statements, which try to operationalize each of the competency indicators with their own descriptors in order to make them describable in actual behaviour. The focus is therefore rather on the process of communication. The concept of mindfulness helps one to make conscious choices in particular situations and to be able to communicate effectively (Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009). Langer describes acting mindfully as (1) perceiving behaviour and information in sociocultural encounters as new; (2) taking different perspectives on socio-cultural encounters; (3) interpreting the context in which the person is behaving; and (4) creating new categories and thus being able to understand behaviour (Langer 1997: 111). The practical aim is “to develop a valid framework of intercultural competence and robust instruments for assessing intercultural competence to meet the needs of employers” (Prechtl & Davidson-Lund 2007, as cited in Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009: 68).

INCA consists of six different characteristics, which define intercultural competence (see indicators in Table 1). Each characteristic is divided into motivation, skill/knowledge and behaviour. These three sub-characteristics can be assigned to the derived components (cognitive, affective and behavioural) of transcultural competence.

Unlike most intercultural competence instruments, which are usually based on self-assessment, the INCA is defined by a mixed method and includes the assessment of observers. More precisely, there are three assessment types combining direct and indirect ways of measuring intercultural competence: Questionnaires, scenarios and role plays. Each of the assessments consists of multiple subcomponents, such as motivation, skill/knowledge and behaviour or the skill level differentiation.

Besides the questionnaire component (Sinicrope et al. 2007: 31), the assessment types, scenarios and role plays, have a direct assessment approach. Scenarios are text- and video-based, and there are either multiple

choice or open-ended questions. Each scenario is based on one of the six dimensions of intercultural competence.⁹

Table 1: INCA and its characteristics

Tolerance for ambiguity	Behavioural flexibility	Communicative awareness	Knowledge discovery	Respect for otherness	Empathy
Indicator: Cognitive dimension					
Readiness for ambiguity (M)	Readiness to apply full range or repertoire of behaviour (M)	Willingness to modify (M)	Skills of ethnographic discovery of cultural knowledge (S)	Willingness to respect (M), Critical knowledge of such systems (S)	Willingness to take other's perspective (M), decentring (S)
Indicator: Affective dimension					
Handle stress (S)			Curiosity (M)		
Indicator: Behavioural dimension					
Managing ambiguous situations (B)	Having a broad repertoire (S), Adapting behaviour to the situation (B)	Ability to identify different communicative conventions, language proficiency (S+B)	Including technical knowledge (S), Seeking information to discover culture-related knowledge (B)	Treating equally different behaviour, value and convention systems (B)	Skills of role-taking, Awareness (S), Making explicit and relating culture-specific perspectives (B)

Note: (M) = Motivation, (S) = Skill/Knowledge, (B) = Behaviour. Motivation, Skill/Knowledge and Behaviour are being assigned to the derived components (cognitive, affective and behavioral) of transcultural competence.

Source: Based on Precht & Davidson-Lund 2007: 472.

⁹ This is one example of a text-based, open-ended question in a scenario: "One disadvantage of your work placement is that the weekends are rather lonely. You normally spend time with friends and family and you miss this social side of your life. At work you become friendly with a colleague who can speak your language. This colleague says that he will telephone to invite you to the house during the weekend. The telephone does not ring. There could be a number of explanations for this.

1. On the Monday morning you decide to talk to a local colleague about this. How would you explain what had happened and how would you find out from the colleague what the explanation could be?

2. Later in the morning you meet the colleague who did not phone. He/she tells you he/she could not phone because 'My mother asked me to go shopping for her'. Write a few lines as part of a letter/e-mail to your family telling them about this incident and explaining why it happened." (Sinicope et al. 2007: 32f.).

During the role plays, observers evaluate the behaviour of the examinees. Just like the other assessments, the role play is also provided online. Individuals from different cultures and with different customs, work on a project together and are able to discover and respect each other (Sinicrope et al. 2007).

The results of the INCA assessments are collected in the so-called dossier and, to further support the individual in his or her learning, records are kept. The idea of an intercultural learning diary is implemented in the biography section and in the passport section as part of the dossier, “which allow the individual to keep a record of significant intercultural experiences” and to “evaluate his/her experiences, learning and progress” (Prechtel & Davidson-Lund 2007: 482, as cited in Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009: 195). Due to its relatively objective assessment by observers, the INCA project may be a promising tool.¹⁰ The written exercises, such as scenarios, are an effective solution when aiming to profile affective and cognitive aspects of intercultural competence online. The open-ended questions recall Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars’ dilemma theory.

Complementarily, the assessment of behavioural aspects of intercultural competence is done by role plays: “the assesses work together in a team with counterparts from another culture. They are observed by trained assessors, who score their behaviour against the INCA grid” (ibid.: 483).

In some respects, the multiple approach with different assessment tools is INCA’s unique selling proposition, but at the same time it constitutes a major reason for criticism. The inclusion of observers may increase the validity, but it also raises doubt about the reliability. Will a different observer have the same assessment and, even more importantly, can the assessment be repeated with different examinees from different cultures? The training and knowledge, skills and experiences of the observers are crucial for a successful assessment. It “is almost exclusively carried out by applied linguists and discourse analysts” (Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009: 251), in order to assess exact verbal and non-verbal behaviour. High costs can be expected, and having in mind the origin, INCA being a research project by the European Union, might explain the rather costly, but presumably elaborate approach. The culture-general

¹⁰ More details on INCA’s questionnaires, scenarios and role plays are available online at <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/the-inca-project-inter-cultural-competence-assessment?lang=de> (accessed 23 Apr. 2017).

approach on intercultural competence has no culture-specific consideration, and there is no empirical research available on how members of, e.g., non-European cultures would differ. Yet there is no published research available using the INCA tool. An analysis of the INCA project reveals that the notion of the nation as the basic unit of analysis seems to be dissolved, because individual characteristics are not related to national norms. Culture is a dynamic concept that is particularly focused on the attitudes, and hence the behaviour, affecting the way people work. The strong focus on behaviour and the six dimensions can be related to transcultural competence. Precisely the dimensions respect for otherness and empathy may be a strong step toward non-normativity.

5.3 Cultural Intelligence (CQ)

Cultural Intelligence (CQ) was called the “new kid on the scientific block” (Gelfand *et al.* 2008: 376) and was formally introduced by Earley & Ang (2003: 3):

“CQ, defined as an individual’s capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings” (Earley & Ang 2003), is consistent with Schmidt and Hunter’s (2000) definition of general intelligence (IQ) as “the ability to grasp and reason correctly with abstractions [concepts] and solve problems”.

Based on the IQ model, Ang *et. al* (2007) derived four components which can describe CQ: (1) CQ-Strategy characterizes the mental ability to acquire knowledge. (2) CQ-Knowledge describes the actual knowledge about culture (Leung *et al.* 2014: 494). (3) CQ-Motivation “refers to the mental capacity to direct and sustain energy on a particular task or situation” (Ng *et al.* 2012: 32). (4) CQ-Behaviour “refers to outward manifestations or overt actions: what a person does rather than what he or she thinks” (*ibid.*: 32).

Because of its connection to intelligence research, cognitive processes like “self- and other awareness, analogical reasoning, and pattern recognition” (Thomas & Inkson 2004: 31) become part of intercultural competence. Ting-Toomey (1999) takes mindfulness and develops it as the essential communication skill component regarding transcultural competence. He defines four steps and calls it ODIS (Observe, Describe, Interpret, Sus-

Table 2: CQ-components and its descriptors

CQ-Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be conscious of the cultural knowledge (CK) 2. adjust CK, 3. apply CK in ICI, 4. check the accuracy of CK
CQ-Knowledge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. legal and economic system of cultures, 2. rules of other languages, 3. cultural values and religious beliefs, 4. marriage systems, arts and crafts, 5. rules of non-verbal behaviour
CQ-Motivation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enjoy interacting with other cultures, 2. Confident in socializing, 3. confident in dealing with stress, 4. enjoy living in unfamiliar cultures, 5. Confident in getting accustomed
CQ-Behaviour	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Change verbal behaviour, 2. Use pause and silence to suit different intercultural interaction, 3. Vary the rate of speaking, 4. Change non-verbal behaviour, 5. Alter facial expressions

Note: The descriptors operationalize each CQ-component (and its outcome). CQ-Strategy and CQ-Knowledge can be assigned to the derived cognitive dimension. CQ-Motivation also belongs to the cognitive and also to the affective dimension. CQ-Behaviour belongs to the behavioural dimension.

Source: Based on Van Dyne 2017.¹¹

pend/Evaluation) analysis (ibid.: 269). (1) Observe verbal and non-verbal signals.¹² (2) Describe the behaviour and mental predisposition in the socio-cultural encounter. (3) Make sense of the behaviour by generating multiple interpretations. (4) Decide: “respect the differences and suspend our ethnocentric evaluation” or “engage in open-ended evaluation by ac-

¹¹ Available at: http://intranet.chw.edu.hk/~ac/S6_HealthProject_SampleReport3.pdf (accessed 23 Apr. 2017).

¹² Similarly, it could be said: “When in doubt, the best strategy may be to simply let the other person lead” (Meyer 2016: 191).

knowledging our discomfort with unfamiliar behaviours” (Ting-Toomey 1999: 269).

CQ is a long-term concept, which develops and improves over time. This distinguishes it from other concepts of intelligence, by focusing on abilities rather than on personality traits (Ng et al. 2012: 50). Matsumoto and Hwang (2013) emphasize that CQ is more elaborate than other concepts of intelligence. It is thus not only an assessment, but also a development tool. The development tool is constructed because of its behavioural approach, its focus on management practice, and especially its long-term perspective, including outcomes which again strengthen components of CQ.

It can be said that CQ is theoretically well founded due to its origin in the multiple-loci-of-intelligence arguments (Sternberg & Detterman 1986). It “is explicit on what it is [four factors of CQ] and what it is not (it is not personality and not values)” (Ng et al. 2012: 31). CQ is not values, but can it therefore be a non-normative approach? Even though values are not an explicit component in the operationalization and measurement, they can still be an implicit part of the concept. Nevertheless, CQ might be an interesting approach to overcome the nation as the basic unit of analysis, because it does not perceive culture as nation. Here, culture is contextual, and the questions can be applied to different frames, such as national, ethnical, regional, or functional backgrounds, or to subgroups like age, gender, religion, etc. At the beginning of each assessment it is important to explain the cultural context in order “to ensure that participants respond to questions with a consistent mental model” (Ng et al. 2012: 46). It must be noted as a limitation that there is not one common definition of CQ, and only because Thomas & Inkson (2004) combine mindfulness and CQ, this does not imply that this approach is universally applicable to CQ.

The primary method of CQ is the self-assessment, which predicts cross-cultural leader emergence better than related concepts like IQ, international experiences, and others. The common critique regarding self-assessments (e.g., social desirability) applies here, too. But research on CQ has been developing complementary measures such as informant-based and performance-based measures. Van Dyne et al. (2008) placed in the informant-based method an independent observer, who rates the assessee based on the CQ-scale, while Rockstuhl et al. (2013) introduced the multimedia situational judgement test methodology as a performance-

based measure of CQ. The performance-based measure can be seen as a complement to the psychometric measure. Due to its relatively short history, the concept of CQ and the understanding on how its competence can be developed are still relatively limited. In their reviews on intercultural competence, Matsumoto & Hwang (2013), as well as Leung et al. (2014: 495), come to the conclusion that CQ is nevertheless one of the “most promising” evidences, which is able to predict “a range of psychological, behavioural, and performance outcomes”.

5.4 Systematization of the Concepts

The three related concepts analysed are now systematized regarding the derived theoretical aspects of the operationalization of transcultural competence. Each one offers overlapping aspects which may serve as a starting point for further operationalization.

Not all of the aspects of transcultural competence that were derived in the theoretical foundation could be found in the analysis of related concepts. However, they may be relevant for a further operationalization of transcultural competence, and the most important are thus summarized: (1) Literature suggests that 70 percent of development of competence occurs through direct experience, which leads to an advocacy for on-the-job experience as a strong development tool (Leung et al. 2014: 508). Tools can moreover include formal training, coaching, mentoring and learning communities. (2) Youth can be seen as the crucial stage in the development of an identity, which goes in line with the long-term learning and practicing process (Erikson 1973). An interplay between personality, socialization and life experience develops transcultural competence. This may imply a task for society in general and a call for educational policies. (3) Even though ICP and CQ focus on commonalities and consider differences, they are not in line with the positive cross-cultural scholarship. Understanding how culture works as a cognitive process may be one essential part of transcultural competence. Alterity instead of alienness may be one further component. Another may be the search for a common denominator by perceiving cooperation at first as a social process to find and create shared values.

Table 3: Systematization of the concepts

Concept \ Dimension	ICP	INCA	CQ
Network	–	×	–
Open	–	×	×
Dynamic	×	×	×
Interaction	×	×	×
Non-normativity	×	×	×
Commonalities	×	–	×
Method	Self-assessment incl. sociocultural encounters	Mixed method: Surveys, scenarios and role plays available online	Self-assessment, observer (informant- based), performance- based measure
Cognitive	×	×	×
Affective	×	×	×
Behavioral	×	×	×

Note: Not all dimensions are systemized, for a deeper understanding see the particular analysis. Network = culture is perceived as a network and not as an island (nation state as a cultural container); Open = Culture changes and is not a coherent, closed block; Dynamic = Context is dynamic and not static; Interaction = Culture-interactional perspective focuses on behavior and not on abstract characteristics; non-normativity = unbiased approach, abstaining from a normative point of reference and gaining an ethno-relativity; Commonalities = positive approach on commonalities, cooperation-oriented.

Source: Own representation.

6. Implications for the operationalization of Transcultural Competence

The ‘substrate’ of all considerations induces that transcultural competence can be defined as a cooperation-oriented ability to find and create commonalities, regardless of the specifics of the socio-cultural encounter. Self-awareness, understanding how culture works and experiences lead to non-normativity. The developed ethno-relative perspective perceives socio-cultural encounters as contingent processes in order to generate mutual understanding. By perceiving culture as a network, a dynamic, open concept is established. The concepts of reconciliation and the genius of the AND are able to bridge differences by seeing commonalities and become an important component of transculturality and its competence.

This work has also shown that the abstract characteristics often found in self-assessments need to be complemented with a more qualitative approach focusing on behaviour and its actual description in culture-interactional situations. Scenarios and dilemmas may be a first step to develop self-assessments with higher validity. The transcultural competence tool may benefit from the trend towards combined designs (Sinicrope et al. 2007: 40) and may – depending on the context and the task – include a complementary approach.

There is no agreed-upon definition of transcultural competence, but the indicators of the analysis and those developed in the theoretical foundation may be enough to develop a first prototype as an orientation for the further development of transcultural competence. Since no empirical

Table 4: Prototype as an orientation for the further development of transcultural competence

	Cognitive Dimension
Culture-specific, Knowledge, Cognitive Attitude, Motivation, Personal Autonomy	Culture-specific knowledge as basis, knowledge of one's own culture (Sievers 2005: 178)
	Self-reflection/awareness (Bird et al. 2009: 817-819), tolerance for ambiguity, open-mindedness, flexibility, respectfulness, adaptability, creativity (Ting-Toomey 1999: 272), moral inclusion / category inclusiveness (Ting-Toomey 1999: 275), value-free openness (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016: 201), interest flexibility (Bird et al. 2009: 816), new thinking (Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009: 201), looking for commonalities, sustainably reflect on the cultural surrounding, not pursuing determined goal but being cooperation-oriented in a contingent process
	Self-confidence, perceiving oneself as an individual (Hauenschild & Wulfmeyer 2005: 198), cosmopolitan outlook (Bird et al. 2009: 816), critical thinking
	Affective Dimension
Cultural Empathy, Affective Attitude	Sensitivity (Ting-Toomey 1999: 272), self-awareness (leads to), sense of humility/compassion/reconciliation (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2012: 200), ethno-relative perspective, alterity approach
	Inquisitiveness (Tucker et al. 2004: 815), patience (Meyer 2016: 191), emotional resilience, non-stress tendency (Bird et al. 2009: 819), inner purpose or spirit of adventure (Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009: 201), optimism, trust giving

	Behavioural Dimension
Experience, Social Initiative, Leadership, Communication Mindfulness	Foster a network of different contacts and positive social relationships (Hauenschild & Wulfmeyer 2005: 192), experience (about dilemmas) (Hauenschild & Wulfmeyer 2005: 198)
	Friendly and positive manner/politeness (Möhrer et al. 2016: 13), relationship skills (Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009: 201), genius of the AND, contingent awareness, dynamic and circular understanding leads to reconciliation, framing the context, engaging actively in a project
	Behavioural flexibility (as the overall goal) (Ting-Toomey & Chung 2005), take serious account of the legitimate claims of others
	Communicative appropriateness (Franklin & Spencer-Oatey 2009: 54f.), competent language user (Kramsch 1998: 27), language proficiency (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016: 214), listening mindfully (Ting-Toomey 1999: 264), active listening (Comfort & Franklin 2008: 94f.), get involved into a transcultural learning process, communication skill, qualification, understanding transculturality as a process, focus on action, working effectively in teams
	Mindfulness action: Observe, Describe, Interpret, Suspend/Create new categories, Reconciliation

Note: The respective source of each characteristic that was not elaborated in the chapters before can be found in the table. Due to its dimensions (cognitive, affective and behavioural) this table may be able to framework any kind of emerging competency.

Source: Own table based on Matveev & Merz 2014: 132.

investigations have examined the entire set of indicators embodied in the following prototype as an orientation for the further development of transcultural competence, caution is advised. These empirical investigations may be one next step for further research.

7. Conclusion

With its elaborations on the conceptualization of transcultural competence, as well as the analysis of related concepts regarding operationalization and measurement, this chapter may present some suggestions towards a more positive cross-cultural scholarship. It strengthens the theoretical foundation of transculturality by deriving a common definition of what transcultural competence may constitute. Concepts such as reconciliation

(ICP), mindfulness (CQ) and the genius of the AND further operationalize transcultural competence by shifting the culture-comparative approach towards a culture-interactional perspective. By perceiving culture as a network of relations (Wieland 2018), a dynamic, open concept is established that understands values as dynamic and circular. These concepts are able to bridge differences by seeing commonalities and may be an important component of transculturality and its competence. It is important to emphasize that transculturality, its orientation towards cooperation and its operationalization do not neglect differences or culture-specific approaches. They all have their particular focus that makes them relevant in the respective contexts. However, culture-specific approaches are predominantly based on the nation as the basic unit. Nevertheless, this work does not suggest the abandonment of the nation as a basic unit per se, e.g., the laws and regulations that guide the behaviour of all inhabitants of a specific country can be considered as an outgrowth of an actual national culture.

The analysis has shown that all three selected concepts ICP, INCA and CQ, possess related approaches to transcultural competence, but an actual paradigm shift of positive cross-cultural scholarship needs to be taken. Alterity instead of alien-ness and the search for a common denominator by perceiving cooperation at first as a social process to find and create shared values may be one starting point. By focusing rather on abilities than on personality traits (Ng et al. 2012: 50), the operationalization of transcultural competence may be seen as a development tool. This approach is taken by CQ and is in line with the suggestion that 70 percent of the development of competence occurs through direct experience. This work has also shown that the abstract characteristics often found in self-assessments need to be complemented with a more qualitative approach focusing on behaviour and its actual description in culture-interactional situations.

There is still relatively limited understanding of how individuals develop transcultural competence. Hence, this work can be seen as a contribution, especially in its conceptualization of transcultural competence and in giving implications on operationalization and measurement. The derived orientation for the further development of transcultural competence (Table 4), as well as the systematization of the concepts (Table 3) are all prototypes – they all leave room for further research endeavours. Nevertheless, due to their dimensions and their developed distinction of

e.g., cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions of competencies, they are able to frame any other kind of emerging concept of intercultural competence. Moreover, the outcomes are particularly interesting for the operationalization of transcultural competence as a development tool and can also be classified into the same dimensions.

To conclude, culture might have freed us from the dictates of nature, shaped our knowledge and the consensus of groups and generations. Transculturality might free us from the obsession and convention of culture, which may allow us to participate in, and not negate, the valued traditions of other cultures (Epstein 1995).

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Transcultural by Biography

A Comparative Study on the Transcultural Competences of ‘Biculturals’ and ‘Monoculturals’

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*1. Introduction*¹

Global value chains, the internationalization of companies, worldwide mobility, mass migration, the dramatic deterioration of political rhetoric, and worldwide access to information technologies – we are living in a VUCA world: Volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (Mack et al. 2015). Culture has become more important in the current environment, where much conflict takes place not just between states, but mostly between groups, divided along cultural lines within a state (Bercovitch & Foulkes 2012). As people interact globally and cross-culturally in this VUCA world, they are confronted with sets of rules and behaviours that are different from their own.

Traditional academic approaches claimed that cultures exist as a single homogeneous entity (Berg & Éigeartaigh 2010: 7). In the 18th century Johann Gottfried Herder (1966) proposed the idea of single cultures that are characterized by social homogenization, ethnic consolidation and intercultural delimitation. Even though his argumentation might – to a certain degree – correspond to the environment of the 18th century, it cannot be said to be true in the present day. Welsch (1999) argued that

¹ The chapter at hand summarizes the findings of a research work conducted under the supervision of Prof Dr Josef Wieland. The original work has been presented as a Master thesis carrying the same title as this chapter.

“...cultures de facto no longer have the insinuated form of homogeneity and separateness. They have instead assumed a new form, which is to be called transcultural insofar that it passes through classical cultural boundaries. Cultural conditions today are largely characterized by mixes and permeations.”

The mergence of cultures requires not only a modern cultural mindset, but also a new competence concept that is based on a cooperation-based ability to find and create commonalities within cultural diversity. Here, transcultural ideals can serve as a common bond in decision-making processes (Wieland & Leisinger 2016).

Transculturality can be described as a concept that helps to form “[...] an institutional condition of local and global cooperation that allows the productive handling of cultural diversity and the curbing of its potential destructiveness” (Wieland 2016: 13f.). Yet there is no clear academic approach on how to generate this ‘transcultural competence’ (TCC). The concept of transculturality assumes that transcultural values contribute to successful functioning within diverging cultures and helps in identifying and transcending cultural boundaries (Glover & Friedman 2015). However, the handling of diverging cultures and the awareness for cultures’ external networking (Welsch 1999) seems intuitive and – to a certain extent – self-evident for one particular demographic: Biculturals.²

This study examines whether biculturals are indeed favourably equipped with competences that are of a transcultural nature. In order to do so, it will first demonstrate how biculturalism can influence personality traits, and why this influence can be of relevance for transculturality. A definition of TCC will then be precisely elaborated. The competence dimensions derived from the literature will then serve as the basis for the comparative and quantitative assessment of TCC. The overall goal of this paper is to construct a Transcultural Competence Questionnaire (TCCQ) that allows the TCC of biculturals and individuals to be compared, who were not significantly exposed to a second cultural frame during the course of their socialization (as a matter of simplification, the second group will be described as ‘monoculturals’ throughout this chapter). At

² Author’s note: The term bicultural is being used to describe individuals who have (either been ascribed by birth or who have acquired) more than one cultural schema. This is consistent with how the term is used in the literature and can refer to three or even more cultures.

the end of this chapter, a discussion on the results of the TCCQ as well as an overview of the limitations and fields for further research will be presented.

2. *Biculturalism and its reference to transculturality*

It is assumed that people with a bicultural biography could help to better understand and design the ‘decisive turn towards transculturality’ (Welsch 1999). Bicultural individuals might be actors who have the potential to perceive cultures as dynamic networks and not as isolated containers. They are individuals who assumingly incorporate a mindset of combining opposites, who seek for commonness rather than seeing demarcation and, finally, who continuously participate in cultural exchange and interaction.

According to the relevant literature, biculturalism entails the synthesis of cultural norms from two (or more) groups into one behavioural repertoire and/or the ability to switch between cultural schemas, norms, and behaviours in response to cultural cues (Nguyen & Benet-Martinez 2007: 102). Bicultural individuals may be immigrants, sojourners (e.g., international students, expatriates), indigenous people, ethnic minorities, those in inter-ethnic relationships, and mixed-ethnic individuals (Berry 2003; Padilla 1994 as cited in Nguyen & Benet-Martinez 2007). Therefore, biculturals usually meet one of the following criteria (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016: 202f.): (1) They have been raised in a culture outside their parents’ culture for a significant part of their lives. (2) They permanently live or have lived in a country that is not their country of birth. (3) They frequently move from one country to another, e.g., for professional reasons. (4) They have parents who originate from two distinct cultures and grew up or live under conditions in which they incorporate both cultural schemes, e.g., speaking both languages and have a command of both behavioural patterns. Following these four criteria, it is assumed that biculturals interact within different systems of reference, either periodically or even simultaneously, and might be able to denote, classify, identify or connect with a variety of culturally different schemes. By internalizing more than one linguistic and cultural reference system, biculturals are supposed to be able to apply diverse meaning and action systems [...]” (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016: 202). Through a strong exposure to poly-

centric perspectives they develop a deeper sensitivity to multiple cultural reference systems; thus, developing a neutral meta-position and an ethno-relative attitude (ibid.).

Ting-Toomey argues that by shifting perspectives and basing our understanding on the other's cultural frame of reference, transcultural communication is enabled (1999: 267). This ability to shift towards other cultural frames is also called 'frame switching': A situation in which "bicultural individuals with extensive experience in two cultures seem to access different culture-specific cognitive structures, or mental frames, depending on the socio-cultural context" (Luna et al. 2008: 279). Biculturals' frequent use of this cultural frame-switching increases complexity of thought as these individuals develop increasingly multidimensional cultural schemes and engage in more effortful processing of cues (Galinsky et al. 2012). Leung et al. (2008: 174) argue that it is plausible that the juxtaposition and fusion conditions (bicultural background) induce a mindful-like state, it is thus "useful for future research to explore the overlap between multicultural experience and mindful thinking".

Recalling that transculturality is a learning process for the relationing of different cultural identities and perspectives (Wieland 2018, 2019) and that the prefix "trans" designates the relation, the creation of a connection and the building of a bridge between intercultural interaction patterns (Wieland 2016: 18), biculturalism might in fact provide a substantial foundation for the exploration of cognitive and attitudinal characteristics of TCC.

3. *Hypothesis of the research*

The goal of this analysis is to find out whether the bicultural biography of a person has a significant impact on his or her transcultural competence. On the basis of the theoretical construction of TCC, as derived in the previous chapter, the main hypothesis is: *Biculturals show a higher overall degree of TCC, compared to monoculturals*. The reasons for this assumption have been presented in the previous section "biculturalism and its reference to transculturality". It was argued that biculturals are confronted with alternative perspectives and might gain a deeper sensitivity to multiple cultural reference systems. It is supposed that these conditions contribute to the development of a neutral meta-position, an ethno-relative

attitude, a combining and reconciling mindset and the capability to make novel connections. The hypothesis whether or not biculturals possess a higher overall degree of TCC compared to monoculturals will be tested in the following sections. Beforehand however, one must determine how TCC can be defined. A precise quantitative analysis requires a profound competence description in order to reliably assess adequate competence dimensions. Therefore, the following part of this paper switches the focus to a working definition of TCC. In order to understand what TCC is, which competence dimensions it embraces and which components a transcultural competent person needs to internalize, a theoretical framework will be elaborated. The theoretical framework of TCC will later on serve as the basis for the comparative study between biculturals and monoculturals.

4. Dimensions of Transcultural Competence

A transculturally-competent person reverts to a toolbox of abilities that allows him or her to adapt to sociocultural settings and to self-reflect on their own and other people's cultures. Instead of perceiving cultural differences as a threat, individuals should be able to take advantage of cultural diversity. A profound literature review on transculturality has been conducted in order to identify prerequisites, requirements and components that contribute to the existence of transcultural competence (TCC). As a result, a six-dimensional competence construct has been derived. These six dimensions of TCC will be presented briefly in the following sections.

Dimension 1: Self-awareness

A first and very important characteristic to become transculturally competent is self-awareness. By understanding how "one has been socialized into one's own particular culture with all of its attendant assumptions" an important initial step towards transcultural competence is accomplished (Glover & Friedman 2015: 92). Naturally, a person does not have the ability to absorb and understand every distinct cultural pattern in detail, when facing a socio-cultural encounter (SCE). But a high degree of self-awareness is a reliable and beneficial source of effective and appropriate

cross-cultural interaction. By understanding, analysing and reflecting on one's own thoughts and feelings, it is possible to adjust responses and behaviours. This meta-cognitive process allows one to capture new cultural knowledge and enables the individual to control and process the information of the new culture and to generate coping strategies (Nunes et al. 2017: 222). Cultural self-awareness reflected in meta-cognition, leads to "planning and monitoring actions and in the ability to perform a review of mental models of cultural norms enabling the individual to question cultural assumptions and their mental adjustment model during and after the interactions" (ibid.). As such, the competence dimension self-awareness reflected in the sub-dimension meta-cognition can be described as a TCC-relevant dimension.

*Dimension 2: Recognition of cultural differences
through cultural knowledge*

According to Glover & Friedman, the awareness and understanding of the functioning of culture is an essential prerequisite for the development of TCC:

"Understanding that one's own culture is simply one among many cultures – no better or worse in a culturally relative way – is one of the most difficult things in life. This realization is the part of the prerequisite of recognition that is necessary for transcultural competence [...]" (Glover & Friedman 2015: 91).

As mentioned before, the development of TCC thus requires a form of cultural adaptation that requires more "sophistication and a greater level of awareness and understanding of how culture works" (ibid.: 8). It is unlikely that a person will become transculturally competent if he or she does not understand that culture affects every human's thinking and reasoning. For Glover and Friedman, the "single most important prerequisite for developing TCC is to recognize that all humans come from a culture and that cultural reality has shaped every aspect of their being" (ibid.: 42). Glover and Friedman thus argue that, for the development of TCC, a strong portion of cultural knowledge is inevitable. A certain instinct for the range of values involved in an SCE combined with the awareness that all humans perceive the world through a cultural lens, that people possess

individual cultural interpretations of reality (ibid.: 31) and that culture is shared and learned is an essential step towards the recognition of a cultural dilemma. This cultural awareness is an important part of TCC and does not undermine its claim to see cultural diversity as an opportunity rather than as a threat. Recognizing and being aware of cultural differences can contribute to the identification of commonalities. Ting-Toomey (1999, 1966) assumed that the comprehension of larger cultural grounds and values will “help to better understand the logic that motivates the dissimilar other’s behaviour”. Understanding that “people allocate time and resources and set priorities in response to their social and physical environment” (Barth 1967) is another essential part of cultural awareness.

To conclude, cultural knowledge is defined as knowledge of the universal elements that constitute a cultural environment; this knowledge is important as it “provides people with an organizing framework for thinking about possible ways that cultures might be similar and different” (Dyne et al. 2012: 301). Therefore, cultural knowledge is a relevant dimension of TCC. It implies two competence sub-dimensions: (1) Individuals develop a cultural awareness that is based on culture-relative thinking and knowledge of cultural polar extremes; (2) individuals have the motivation to learn about culture. The presence and application of cultural knowledge might be a useful tool – not only for solving cultural dilemmas – but for developing TCC in particular. The dimensions presented here can serve as an orientation for assessing an individual’s cultural motivation and awareness and shall be considered in the design of the TCC assessment tool, which will be presented later in this work.

Dimension 3: Overcoming cultural differences through non-normativity

As stated above, self-awareness and understanding how culture works are dimensions of TCC and important prerequisites for its development. It has also been pointed out that this understanding can only evolve if cultural relativity is embraced. These dimensions can only serve as an initial step towards the application of TCC. The following section will introduce the TCC dimension of “non-normativity”, consisting of sub-dimensions such as ethno-relativity, respect and non-judgmentalness, openness as well as the appreciation of otherness.

Barmeyer & Franklin (2016: 201) introduced the term value-free openness to describe the capability to impartially value cultural otherness. However, this term might be misleading as it could impute a form of moral-relativity to any transculturally-competent individual. Glover & Friedman (2015: 96) argue that “it is also important not to flip from overvaluing one’s own culture toward its opposite, namely embracing another’s so-called exotic culture in an uncritical manner”. This research therefore suggests using the term “non-normativity” (rather than value-free openness) to describe a competence state in which individuals – without any form of downgrading – embrace openness, think ethno-relatively and recognize and value cultural otherness. Non-normative openness may play a significant role in order to identify qualities and advantages of cultural otherness.

Glover & Friedman (2015: 20) claim that privileging any cultural difference as being inherently better or worse will constitute ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism can be defined as making false assumptions about others’ ways based on our own limited experience: “The key word is assumptions, because we are not even aware that we are being ethnocentric. We don’t understand that we don’t understand” (Barger 2017). Being aware of, and overcoming, ethnocentrism can thus be considered an essential prerequisite of TCC. According to Rösen (2014) ethnocentrism is based on asymmetrical evaluation, teleological continuity and a centralized perspective. In order to overcome these ethnocentric elements, Rösen (2014) proposes to replace asymmetrical evaluation with normative equality, teleological continuity with reconstructive concepts of contingency and discontinuity and centralized perspectives with multi-perspectivity and polycentric approaches to experience. The three steps to overcoming ethnocentrism, as proposed by Rösen, are strongly related to the conception of transculturality. As discussed in the previous section, normative equality is partly expressed by the ability to understand that one’s own culture is not better or worse: “When two persons have equal status in at least one normatively relevant respect, they must be treated equally with regard to this respect” (Gosepath 2011). The idea to replace teleological continuity with reconstructive concepts of contingency is strongly linked to the transcultural understanding of culture as a contingent, dynamic process. And third, the shift from centralized perspectives towards a multi-perspectivity and polycentric experience is considered a very efficient tool as

“...one of the best ways to grow beyond ethnocentrism is by gaining experiences in different cultures, which can lead to recognizing one’s own culture more clearly, as well as recognizing and respecting the cultures of others” (Glover & Friedman 2015: 20).

In this regard, experience in different cultures can not only be seen as a way to overcome ethnocentrism but also as a beneficial prerequisite of TCC.

Ethno-relativity is strongly linked to the idea of respect and non-judgmentalness towards cultural diversity. According to Trompenaars, the next step after recognizing a cultural dilemma is to respect that both sides have legitimate opinions (Trompenaars & Woolliams 2006: 6). As transculturality “sketches a different picture of the relation between cultures [...] not one of isolation and of conflict, but one of entanglement, intermixing and commonness [...] not separation, but exchange and interaction” (Welsch 1999), TCC can only come to life if individuals not only tolerate but also respect and act non-judgmentally towards cultural otherness. The mutual respect for cultural otherness that is thus generated is a desirable starting point for any transcultural competent person as it helps to identify commonalities. Another important prerequisite for applying respect and non-judgmentalness is the degree of openness of a person.

Attitudinal and behavioural openness is defined as the “flexibility of one’s attitudes and behaviours, which result in an individual’s ability to function effectively in diverse cross-national and intra-national settings” (Caligiuri et al. 2000: 29). Caligiuri et al. argue that showing a high degree of openness can

“ultimately help facilitate the acceptance of cultural diversity. Individuals higher in openness will have less rigid views of right and wrong, what is appropriate and inappropriate, etc. (Black 1990). Those who are less open ‘view their ideas, norms, and behaviour patterns as correct and others as incorrect ... and will make little effort to understand’ people from other cultures and backgrounds” (Black 1990 as cited in Caligiuri et al. 2000: 28).

In a next step, openness might enable new opportunities for perceiving unfamiliar ways of thinking as well as being receptive towards them. Through ethno-relativity, respect and non-judgmentalness, as well as openness, a person’s perception of cultural otherness shifts towards appreciation.

Barmeyer & Franklin (2016: 201) argue that “valuing (instead of only accepting) the characteristics and properties of other cultural groups”, these characteristics and properties “acquire the status of strength”. Any person facing an SCE should be able to value these culturally-different characteristics as qualities and strengths and consciously employ them as resources (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016: 201). At this point, a transculturally competent person would go one step further and not only employ culturally different characteristics as resources but combine them in order to “correspond best to the situation to be managed in the given context” (ibid.). As a result, appreciation of cultural diversity is an important sub-dimension of non-normativity and a vital component of TCC as it can foster cultural synergy.

To conclude: The sub-dimensions described in this section include ethno-relativity, respect and non-judgmentalness, openness as well as the appreciation of otherness. Together they form a core dimension of TCC, which is known as non-normativity. This dimension is an indispensable component for identifying commonalities, as well as for deriving synergistic solutions from cross-cultural interactions.

Dimension 4: Mindful interaction

When interacting across cultures, individuals have to be sensitive towards verbal and non-verbal ways of communication. This section introduces mindful interaction as a dimension of TCC. Mindful interaction comprises the sub-dimensions of mindfulness, interaction engagement and empathy.

According to Ting-Toomey (1999) ‘transcultural communication competence’ (TCCC) means that there is a body of knowledge and skills in the intercultural communication literature that is designed to help people communicate appropriately and effectively in a wide range of intercultural situations. Interestingly, for her, the combination of communication competence and a profound culture- and ethnic-specific knowledge “will yield a wealth of interaction skills that permit individuals to cross cultural boundaries flexibly and adaptively” (Ting-Toomey 1999: 261). For her, TCCC “refers to an integrative theory-practice approach enabling us to mindfully apply the intercultural knowledge we have learned in a sensitive manner”, therefore TCCC connects intercultural knowledge with

competent practice (ibid.). According to Ting-Toomey, TCCC consists of three components:

- The knowledge blocks component – This component, as discussed before, is essential for transculturally competent professionals and communicators, as it is the first step to entering a new culture (ibid.: 267). (This component has been discussed extensively in 5.2 and is validated as an important dimension of TCC.)
- The mindfulness component – This component describes the ability to attend one’s internal assumptions, cognitions and emotions, while simultaneously being able to attune to an other’s assumptions, cognitions and emotions. Individuals who consciously integrate new ideas or perspectives into their value system act mindfully and are mentally flexible. (ibid.: 268).
- The communication skills component – To Ting-Toomey (1999: 269) the transcultural communicator masters four core skills which are mindful observation, mindful listening, identity confirmation and collaborative dialogue. Later in this work, the term interaction engagement will be used to refer to these four described communication skills. Interaction engagement as part of mindful interaction is thus an extensive sub-dimension of TCC.

Additionally, to the three components of TCCC presented here, it is argued that empathy is another important dimension for the construction of TCC. In a cross-cultural context, empathy is considered to be an important dimension of TCC as it constitutes the “ability to take perspective or shift frame of reference vis-à-vis other cultures” (Bennett et al. 2003: 425). Transculturality, as illustrated before, enhances the idea of recognition and acknowledgement of the other in terms of his or her own perceptions and actions. Empathy plays a major role in the recognition and acknowledgement of the other as it helps to expand one’s world view “to include relevant constructs from other cultural world views” (Bennett et al. 2003: 425). In another definition of the Intercultural Competence Assessment (INCA; officially published by the EU 2004) empathy is the ability to “understand other people’s thoughts and feelings and see and feel a situation through their eyes”. Therefore, including other cultural world views in one’s own reasoning opens up solution spaces and new ways of thinking. If the process of shifting perspectives is deepened and habitualized,

it can become the basis of a person's ability to identify commonalities. Finding commonalities and reconciling differences can only happen through continuous deliberative and non-punctual processes. Applying TCC in order to generate reconciled solutions and shared values is thus a dynamic process.

To conclude: Mindful interaction is considered an essential dimension of TCC. With its sub-dimensions mindfulness, interaction engagement and empathy it constitutes a component of TCC that is particularly important for the actual face-to-face engagement of individuals and organizations from distinct cultures.

*Dimension 5: Focus on commonalities³ –
Reconciling cultural diversity*

As discussed above, “transculturally competent professionals need to do more than be able to cope with cultural differences; they need to create a synergy that reconciles dilemmas in new ways” (Glover & Friedman 2015: 61). Trompenaars (1993: 200) proposed a perspective that is very similar to the one of Glover and Friedman, as he states:

“Once we are aware of our own mental models and cultural predispositions, and can respect and understand that those of another culture are legitimately different, then it becomes possible to reconcile differences.”

For Trompenaars, reconciliation plays a significant role, as it is “the art of coming to some sort of agreement” (Trompenaar & Woolliams 2006: 6). However, TCC is more than adapting to another culture or respecting it as legitimately different; TCC is much more the ability to take advantage of diversity regardless of whether it relates to one specific culture or multiple differing cultures (Trompenaars 1993). Seeing cultural diversity as a strength and not as a source for conflicts, might lead to intercultural synergy and cultural complementarity. In both these concepts, culturality is seen as a dynamic process of joint construction (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016: 200):

³ The dimension „Focus on commonalities“ is precisely elaborated in the next chapter of this book by Sebastian Urthaler (2019: 113-141).

“Cultural complementarity describes a state in which particular and seemingly contradictory, but in themselves equally valuable, value-based characteristics (such as attitudes, norms, behavioural patterns, practices) of individuals from different groups complement each other to form a whole.”

Here, complementarity serves not only as an approach to identify commonalities, it is also seen as a management tool, in that it might lead to enhanced performance, “as the characteristics best suited to the context, task and individuals involved are employed” (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016: 200).

Transculturally competent interactors – through applying self-awareness, cultural knowledge and mindful interaction – develop the ability to identify commonalities and, through this process, derive synergistic solutions. Intercultural synergy, in the context of international management, is the output that arises when the joint actions of individuals from different cultures lead to a higher quality than the sum of individual actions; these synergistic actions have the potential to be creative and innovative (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016: 203f.). Individuals and organizations which integrate and use contrasting values act synergistically if they are able to reach a fusion of the opposites into a single concept (Maslow 1964: 163). One way to reach this fusion (or synergistic solutions as described before) is by understanding that new ways of doing things must not replace previous ways (Glover & Friedman 2015: 62). Collins & Porras (1994) argue that leaders often deal with a widespread problem called the “tyranny of the OR” (Gilsa 2019, Urthaler 2019), leading to a situation in which decision-makers believe that things must be done one way OR the other. The OR, however, prevents adaptive responses and acts as a cultural trap that limits one’s ability to see alternatives (Barmeyer & Franklin 2015: 63). Collins & Porras (1994) provided a possible solution to overcome the “tyranny of the OR”: the yin/yang concept of Chinese philosophy. It is a perfect example of how opposites are complementary and not contradictory, and therefore represents what Collins and Porras call “the genius of the AND”. It is the ability to understand and embrace both extremes of a dimension: “Long term AND short term, profits AND good for the world, low costs AND quality are all possible if the OR can be replaced with the AND” (Collins & Porras 1994 as cited in Glover & Friedman 2015: 63). For Glover & Friedman this form of combining ex-

tremes, integrating values and finding commonalities through the “genius of the AND” is a pro-active strategy applied by transculturally competent professionals and is therefore a core component of TCC:

“Transculturally competent professionals avoid the cultural traps of linear and single-option perspectives. They employ pro-active strategies, rather than reactive ones. Alternative futures are continuously evaluated and anticipated as future possibilities. They are able to see options and find ways to reconcile and realize solutions for cultural dilemmas” (Glover & Friedman 2015: 133).

To conclude on this section: A transculturally competent person focuses on commonalities; through a process of reconciliation and the application of the genius of the AND, creative and innovative synergies can be derived from cultural diversity. The focus on commonalities is thus an essential core dimension of TCC.

Dimension 6: Reconciled solutions translated into synergistic actions

As Glover & Friedman (2015: 77) state: “Transcultural competence requires knowledge of how to make change happen, and skills in doing so, so that the new-box solution will be accepted and embraced by the stakeholders.” Glover & Friedman (2015) introduce the term “creating new boxes” to describe this innovative process, as it illustrates the solution to a cultural dilemma with seemingly opposing values. Reconciling and realizing appropriate solutions to cultural differences and then translating these reconciled solutions into actual behaviour is thus essential to being transculturally competent (Glover & Friedman 2015: 62). The success of a communication and reconciliation process of a cultural dilemma is measured according to its appropriateness and effectiveness. Barmeyer & Franklin (2016: 138) state that appropriateness refers to the degree to which the interaction is congruent with the relationship of the interactors and the situation and context in which they find themselves, whereas effectiveness refers to the degree to which they achieve their goals. Or as Ting-Toomey (1999: 263) puts it: “When we act appropriately in a cultural scene, our culturally proper behaviours can facilitate communication effectiveness”. In this regard, Ting-Toomey (1999) introduces a third criterion that might be useful for measuring a successful transcultural

communication process. Additionally, to the “appropriateness- and effectiveness criterion”, she adds the satisfaction criterion:

“When both communicators and interested parties experience communication appropriateness and effectiveness plus satisfaction, the process and the outcome of communication can be deemed successful.”

Ting-Toomey (1999: 265) argues that “individuals tend to be more satisfied in interaction scenes in which their desired identity images are elicited or validated”. She wants to put a focus on the fact that addressing cultural values through different verbal styles can arouse different levels of satisfaction in different cultural communities (ibid.). Here, the awareness for the different cultural dimensions (as discussed in previous sections) can again serve as a tool to ensure transculturally-competent communication. Ting-Toomey is not the only scholar to extend the “appropriateness-effectiveness-model” with a third criterion. Spencer-Oatey & Franklin (2009: 51) introduced the term “intercultural interaction competence” (ICIC) meaning not only the ability to communicate and interact effectively and appropriately, but also the ability to handle psychological demands and dynamic outcomes of intercultural encounters. Both concepts, TCCC and ICIC, overlap with one particular component of TCC, namely the culture-interactional perspective that focuses on the outcome of an SCE. This outcome, ideally, is appropriate, effective, satisfactory and represents a creative and synergistic solution in the form of a “new box”.

To conclude: TCC implies that a person has the capability to translate reconciled solutions into actual behaviour. The implemented synergistic solution is evaluated according to its appropriateness, effectiveness and its degree of satisfaction and creativity.

5. Definition of Transcultural Competence

Summing up the six dimensions that were identified throughout the previous section, TCC can be defined as a cooperation-based ability to identify commonalities and to derive reconciled solutions in a culturally-diverse environment; it comprises the perception that SCEs have a synergistic potential, from which transculturally-competent persons can derive creative solutions. This competence is based on the understanding that cul-

Table 1: Core dimensions and sub-dimensions of TCC

Core dimensions of TCC	Sub-dimensions of TCC	Competence explanation
Self-awareness	Meta-cognition	Self-reflects on one's own thinking, feelings and behaviours. Understands that culturality has shaped every human being, including one's self. Willing to learn a wider range of behaviour patterns. Ready to try out different behaviours to discover those which are most successful and appropriate.
Cultural knowledge	Cultural awareness Cultural motivation	Is aware of different cultural dimensions and cultural polar extremes. Takes time and interest to learn about unfamiliar cultures and deepens understanding of those already known. Employs various information-gathering strategies for understanding the specific context.
Non-normativity	Ethno-relativity Respect/Non-judgmentalness Openness Appreciation of otherness	Does not consider one's own culture as better or worse. Is sensitive to how people see the world differently and respects their world views. Likes to work with colleagues and partners from diverse backgrounds. Is keen to explore and understand other peoples' behaviour. Values cultural otherness as a potential source for creativity and innovation.
Mindful Interaction	Mindful attention Interaction engagement Empathy	Attends to one's own internal assumptions cognitions and emotions and simultaneously attunes to other people's assumptions cognitions and emotions. Observes and listens attentively. Is sensitive to people's self-image and addresses their desired identity when interacting with them.
Focus on commonalities	Collaborative dialogue Genius of the AND Reconciliation	Focuses on commonalities by being inwardly reflexive and outwardly reflective. Receptive to new ideas, and typically seeks to extend his or her understanding into new and unfamiliar fields. Finds solutions by embracing extremes. Seeks fresh ideas and approaches in cultural diversity.
Realization of reconciled solutions* <i>(*only assessable through qualitative evaluation of interaction outcomes)</i>	Appropriateness Effectiveness Satisfaction Creativity Synergy	Leverages identified commonalities. Derives and realizes "new boxes" that represent creative and synergistic solutions. Creates new alternatives, uses a careful and systemic approach when facilitating groups to ensure that different cultural perspectives are not suppressed, but are properly understood and used in the creative solution-oriented process.

Source: Own representation.

tural values are not static but multi-dimensional (Wieland 2018). TCC is a self-reflective dynamic process that consists of avoiding inner-directedness, enabling non-normativity through ethno-relativity and mindful interaction. Being able to reconcile various worldviews by engaging in multi-perspectivity and applying the genius of the AND results in shared values that will generate cultural synergy and complementarity.

Summarizing from the literature review above, we learn that TCC consists of six core dimensions, which are self-awareness, cultural knowledge, non-normative openness, mindful interaction, focus on commonalities and synergy/realization of reconciled solutions. These six core dimensions embrace eighteen sub-dimensions (see Table 1).

6. Construction of the TCCQ – A multi-component approach

After having defined the core- and sub-dimensions of TCC, the next task is to generate items that are sufficient to assess them. This requires the construction of a survey which is valid and reliable in assessing TCC dimensions. By creating an assessment tool that is valid and reliable to explore the various dimensions of TCC, it eventually becomes possible to verify or falsify the hypothesis stating that biculturals possess a higher degree of TCC than monoculturals. A variety of existing assessment tools in the field of intercultural interaction competence (ICIC) entail dimensions similar to TCC-specific dimensions (Gilsa 2019). The approach of this work is to find valid and reliable existing ICIC scales which can measure each sub-dimension of TCC and assemble parts of these existing scales into a new TCC scale. As TCC is a relatively new, widening field of ICIC research, it is expected that not all dimensions of TCC can be assessed through existing scales. A new TCC scale should ideally include all six TCC dimensions and address the cognitive, affective and behavioural dimension of an individual. As elaborated by Gilsa (2019), existing IC dimensions could be useful to identify overlapping sub-dimensions in order to derive items that are sufficient for the assessment of TCC. Therefore, the approach for the present study is to analyse different dimensions of IC, and to include those that are of relevance for the assessment of TCC.

In this paper, it is assumed that existing ICIC scales formed through an exploratory factor analysis, and items providing a high factor loading, are suitable to predict and test intersecting observed variables (dimen-

sions) of TCC. By integrating scales that underwent a factor analysis, the current research provides an assessment instrument that can measure the sub-dimensions of TCC in a reliable manner. At this point it should be mentioned that, despite the non-application of a factor analysis (which organizes the items into constructs), this work will later on present a reliability test (Cronbach's alpha test) to determine how well each of the presented constructs hold together. If the TCCQ is reliable, participants who are identical – at least in regard to their TCC – should get the same score, and participants that are different should get a completely different score (Field 2009). Further details will be provided in the statistics section of this work. Again, it needs to be re-emphasized that more extensive research on TCC and its assessment might require the creation of completely new items. This will also require a factor analysis for the questionnaire construct as a whole. In the following, items will be presented that form a scale for each of the six dimensions of TCC.

For the TCCQ, items have been chosen from the following existing scales: For TCC's dimension 'self-awareness' a 3-item scale by Bartel-Radic & Gianneloni (2016) has been chosen. The scale is taken from an assessment tool that aims to assess the cross-cultural competence (CCC) of individuals. It is suitable for integration into the TCCQ, as it includes a meta-cognitive dimension.

Table 2: Items applicable to assess TCC Dimension 1 'Self-awareness'

Self-awareness
Metacognition (Source: CCC by Bartel-Radic & Gianneloni 2016)
I am very interested in how my own thinking works when I make judgments about people or attach causes to their behaviour. (0.58)
I really enjoy analyzing the reasons or causes for people's behaviour. (0.63)
I have thought a lot about the way that different parts of my personality influence other parts. (0.74)

Source: Own representation.

For the assessment of TCC's dimension 'cultural knowledge', two scales that intend to measure 'cultural motivation' and 'cultural awareness' have been taken from the Cross-Cultural Orientation Inventory (CCOI; Mittal 2012).

Table 3: Items applicable to assess TCC Dimension 2 ‘Cultural Knowledge’

Cultural Knowledge
Cultural motivation (Source: CCOI by Mittal 2012)
I am happy to interact with people from different cultures. (0.83)
I feel I should make friends with people from diverse cultures. (0.75)
I should know about other cultures to be fair to people from different cultures. (0.87)
Cultural awareness (Source: CCOI)
I know the cultural values and beliefs of other cultures. (0.75)
I know about body language practices of cultures other than mine. (0.74)
I am open-minded to people from other cultures. (0.84)
People from some cultures avoid eye contact while talking. (0.55)

Source: Own representation.

In order to assess ‘non-normativity’ in this work, items of the cross-cultural competence scale (CCC, Bartel-Radic & Gianelloni 2016) to assess ‘ethno-relativity’, items of the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS, Chen & Starosta 2000) to assess ‘respect otherness/non-judgmentalness’ and items of the Attitudinal and Behavioural Openness Scale (ABOS, Caligiuri et al. 2000) to assess ‘openness’, are going to be merged.

Table 4: Items applicable to assess TCC Dimension 3 ‘Non-normativity’

Non-normativity
Ethno-relativity (Source: CCC by Bartel-Radic & Gianelloni 2016)
In my country, we have reached a level of “moral” development that other countries ought to reach as well. (0.82) (reverse-coded)
The dominant values in my country are good and should be favoured to develop elsewhere. (0.81) (reverse-coded)
I prefer to be with people who are like me. (0.16) (reverse-coded)
Respect otherness/Non-judgmentalness (Source: ISS by Chen & Starosta 2000)
I respect the values of people from different cultures. (0.67)
I respect the ways people from different cultures behave. (0.68)
I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures. (0.62) (reverse-coded)
I can tell when I have upset my culturally-distinct counterpart during our interaction. (0.60)
I don’t like to be with people from different cultures. (0.56)
I think my culture is better than other cultures. (0.50)

(Attitudinal) Openness (Source: ABOS by Caligiuri et al. 2000)
An overseas assignment would be a fantastic opportunity for me and/or my family. (0.70)
Traveling the world is a priority in my life. (0.64)
I hope the company I work for, (or will work for), will send me on an overseas assignment. (0.58)
Other cultures fascinate me. (0.51)
I would host a foreign exchange student for one year. (0.43)
Foreign language skills should be taught in elementary school. (0.38)

Source: Own representation.

The scale to assess the TCC dimension ‘mindful interaction’ has been constructed by three existing scales: The mindful attention awareness scale (MAAS, Osman et al. 2016) to assess TCC’s sub-dimension ‘mindful attention’, the intercultural sensitivity scale (ISS) developed by Chen and Starosta (2000) to assess ‘interaction engagement’ and the CCC constructed by Bartel-Radic & Giannelloni (2016) to assess empathy.

Table 5: Items applicable to assess TCC Dimension 4 ‘Mindful Interaction’

Mindful Interaction
Mindful Attention (Source: MAAS by Osman et al. 2016)
It seems I am ‘running on automatic’ without much awareness. (0.82)
I run through activities without being really attentive to them. (0.83)
I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I am doing right now to get there. (0.71)
I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I’m doing. (0.75)
I find myself doing things without paying attention. (0.75)
Interaction Engagement (Source: ISS by Chen & Starosta 2000)
I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me. (0.70)
I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons. (0.66)
I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts. (0.53)
I often give positive responses to my culturally-different counterpart during our interaction. (0.52)
I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or non-verbal cues. (0.52)

Empathy (Source: CCC by Bartel-Radic & Gianneloni 2016)
I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at both. (0.65)
I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision. (0.86)
When I am upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his or her shoes" for a while. (0.66)
I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how this looks from their perspective. (0.59)

Source: Own representation.

The dimension "focus on commonalities" is one of the newly derived TCC-specific dimensions that have not yet been integrated in existing IC models. Together with its sub-dimensions (collaborative dialogue, genius of the AND, reconciliation), the dimension focus on commonalities can be considered to be a rather new dimension in the world of existing IC dimensions (Urthaler 2019).

Having the competence to "realize cultural synergy" and to reach reconciled solutions is the ultimate goal of any transculturally-competent person. However, it is highly questionable whether this dimension of TCC could possibly be assessed through an item-based scale. Whether or not a person is able to realize transculturally-reconciled solutions is highly dependent on two things:

- The degree to which a person is equipped with transcultural competences as described in TCC-dimensions 1-5.
- The external factors of a cultural dilemma that can be understood, shaped and leveraged by a transcultural competent professional, but never fully controlled.

Therefore, the assessment of a person's ability to realize reconciled solutions is rather outcome-dependent and should be based on a contextual post-interaction assessment (Gilsa 2019). For the comparative ("biculturals vs. monoculturals") questionnaire on TCC, the dimension 'realization' will not be assessed.

The various identified scales are the basic construction of the TCCQ. Together they build a 39-item questionnaire. All of the 39 items show sufficient, or even excellent, factor loadings (except for the item "I prefer to be with people who are like me" (0.16); sub-dimension ethno-relativity;

reliability calculation will be presented afterwards) and are able to assess the dimensions to the extent as described above.

For the reasons mentioned, the questionnaire presented here might not provide a full 360-degree assessment on TCC. Yet it is able to assess essential components of TCC in a credible manner: Participants who are able to reach higher scores in the TCCQ might not be “transculturally competent” per se, but they certainly have better prerequisites for becoming transculturally competent than other people.

7. *Quantitative study*

7.1 *Description of the sample*

The population for this study was professionals (N = 63) from various parts of the world, including Brazil, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Sweden, Thailand and the United States. The questionnaire was provided in English, guaranteeing identical content for each participant. The participants fell into one of three categories to be analysed: (1) thirty-six biculturals with strong intercultural exposure (57%), (2) ten monoculturals with limited international experience (16%) and (3) seventeen monoculturals who had not travelled internationally (27%). 34 (54%) participants classified themselves as holding a managerial position or having responsibilities for staff, whereas 29 (46%) participants do not hold a leadership role. The participants show a strong variety in years of professional experience, where almost 40% of participants have more than 20 years of experience. The second largest group (31,7%) represented in this sample are young professionals with up to 5 years of experience. The age of participants ranges from 25 to older than 56. The examined population consisted of 50,8% participants aged between 25-35, 7,9% of participants aged between 36-45, 15,9% aged between 46-55 and 25,4% of participants who are over 56. Asked for the number of languages that participants speak, the analysis of the sample shows that approximately half of the participants speak two languages or fewer, whereas the other half of participants speak three or more languages.

Of the participants sampled, nineteen (30,2%) were raised in a culture outside their parents' culture for a significant part of their life, while forty-four (69,8%) were only raised in a single culture. Asked for permanent

residence outside the participant's country of birth, thirty-four (54%) participants answered that they have permanently lived in another culture, whereas twenty-nine (46%) participants have not. Of those participants who have lived in another culture, three (4.8%) lived up to one year, eight (12.7%) lived 2 years, four (6.3%) lived 3 years, four (6.3%) lived 4-8 years, four (6.3%) lived 8-12 years and eleven (17.5%) lived more than 12 years in another host culture. Twenty-four (38.1%) participants classified themselves as 'frequently moving from one country to another' whereas thirty-nine (61.9%) participants do not frequently move between different cultures. Of all 63 participants, seven (11.1%) stated they had parents who originated from two different cultures and are therefore cultural hybrids. Asked whether participants integrate two different cultural schemes in their everyday life (e.g., if they speak languages, go to religious sites, take part in cultural celebrations that are not domestic and unusual in their country of residence), thirty-five (55.6%) responded positively whereas twenty-eight (44.4%) answered the question negatively.

7.2 Calculating Cronbach's Alpha – Reliability analysis

Each of the nine sub-dimensions, with their dependent variables described by the 39 items of the TCCQ, was subjected to a reliability analysis by calculating Cronbach's alpha. In the following, the Cronbach's alpha for each of the nine scales of the TCCQ – for both biculturals and monoculturals – is presented. The reliability analysis has been conducted per group, examining the Cronbach's alpha of the scales applied to biculturals and monoculturals (see Tables 6 and 7).

The reliability analysis has shown that most scales possess a sufficient Cronbach's alpha. In the literature, the acceptable Cronbach's alpha remains widely discussed. Nunally (1967) recommended a Cronbach's alpha of 0.50 to 0.60 for the early stages of research, 0.80 for basic research tools, and 0.90 as the "minimal tolerable estimate" for clinical purposes, with an ideal of 0.95 (Nunally 1967 as cited in Streiner 2003). According to Nunally's (1967) rule for early stages of research, the scales used in the TCCQ can be seen as reliable and internally consistent. However, for more advanced research on TCC assessments, higher Cronbach's alphas would be desirable. The reliability analysis in SPSS showed that most items appeared to be worthy of retention, resulting in a decrease in the

alpha if deleted. The one exception to this was item 27: The elimination of item 27 increased the alpha from $\alpha = 0.535$ to $\alpha = 0.901$ for monoculturals and from $\alpha = 0.521$ to $\alpha = 0.699$ for biculturals. As such, removal of this item should be considered, particularly if taking into account that the low factor loading for this item has already been disputable, as described in the previous section.

Table 6: Cronbach's alpha – biculturals

Biculturals			
Core dimension	Sub-dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Self-awareness	Meta-Cognition	0,532	3
Mindful interaction	Mindful Attention	0,732	5
	Interaction Engagement	0,579	5
	Empathy	0,767	4
Cultural knowledge	Cultural Motivation	0,687	3
	Cultural Awareness	0,606	4
Non-normative openness	Ethno-relativity	0,699	2
	Respect for Otherness	0,769	6
	Openness	0,608	6

Source: Own representation.

Table 7: Cronbach's alpha – monoculturals

Monoculturals			
Core dimension	Sub-dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Self-awareness	Meta-Cognition	0,636	3
Mindful interaction	Mindful Attention	0,696	5
	Interaction Engagement	0,658	5
	Empathy	0,785	4
Cultural knowledge	Cultural Motivation	0,656	3
	Cultural Awareness	0,629	4
Non-normative openness	Ethno-relativity	0,901	2
	Respect for Otherness	0,508	6
	Openness	0,733	6

Source: Own representation.

7.3 Descriptive statistics of the TCCQ scale's items

In the following, the means and standard deviations of biculturals and monoculturals will be presented separately from each other and items will be ranked from strongest mean response to lowest mean response. This allows us to see which items scored highest in the two different groups. For a better overview of the descriptive statistics, the complete ranking of items can be found below (see Table 8). For reasons described previously, item number 27 has been eliminated and won't be considered in the following statistical evaluation (items from number 28 on are renumbered, e.g., item 28 now becomes item 27, item 29 becomes item 28 etc. as depicted in table 8). In Table 8 it can be observed that for the group of monoculturals the item with the highest mean response was item number 23: "I am open-minded to people from other cultures" ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 0.542$, cultural awareness sub-dimension). The item with the lowest mean response was item number 7: "I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I'm doing." ($M = 1.96$, $SD = 0.940$, mindful attention sub-dimension). Table 8 also indicates that, within the group of monoculturals, quite a high number of items (16) show a standard deviation higher than 1.0; these items are: 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 22, 25, 26, 29, 32, 33, 35, 37. The standard deviation is a number that indicates the extent to which a set of numbers lie apart (van den Berg 2017). Higher standard deviations mean there is a broader set of given answers (McMurray 2007: 46), indicating a large amount of variation within the group of monoculturals.

Table 8: Mean and standard deviation of monoculturals

Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Item	Item No#	Dimension
4,70	0,542	27	I am open-minded to people from other cultures.	23	Cultural Awareness
4,59	0,572	27	I don't like to be with people from different cultures.	31	Respect for Otherness
4,44	0,698	27	Other cultures fascinate me.	36	Openness
4,44	0,712	25	I should know about other cultures to be fair to people from different cultures.	20	Cultural Motivation
4,41	0,572	27	I respect the values of people from different cultures.	27	Respect for Otherness
4,36	0,860	25	I am happy to interact with people from different cultures.	18	Cultural Motivation
4,30	0,912	27	Foreign language skills should be taught in elementary school.	38	Openness
4,22	0,847	27	I really enjoy analyzing the reasons or causes for people's behavior.	2	Meta-Cognition

4,19	0,834	27	I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.	28	Respect for Otherness
4,19	1,210	27	I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.	29	Respect for Otherness
4,19	1,111	27	I think my culture is better than other cultures.	32	Respect for Otherness
4,12	0,927	25	I feel I should make friends with people from diverse cultures.	19	Cultural Motivation
4,07	1,107	27	An overseas assignment would be a fantastic opportunity for me and/or my family.	33	Openness
4,07	0,829	27	Traveling the world is a priority in my life.	34	Openness
4,04	1,091	27	I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.	10	Interaction Engagement
4,04	1,126	27	I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at both.	14	Empathy
4,04	1,126	27	I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.	15	Empathy
4,04	1,126	27	I hope the company I work for, (or will work for), will send me on an overseas assignment.	35	Openness
3,93	0,874	27	I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how this looks from their perspective.	17	Empathy
3,89	0,641	27	I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.	13	Interaction Engagement
3,89	0,892	27	I know the cultural values and beliefs of other cultures.	21	Cultural Awareness
3,85	0,949	27	When I am upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his or her shoes" for a while.	16	Empathy
3,85	0,864	27	People from some cultures avoid eye contact while talking.	24	Cultural Awareness
3,74	1,130	27	I would host a foreign exchange student for one year.	37	Openness
3,63	0,926	27	I am very interested in how my own thinking works when I make judgments about people or attach causes to their behavior.	1	Meta-Cognition
3,63	0,884	27	I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.	12	Interaction Engagement
3,56	1,155	27	I know about body language practices of cultures other than mine.	22	Cultural Awareness
3,48	0,893	27	I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.	9	Interaction Engagement
3,41	1,010	27	I have thought a lot about the way that different parts of my personality influence other parts.	3	Meta-Cognition
3,37	1,079	27	I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.	11	Interaction Engagement
3,07	1,141	27	The dominant values in my country are good and should be favored to develop elsewhere.	26	Ethno-relativity
3,00	1,109	27	In my country, we have reached a level of "moral" development that other countries ought to reach as well.	25	Ethno-relativity
2,52	0,935	27	I can tell when I have upset my culturally-distinct counterpart during our interaction.	30	Respect for Otherness
2,26	1,059	27	I run through activities without being really attentive to them.	5	Mindful Attention
2,19	0,879	27	It seems I am 'running on automatic' without much awareness.	4	Mindful Attention
2,15	1,064	27	I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I am doing right now to get there.	6	Mindful Attention
2,11	1,188	27	I find myself doing things without paying attention.	8	Mindful Attention
1,96	0,940	27	I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I'm doing.	7	Mindful Attention

Source: Own representation.

Now, the focus turns towards biculturals. The item with the highest mean response was item number 18: “I am happy to interact with people from different cultures.” ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 0.439$, cultural motivation sub-dimension). The item with the lowest mean response was item number 8: “I find myself doing things without paying attention.” ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 0.841$, mindful attention sub-dimension). For a better overview, the complete ranking for the highest mean responses of biculturals can be found in Table 9. For both biculturals and monoculturals, the lowest scores have been accounted for the “mindful attention” sub-dimension. In contrast to monoculturals, biculturals seem to answer more consistently, as only six items show a standard deviation of 1.0 or more. These items are 4, 6, 10, 24, 26 and 31. This could imply that the group of monoculturals investigated might be much more heterogeneous than the group of biculturals.

Table 9: Mean and standard deviation of biculturals

Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Item	Item No#	Dimension
4,75	0,439	36	I am happy to interact with people from different cultures.	18	Cultural Motivation
4,71	0,458	35	Foreign language skills should be taught in elementary school.	38	Openness
4,66	0,539	35	I am open-minded to people from other cultures.	23	Cultural Awareness
4,61	0,599	36	I should know about other cultures to be fair to people from different cultures.	20	Cultural Motivation
4,61	0,549	36	I respect the values of people from different cultures.	27	Respect for Otherness
4,47	0,654	36	I really enjoy analyzing the reasons or causes for people's behavior.	2	Meta-Cognition
4,47	0,774	36	I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.	29	Respect for Otherness
4,47	1,000	36	I don't like to be with people from different cultures.	31	Respect for Otherness
4,46	0,611	35	Other cultures fascinate me.	36	Openness
4,44	0,786	34	I believe that there are 2 sides to every question and try to look at both.	14	Empathy
4,42	0,732	36	I feel I should make friends with people from diverse cultures.	19	Cultural Motivation
4,39	0,728	36	I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.	28	Respect for Otherness
4,37	0,843	35	An overseas assignment would be a fantastic opportunity for me and/or my family.	33	Openness
4,35	0,691	34	I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.	15	Empathy
4,28	1,137	36	I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.	10	Interaction Engagement
4,28	0,914	36	I think my culture is better than other cultures.	32	Respect for Otherness
4,21	0,770	34	I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how this looks from their perspective.	17	Empathy

4,20	0,833	35	I hope the company I work for, (or will work for), will send me on an overseas assignment.	35	Openness
4,14	0,810	35	I know the cultural values and beliefs of other cultures.	21	Cultural Awareness
4,09	0,742	35	Traveling the world is a priority in my life.	34	Openness
4,08	0,874	36	I am very interested in how my own thinking works when I make judgments about people or attach causes to their behavior.	1	Meta-Cognition
4,06	1,056	35	People from some cultures avoid eye contact while talking.	24	Cultural Awareness
3,97	0,654	36	I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.	13	Interaction Engagement
3,94	0,924	36	I have thought a lot about the way that different parts of my personality influence other parts.	3	Meta-Cognition
3,92	0,806	36	I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.	9	Interaction Engagement
3,77	0,910	35	I know about body language practices of cultures other than mine.	22	Cultural Awareness
3,75	0,874	36	I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.	11	Interaction Engagement
3,74	0,931	34	When I am upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his or her shoes" for a while.	16	Empathy
3,69	0,822	36	I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.	12	Interaction Engagement
3,60	0,914	35	I would host a foreign exchange student for one year.	37	Openness
3,42	1,052	36	The dominant values in my country are good and should be favored to develop elsewhere.	26	Ethno-relativity
3,11	0,919	36	In my country, we have reached a level of "moral" development that other countries ought to reach as well.	25	Ethno-relativity
2,56	0,773	36	I can tell when I have upset my culturally-distinct counterpart during our interaction.	30	Respect for Otherness
2,53	1,207	36	I get so focused on the goal I want to achieve that I lose touch with what I am doing right now to get there.	6	Mindful Attention
2,50	1,159	36	It seems I am 'running on automatic' without much awareness.	4	Mindful Attention
2,11	0,919	36	I run through activities without being really attentive to them.	5	Mindful Attention
1,92	0,996	36	I do jobs or tasks automatically, without being aware of what I'm doing.	7	Mindful Attention
1,92	0,841	36	I find myself doing things without paying attention.	8	Mindful Attention

Source: Own representation.

7.4 Compound structure of the nine scales

In the next step of this research, the goal is to gain a better overview of the data. For this reason, the items for each of the nine scales (as presented previously) are compounded. The results of the compounded sub-dimensions are shown in Table 9.

Table 10: Mean and standard deviation according to groups

	Groups	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Metacognition	Monocultural	27	3,75	0,71
	Bicultural	36	4,17	0,59
Mindful Attention	Monocultural	27	2,13	0,69
	Bicultural	36	2,19	0,72
Interaction Engagement	Monocultural	27	3,68	0,61
	Bicultural	36	3,92	0,53
Empathy	Monocultural	27	3,96	0,80
	Bicultural	36	4,16	0,60
Cultural motivation	Monocultural	27	4,32	0,64
	Bicultural	36	4,59	0,47
Cultural awareness	Monocultural	27	4,00	0,61
	Bicultural	36	4,16	0,57
Ethno relativity	Monocultural	27	3,04	1,07
	Bicultural	36	3,26	0,87
Respect otherness/ Non judgmentalness	Monocultural	27	4,01	0,49
	Bicultural	36	4,13	0,55
Openness	Monocultural	27	4,11	0,64
	Bicultural	36	4,20	0,49

Source: Own representation.

8. Testing of the hypothesis

In this section the following hypothesis will be tested: “H1: Biculturals show a higher overall degree of TCC, compared to monoculturals”.

This hypothesis will be analysed by applying an independent T-test. An independent T-test tests the difference between the two means of two groups (Glen 2017) here, monoculturals and biculturals. The T-test also shows how significant the differences are and whether these differences could have happened by chance (ibid.). A significance is usually given when the p-value is 0.05 or smaller. For example, a p-value of .01 means there is only a 1% probability that the results from an experiment happened by chance (ibid.). In the following, the table of the independent samples T-test (as calculated in SPSS) is presented:

Table 11: Independent Samples Test Box

		Levene's Test for quality of Variance		T-Test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the difference	
									Lower	Upper
Meta-cognition	Equal variance assumed	0,647	0,424	-2,520	61	0,014	-0,41358	0,16413	-0,74178	-0,08538
	Equal variance not assumed			-2,457	50,281	0,018	-0,41358	0,16833	-0,75164	-0,07552
Mindful Attention	Equal variance assumed	0,391	0,534	-0,339	61	0,736	-0,06111	0,18008	-0,42120	0,29897
	Equal variance not assumed			-0,341	57,187	0,734	-0,06111	0,17915	-0,41983	0,29760
Interaction Engagement	Equal variance assumed	0,444	0,507	-1,673	61	0,099	-0,24074	0,14388	-0,52845	0,04696
	Equal variance not assumed			-1,643	51,947	0,107	-0,24074	0,14657	-0,53485	0,05337
Empathy	Equal variance assumed	2,536	0,116	-1,142	61	0,258	-0,20139	0,17641	-0,55414	0,15137
	Equal variance not assumed			-1,097	46,613	0,278	-0,20139	0,18360	-0,57083	0,16805
Cultural motivation	Equal variance assumed	1,549	0,218	-1,945	61	0,056	-0,27160	0,13965	-0,55085	0,00764
	Equal variance not assumed			-1,864	46,032	0,069	-0,27160	0,14568	-0,56484	0,02163
Cultural awareness	Equal variance assumed	0,050	0,824	-1,084	61	0,283	-0,16204	0,14952	-0,46102	0,13695
	Equal variance not assumed			-1,072	53,752	0,289	-0,16204	0,15116	-0,46513	0,14106
Ethno relativity	Equal variance assumed	1,219	0,274	-0,928	61	0,357	-0,22685	0,24438	-0,71552	0,26181
	Equal variance not assumed			-0,900	48,913	0,372	-0,22685	0,25201	-0,73331	0,27961
Respect otherness/ Non judgmentalness	Equal variance assumed	2,042	0,158	-0,883	61	0,381	-0,11728	0,13286	-0,38296	0,14839
	Equal variance not assumed			-0,898	59,129	0,373	-0,11728	0,13066	-0,37873	0,14416
Openness	Equal variance assumed	1,807	0,184	-0,609	61	0,544	-0,08704	0,14281	-0,37260	0,19852
	Equal variance not assumed			-0,587	47,141	0,560	-0,08704	0,14831	-0,38538	0,21131

Source: Own representation.

In Table 11 we can see that all T-scores are negative, indicating a high degree of similarity between biculturals and monoculturals with regard to their mean responses. (This could also be observed in Table 10.) The

values in the “Sig. column” are all greater than 0.05, which means that the variability in the two groups is not significantly different (van den Berg 2017). However, a more detailed explanation can be derived from the “Sig. (2-tailed) column”, which depicts the p-values relevant for the testing of the hypotheses (ibid.).

Results based on the nine compounded sub-dimensions indicate that there is one significant difference between the two groups in regard to the sub-dimensions of TCC. This one significant difference is found in the sub-dimension “meta-cognition”, where monoculturals had a mean of 3.75 and standard deviation of 0.71, while biculturals had a mean of 4.17, and standard deviation of 0.59. In this case the p-value is $p = 0.014$ with $p < 0.05$ and $t(61) = -2.52$; therefore, the mean between the two groups is significantly different: Biculturals show a higher degree of “metacognition” than monoculturals. As the results of monoculturals do not show higher mean responses for other compounded sub-dimensions, biculturals show a higher overall degree of TCC.

9. *Limitations*

The empirical study presented here allows basic assumptions on the correlation between the bicultural biography of an individual and his or her transcultural competence. Despite the theoretical embeddedness, the comprehensive framework to assess TCC and the profound statistical analysis that has been conducted, the study also shows several limitations.

The study examined bicultural’s and monocultural’s specifications with regard to their TCC. It was assumed that, because of their biography, biculturals show higher degrees of TCC. Yet the question remains whether all biculturals who participated in the survey were in fact bicultural. The term “bicultural” presupposes that a person internalizes two or more cultural schemes. It is still difficult to assess to which persons this trait applies. In the present study, biculturals were identified according to the definitions provided in the literature (chapter 4). Hence biculturals were selected qua definition and not according to their actual ability to apply two different cultural schemes. Further research on the subject might have to integrate more comprehensive assessments on whether a person actually *is* bicultural and does not only *appear* to be. Nguyen &

Benet-Martinez (2007) list a variety of uni-dimensional- and bi-dimensional test scales that could be of use for a more comprehensive identification of biculturals. For future research, a more refined pre-selection of biculturals could lead to stronger statistical significance in the data analysis.

Another limitation of this study is the language. The TCCQ was provided solely in English while assessing only few native English-speakers. This implies that all participants in the study (except for one) were at least bilingual professionals. Being bi- or polylingual could reduce a person's 'degree of monoculturality'. In other words: The monoculturals who participated in the study have beneficial prerequisites with regard to TCC. It is thus recommended that for future research, the questionnaire is provided in several languages in order to address monoculturals in their native language. This would allow the participation of monoculturals with a stronger monocultural profile, namely people who only speak one language and have a culturally, more limited experience.

Another rather strong limitation to this survey are the missing scales to fully assess TCC. As discussed before, not all dimensions and sub-dimensions of TCC have been tested. As no existing scales could be identified, the subdimensions 'appreciation of otherness', "collaborative dialogue", "genius of the AND", "reconciliation" remains to be still integrated into the TCCQ. (And not to forget the dimension "realization" for which a qualitative post-interaction assessment seems much more promising.) Generating validated items for the missing sub-dimensions is a further task for future research. The generation of these items is particularly important as they constitute the TCC-critical dimensions. As the TCCQ did not integrate these critical sub-dimensions of TCC, the questionnaire rather assesses "the potential of an individual to become transculturally competent" (as described before) rather than his or her actual TCC.

Reapplying the TCCQ as presented here could help to conduct a factor analysis of the whole questionnaire construct. As described before, all scales integrated in the TCCQ showed high degrees of validity and reliability as they were tested through factor analyses. Therefore, in this work, a factor analysis was dispensed with. Future research on TCC measurement should fall back on a factor analysis, especially as for the TCC-critical dimensions, additional self-generated items and scales have to be integrated and tested.

10. Concluding remarks⁴

Despite the limitations described before, the findings of this study are considered to be important and useful, as they contribute to the construct of knowledge on transcultural competence research. In order to more fully comprehend TCC, it is important to understand the various factors that can affect an individual's TCC. It is in the nature of empirical surveys that the results cannot be generalized to apply to all professionals outside the participants in this study. Yet the findings presented here give a useful insight into how the cultural biography can affect professionals in terms of their potential to become transculturally competent. There are many studies that have attempted to measure intercultural effectiveness in a variety of different specifications and with diverging intentions. However, the author could not identify a single item-based questionnaire that aims to measure TCC. The study is unique as it leverages existing research by identifying a variety of different scales relevant for the examination of TCC. By constructing several scales into one, a comprehensive yet incomplete questionnaire has been created. This incompleteness is not to be understood as a weakness of this research. It is rather a depiction of TCC-related fields that require further consolidation of knowledge. As such, this research shed light on TCC, its testability and related fields necessary for, and worthy of, further exploration.

⁴ Author's note: The original paper examined a second hypothesis, namely whether monoculturals with international experience show a higher degree of TCC than monoculturals without international experience. As described in this chapter, the survey counted $N = 11$ monoculturals with international experience and $N = 16$ monoculturals without international experience. The hypothesis has been tested by applying a Mann-Whitney test. Results indicated, that monoculturals with international experience show better results for exactly one sub-dimension ('cultural awareness'). As monoculturals without international experience did not show any significant higher results for other sub-dimensions, it has been concluded that monoculturals with international experience possess a higher potential of becoming transculturally competent.

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Transculturality and its Focus on Commonalities

Sebastian Urthaler

1. Introduction

“Despite our faith in technology, and our reliance on technological solutions, there are *no* technical solutions to most of the problems confronting human beings [...] until mankind transcends the intellectual limitations imposed by our institutions, our philosophies, and our cultures.” (Edward T. Hall 1981: 1)

We are experiencing a time in human history, in which an increasing share of the human encounters and transactions is taking place between people from different countries and with different cultural affiliations (Stahl 2016). That is particularly affecting business, as managers and professionals at all levels have to deal with an ever more demanding and complex environment, since they have to interact with people, who have been socialized in different cultural and institutional environments, on a daily basis (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016c; Stahl 2016). In this regard, Barmeyer & Franklin (2016c: 1) emphasize that nowadays “[c]ultural complexity is the rule in many organizations and no longer the exception”. Early in the 21st century we have thus arrived at a point at which the understanding of culture and its impact on the organizational and professional environment has become more important than ever (Schreier & Kainzbauer 2016; Stahl 2016).

Against the background of the prevailing need to successfully manage cross-cultural encounters, we have experienced the advancement of a large number of cross-cultural competence conceptualizations, which aim at making culture operational and outline certain competences that are supposed to help individuals to successfully manoeuvre between different

cultural spheres of influence (Bennett & Bennett 2004; Hofstede 2003; Ting-Toomey 1999; Van de Vijver & Leung 2009). The problem with most of those conceptualizations is that they build on notions of cultural nationalism and thus on a concept of culture, which emphasizes the clear delineation of national cultures and focuses on cultural difference (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016a, 2016c, 2016d; Kühlmann & Stahl 1998; Trompenaars & Woolliams 2009).

In a world which is increasingly shaped by globalization and particularization, any conceptualization of culture founded on cultural nationalism is a) descriptively inaccurate and therefore does not serve the expected purpose of being an adequate basis for the determination of competences needed to successfully, effectively and appropriately handle transactions, and is b) normatively dangerous and untenable, as it reproduces the negative view of cultural difference, which causes the adverse outcomes often associated with cultural difference in the first place (Hagenbüchle 2002; Welsch 1999). Instead, concepts of culture and the associated conceptualizations of the individual competences, needed to successfully handle cross-cultural encounters, should emphasize the ability and willingness to embrace commonalities and to stress pan-cultural complementarity and synergy, in order to actually provide valuable guidance for cross-cultural encounters in a world that is increasingly characterized by complexity and by cultural spheres which flow and blend into each other, influencing each other, merging, intersecting and mixing together (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016c; Stahl & Tung 2015).

In order to do the outlined developments justice and to adequately capture culture in the 21st century, Wolfgang Welsch (1994; 1999) and other scholars have developed and advocated the concept of Transculturality. Thereby, they dismiss “uniform, folk-bound and separatory” notions of culture and stress the differentiated, global and inclusive character of modern society (Möhrer, Pillath, Simmank & Suurendonk 2016; Welsch 1999). Building upon the theoretical notions of Transculturality, there have been first efforts to conceptualize a multidimensional model of various associated individual competences or resources required to manage transactions in a way that allows for the identification and creation of commonalities and for mutually beneficial cooperation and synergies (Möhrer et al. 2016; see also Wieland 2019 in this book). Overall, the theoretical framework of Transculturality, as well as the eventually derived transcultural competences appear to constitute a better foundation

for understanding the significance of culture in the 21st century and providing guidance for individuals on how to successfully manoeuvre between the ever more hybrid cultural spheres, than previously introduced models (Antweiler 2012; Möhrer et al. 2016; Moosmüller & Schönhuth 2009).

Recognizing the importance of successfully managing cross-cultural encounters and transactions and, thus, the ever-increasing relevance of the theoretical notions on Transculturality, this chapter aims to contribute to the understanding of the still somewhat vague, multifaceted construct of Transcultural Competence by examining and elaborating on one specific dimension of the overall concept. After shortly introducing and discussing the overall concept of Transcultural Competences, we would like to pick up on the notions of Gilsa (2019: 43-73) and Salice-Stephan (2019: 75-111) in earlier chapters of the book and specifically examine “Focus on Commonalities” as one essential dimension of Transcultural Competence. Thereby, we will be emphasizing its relevance and importance for the overall construct and discussing some potential human universals, which allow for the assumption of pan-cultural commonalities. Subsequently, we will introduce a first set of measures which pave the way for the assessment of Focus on Commonalities. Finally, we will discuss the findings of the chapter and conclude by re-emphasizing the importance of Transcultural Competence.

2. *Transcultural Competences*

The impact of the trends and developments of globalization and particularization and the subsequent innovations of the concept of culture have led to a demand for a reframed notion of cross-cultural ability that has not yet been met (Moosmüller & Schönhuth 2009; Ng, Van Dyne & Ang 2012). A very interesting approach to view cultural abilities, which is particularly relevant for the definition of Transcultural Competence (TCC), has been introduced by Wieland (2014; 2016) and others (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016b; Bartel-Radic & Giannelloni 2017) as a “resource-based” view. In such a view, the (transcultural) competences are referred to as a repertoire of intangible personal resources such as knowledge, abilities, characteristics and attitudes that are required to successfully master cross-cultural encounters and transactions and to effectively cooperate

with people with a dissimilar cultural orientation (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016b). Wieland (2014) describes the individual transcultural resources and the individual self-commitment in handling transactions as ever more important in a world that is characterized by encounters with different cultures and corresponding heterogeneity and diversity of collective moral and/or cultural orders as well as an increasing discontinuation of the importance of traditional points of reference such as nation states and families that has not (yet) been compensated for by the evolution of equivalent reference systems.

For the limited purpose of this section, TCCs are defined as a personal or an individual competence. In order to reduce complexity, the transaction-based view introduced by Wieland (2014) will be adopted in the following remarks. In discussing Transcultural Competences, we will thus always be talking about individual resources in one specific transaction (Wieland 2014). While there are reasons to examine TCC using a more contextual approach or to look at TCC at an organizational level, there are at least as many arguments that support an approach that begins with the individual as unit of analysis and uses the identified individual competences as a basis for further examination (Glover & Friedman 2015; Spitzberg & Changnon 2009; Wieland 2010). First, even though the respective contextual framework is crucial and needs to be taken into account, it is people who are involved in transactions and who make decisions and who thus determine the success or failure of cross-cultural encounters (Leisinger 2010; Mendenhall 2001). Second, globalization and particularization go hand in hand with the increasing importance of the subjectivity factor, which, in turn, makes individual abilities and capabilities of people an ever more important resource (Schreier & Kainzbauer 2016; Wieland 2010, 2014). Third, the examination of individual abilities is partly also a question of practicability: It is much easier to develop reliable assessment tools and to deduce substantiated statements for individual competences, and to base subsequent work on those findings, than the other way around (Hofstede 2003). In addition, if the notions on, and the assessment of, TCC are to be developed into a leadership development tool or a tool for recruitment and employee appraisal purposes, it is reasonable to consider individual abilities as a starting point (Fowler & Blohm 2004; Hofstede 2003; Möhrer et al. 2016; Wieland 2010).

Correspondingly, TCC can be defined as a set of dynamic cognitive, affective and behavioural competences or resources emphasizing discursive

sive and cooperative discovery and the identification and creation of commonalities required to make cooperation between culturally-diverse actors possible and to increase the likelihood of successful transactions between culturally dissimilar individuals and organizations (Wieland 2016). Individual TCC requires a high degree of awareness and a certain understanding of how cultural identity is developed, what constitutes culture and cultural identity and how cultural identity affects people and transactions (Glover & Friedman 2015). Furthermore, TCC constitutes a culture-general ability to successfully deal with cultural difference, an ability that is desperately needed in a variety of organizational and other contexts that are increasingly characterized by (cultural) heterogeneity and homogenization or respectively globalization and particularization (Schreier & Kainzbauer 2016; Wieland 2014).

3. *Focus on Commonalities*

The following section picks up on von Gilsa's (2019: 43-73) and Salice-Stephan's (2019: 75-111) notions in previous chapters of the book. They dealt with the operationalization of Transcultural Competence and have thereby laid the groundwork for much of the respective scientific examination in future (including the chapter at hand). While contributing a great deal to the overall examination and operationalization of Transcultural Competence, they have not yet extensively described and captured the conceptually indispensable dimension "Focus on Commonalities". The following remarks thus aim to close the void and contribute to the examination of "Focus on Commonalities" within the overall framework of Transcultural Competence. Thereby, emphasis will be placed on why "Focus on Commonalities" is such a significant element of TCC in a first subsection. In a second subsection, a variety of arguments will be elaborated that actually underscore the claim that there are many cultural commonalities and potential complementarities, which most conceptualizations of cultures and cultural identity neglect on behalf of a one-sided over-emphasis of cultural differences (Stahl & Tung 2015). The respective arguments substantiate that it is more reasonable than is frequently maintained to hypothesize and emphasize a significant degree of pan-cultural commonalities and complementarities.

The “Focus on Commonalities” dimension stresses the importance of recognizing and emphasizing commonalities, reconciling differences and building on the commonalities and the reconciled differences in a way that is mutually beneficial for all parties involved in the transaction and that allows for the creation of cultural commonalities in future. Thereby, “Focus on Commonalities” is comprised by the following three sub-dimensions. The first sub-dimension Embracing Commonalities points at the importance of recognizing and emphasizing the physiological, psychological and cultural commonalities that all human beings have in common and that can constitute a common basis for transcultural interactions (Berry 2004). The second sub-dimension Genius of the AND stresses the importance of the cognitive and attitudinal ability of departing from the view of cultural differences as opposites or as two contradictory positions and towards an accentuation of complementarity (Glover & Friedman 2015). In this regard, Glover & Friedman (2015) call for a departure from the “tyranny of the OR” (Collins & Porras 1994) and refer to the ability and willingness to emphasis two alternatives or opposites at the same time and to figure out a way of compromising the two extremes in a manner that is innovative and adds value. That leads to the third sub-dimension of the “Focus on Commonalities”, Reconciliation, which refers to the ability to connect different points of view and emphasizes the attitudinal ability and the behavioural intention to cope with cultural differences by reconciling cultural dilemmas or opposite views and alternative approaches in a creative way that generates synergies (Glover & Friedman 2015; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1998; Trompenaars & Woolliams 2009).

3.1 The Importance of “Focus on Commonalities” for Transcultural Competence

The importance and, generally, the role of “Focus on Commonalities” within the concept of TCC can be explained as follows.

First, the need for a particularly emphasized dimension “Focus on Commonalities” becomes apparent when considering the significance of the conceptually adequate and coherent deduction of dimensions and sub-dimensions from the underlying notions of the relatively recently developed concept of Transculturality. Since the concept of Transculturality

emphasizes that in a world that is increasingly shaped by cross-cultural encounters and interactions, it is increasingly important to emphasize commonalities that are independent from the concrete cultural affiliation and cultural complementarities and synergies in transactions; the respective notions need to be reflected in the definitions and delineations of a related concept of cultural ability. The concept of Transculturality actively expects individuals to reflect on and emphasize commonalities and complementarities and the upsides of transcultural collaboration (Schleicher 2016; Stahl & Tung 2015).

Second, in a world that is increasingly characterized by globalization and particularization, by the emergence of “atopic” societies, the dissolution of boundaries and the emergence of transcultural spaces or spheres, and thus by a mounting prevalence and relevance of cultural diversity, the focus on commonalities associated with TCC can also be viewed as a pragmatic approach to increase the likelihood of successful cooperation and value creation and personal or organizational goal attainment given the ever growing share of transactions that are realized in a transcultural context (Ang & Van Dyne 2008; Brand 2016; Glover & Friedman 2015; Schreier & Kainzbauer 2016; Ting-Toomey 1999; Wieland 2014, 2016).

3.2 Origins of pan-cultural commonalities

After having established the significance of the “Focus of Commonalities” within the concept of TCC, the following will underscore the fact that “Focus on Commonalities” is not to be considered as some kind of a romanticized ideal of peaceful togetherness, but that there is sufficient reason to justify the enhanced emphasis on pan-cultural commonalities between human beings (Antweiler 2012; Berry 2004; Bolscho 2005; Kearney & Adachi 2012). While the challenges of readjusting the inner compass from concentration on polarity and differences to commonalities and collaboration are acknowledged, several important starting points to underscore the claim of a sustained focus on commonalities, are presented in the following (Welsch 1999).

A first set of arguments frequently advocated to emphasize pan-cultural commonalities between human beings refers to various aspects of human nature. Besides obvious and less relevant physical similarities, scholars particularly emphasize psychological and emotional aspects. Hofstede

(1981, 2003), for instance, emphasized a universal level of mental programming by all human beings. Other authors followed and pointed at similar cognitive, emotional and biological equipment and the common structure of consciousness of human beings (Knoblauch 2007; Tomasello 2016; Wieland 2016).

Antor (2010) and Hannerz (1991) point out that all human beings function as pattern-building or sense-making animals in order to provide themselves with orientation and a sense of identity and to place themselves in the world. The mere fact that all human beings live in one form or another of a social context and that all those apparently very different social contexts or cultures share similar functional characteristics and prerequisites, such as the provision of relationships, the differentiation and assignments of roles or the regulation of sexuality, can be taken as an indication for a common structure of consciousness and species-shared psychological processes of all humankind (Antweiler 2012; Berry 2004; Tomasello 2016).

Other scholars, such as Irvine & Berry (1988) and Van de Vijver (1997), point to cognitive performance and abilities across cultures and emphasize that, despite variation in the development and expression of cognition according to the respective socio-cultural background and context, all inductive and deductive reasoning as well the analytical and spatial abilities and memory processes are rooted in common psychological processes (Berry 2004). Berry (2004) elaborated on those findings and concluded that, while scholars have for decades wrongfully focused on the variable expression and display of cognitive processes across cultures, there needs to be more emphasis on the common underlying processes.

Similarly, various authors have scientifically underpinned the claim of the existence of a variety of pan-cultural basic emotions and the pro-social capability of human beings (Berry 2004; Wieland 2016). Discussions in various fields of social sciences, such as, for instance “Neuroethics” and Behavioural Business Ethics, assume a biological and an emotional basic equipment of human beings as a starting point and emphasize that some emotions, such as empathy or compassion, are, to a certain degree, universal (Cropanzano & Stein 2009; Engel & Singer 2008; Glimcher, Fehr & Camerer 2008; Salvador & Folger 2009; Wieland 2014). It is highlighted that while the expression and display of emotions might vary according to the respective socio-cultural background and context, some basic emotions are pan-cultural and again, it is emphasized that, for

far too long, scholars have wrongfully stressed the varying expression of emotions instead of common basic emotions (Berry 2004; Hagenbüchle 2002).

With regard to the discussion of specific psychological mechanisms, which can be assumed to be universal, it is worth looking at Schütz (2004 [1932]) and Knoblauch (2007), who emphasize what they call “intersubjectivity” or “alterity” respectively. Thereby, they point to a common psychological mechanism of transferring meaning and significance (“Sinnübertragung”) and an unquestioned and unreflective acceptance of human counterparts as human beings. They elaborate that a human being is always born into a social context and thus automatically accepts the co-existence of other human beings as people with similar consciousness to one’s own without ever challenging the assumption of the humanness of a human counterpart (Knoblauch 2007). Knoblauch also introduces the general thesis of the alter ego (“Generalthesis des alter ego”) as a universal psychological mechanism of identification and recognition of other human beings as similar creatures, independently of the prior knowledge about, and familiarity with, the human counterpart in question. He elaborates that this mechanism can be traced back to a universal projection of similarity: Knoblauch explains that the very first universal reaction of a human being to a human counterpart will be an assumption of similarity and the recognition of the human counterpart as being “like me”. He continues and asserts that, only in a second moment, will cultural identity weigh in and determine the further course of the interaction.

Also the renowned American developmental psychologist Michael Tomasello (2016) examined a variety of potential examples to underscore the claim of common roots of human-specific cognition. By working and experimenting with infants and young children, he and others point out that before children start to understand and adapt to social and cultural norms and institutions and thus start to become socialized into a specific social and cultural context, all children across cultures display very similar social behaviour. Only after they have reached the age of 3 and have thus begun to become socialized within a certain cultural context does their behaviour start to vary significantly (Hamann, Warneken & Tomasello 2012; Hepach, Vaish & Tomasello 2012; Tomasello 2016).

Tomasello (2016) points to those findings and elaborates on them as evidence of his assumption of a common basis for psychological processes of human cognition, social interaction and self-regulation, which he de-

scribes as increasingly superimposed by dominant group-oriented patterns, norms and framework conditions of culture, morality and/or cultural identity in the course of evolution. Concluding, Tomasello (2016) emphasizes that all human beings have a universal consciousness and thus a natural morality, which is, however, embedded and superimposed by social norms and cultural norms and institutions that provide very dissimilar – and partly conflicting – cognitive and behavioural patterns for (transcultural) interactions with other people. Overall, the assumption of an immediate, natural and universal recognition of similarity between myself and any human counterpart, which is at first independent of cultural affiliation and identity, can be considered an important point of departure for a strengthened emphasis of human commonalities and for collaboration in transactions shaped by transculturality.

Another commonality that can be connected to the notions above and that reflects the common human nature, is the existence of universal human needs (Glover & Friedman 2015; Welsch 1999). Similarly to what has been introduced regarding the differing display of cognition and emotions, Glover & Friedman (2015) exemplify that, even though cultural socialization and background might heavily affect the modalities and styles of how people eat, all human beings will eventually be confronted with the universal primary need to eat. Thus, even though the modalities of the satisfaction of needs might vary significantly, the universal need is already an important commonality that can be a starting point for mutual understanding, collaboration and potential creation of more commonalities in future.

Besides human nature, a variety of authors emphasize a set of universal values, which are claimed to apply to all human beings independently of their cultural affiliation. Wieland (2010) and others, for instance, emphasize a principle of “humanity” or a “moral bond of humanity” as an example of a global moral principle and normative reference point, which has pertained – and still pertains – to all human cultures and is supposed to constitute an important prerequisite for successful human cooperation and joint moral learning, and thus the elaboration of universal moral notions (Küng 2010; Sachs 2010; Wieland 2010, 2015). With regard to the value universalism vs. value relativism discussion, the authors emphasize that they consider the principle of “humanity” as universal. They do, however, not consider the principle of “humanity” as an ethical absolutism that needs to be imposed on and enforced for all people in the world,

but rather as an ethical-universalistic guideline, for which equivalents can be found in virtually all existing ethical frameworks. The respective equivalents can thus collaboratively be synthesized into one transcultural principle or virtue of “humanity” representing a universal normative reference point, or a common bond, which links all culture-induced differences in the application and expression of the respective value¹ (Antor 2010; Fischer & Wieland 2016; Ting-Toomey 1999; Wieland 2010, 2014).

The view of the principle of “humanity” as a derivable global moral principle, strengthens Tomasello’s view of a certain degree of natural morality as well as the currently advocated overall view of far-reaching transcultural commonalities, which frequently remain under-emphasized at the expense of the interculturality paradigm, which highlights cultural differences and points at the apparent incompatibility between various manifestations of culture. Again, one could theorize that with globalization and particularization, the emphasis of common underlying ethical guidelines and principles could become an ever more important and promising prerequisite for future transcultural collaboration and cooperation (Antweiler 2012; Hagenbüchle 2002; Ting-Toomey 1999; Wieland 2014).

A last argument put forward with respect to potential transcultural commonalities is neither related to common human nature nor to universal values, but can rather be associated with the emergence of transcultural meta-symbolic orders that serve as reference systems for the identity formation of people all over the world (Hannerz 1996; Hepp 2006; Kearney & Adachi 2012). Kearney and Adachi (2012) point, for instance, at Advanced Information and Communication Systems, such as the internet, and introduce them as increasingly commonplace Meta-Symbolic Orders, on which people across cultures can equally rely in the process of identity formation and which can thus be considered as elements of a shared living environment of people across cultures. In one way or another, these meta-symbolic orders could be understood as elements of what

¹ In a similar regard and with the prospect of eventually arriving at the broad acceptance of universal values, Ricoeur (2005) and Antweiler (2012) discuss “inchoative universals” and “negotiated universalism”, as approaches that emphasize that there are underlying universal values, which have not yet been realized, and that those underlying universal values need to be identified in a deliberate process among cultures and cannot be imposed.

has variously been introduced as a transnational or transcultural sphere (Brand 2016). These global meta-symbolic orders can be considered increasingly important common reference systems for all human beings and thus potentially relevant factors fostering transcultural cooperation and the creation of further commonalities.

With that, a broad degree of potential pan-cultural commonalities has been introduced.² Those commonalities can be considered important starting points for the potential of cross-cultural collaboration as well as for the creation of further commonalities. They underscore the theoretical elaborations on Transculturality and TCC, as they can be viewed as providing a fundament for an active departure from concepts of culture emphasizing adverse outcomes of cross-cultural interaction and cultural differences towards a concept of culture that reflects current developments towards the globalization of cooperation and of value creation³ and thus acknowledges the importance of pancultural commonalities for the sake of successful cross-cultural collaboration.

4. *The Operationalization of “Focus on Commonalities”*

After having emphasized that there are a variety of human universals to underscore the claim of pan-cultural commonalities, we will now turn towards the discussion of the challenges associated with the assessment of “Focus on Commonalities”. Taking into account fundamental conceptual and methodological notions, the following section will contribute to closing a gap in scientific literature: While researchers have identified points of reference for the development of many of the dimensions and subdimensions of TCC, they have not yet succeeded in finding a conceptual benchmark for what has been introduced as the most pivotal dimension with regard to TCC: Focus on Commonalities.

In the following, we will thus take the identification of this academic void as a point of departure and introduce a set of conceptually derived

² The present section does thereby not provide a conclusive list of commonalities. A more comprehensive and encompassing list and discussion of specific human characteristics can for instance be found in Antweiler (2012: Chapter 9).

³ For a discussion on the relevance of the transcultural approach in the context of global value chains, see Wieland & Baumann Montecinos 2018.

items for the three introduced sub-dimensions of “Focus on Commonalities”. Thereby, we will first discuss some general notions regarding the assessment of Focus on Commonalities, before turning towards the concrete development of three questionnaire item-sets for the assessment of the three sub-dimensions of Focus on Commonalities and discussing the prospect of those questionnaire item-sets serving as a basis for the development of more comprehensive and sophisticated assessment instruments in subsections 2 and 3.

4.1 General notions on the Operationalization of “Focus on Commonalities”

Importantly, the conceptualization of Focus on Commonalities requires the development of a suitable assessment tool that coherently and consistently reflects the underlying conceptual foundations and captures the concisely-specified dimensions and sub-dimensions of the construct TCC (Fantini 2009; Van de Vijver & Leung 2009; Van Dyne, Ang, & Koh 2008). Assessment is important, as it is the only way to examine and determine whether the theoretical conceptions and hypothetical assumptions actually hold up (Deardorff 2009; Sinicrope, Norris & Watanabe 2007). As Matsumoto and Hwang (2013) emphasize, the development of tests to assess concepts of cultural ability, have important theoretical and practical implications: Theoretically, measurement and assessment can help to actually capture and identify the constructs and thus to improve our understanding; practically, assessment can be beneficial as it allows practitioners to identify concrete competences and abilities needed in various circumstances and can serve as a basis for the development of appropriate training programs that can help organizations and individuals.

The process of operationalization or, in the case at hand, item-development, requires the underlying conceptual notions to be translated into questions or propositions which, on the one hand, adequately reflect the underlying concept, but, at the same time, constitute a concrete statement to which a respondent can relate and which can be answered in a relatively straightforward manner by the respondent (Kallus 2010; Schnell, Hill & Esser 2008). In the following, we will introduce six such propositions for

every sub-dimension of “Focus on Commonalities”⁴. These six items per sub-dimension or, respectively, the three item-sets for “Focus on Commonalities” are then to be considered as a first provisional item-pool and thus a point of departure for the subsequent elaboration into a more comprehensive questionnaire capturing all dimensions of TCC and the required psychometric assessment of the respective questionnaire.

In developing the items, various methodological guidelines and formal notions and principles have been accounted for. The underlying conceptual notions were reflected on closely, and an attempt was made to identify tangible elements of the respective subdimensions in order to translate them into possibly precise propositions (Kallus 2010). Thereby, concerns regarding the content validity of the resulting items and item-sets as well as the trade-off between sufficient conceptual precision and an acceptable degree of formal parsimony and clarity have been evaluated and re-evaluated (Bühner 2006; Kallus 2010; Raab-Steiner & Benesch 2012). Reflecting formal guidelines, the attempt was made to formulate short, unambiguous and specific propositions, which are neither overly positively connotated nor overly negatively formulated, which are not suggestive or hypothetical and which do not contain any toxic or loaded terms (Kallus 2010; Raab-Steiner & Benesch 2012). A specific attempt was made to formulate clear-cut propositions, which people could easily understand and answer and which do not allow for differential interpretation or contain terminology with multiple meanings (Porst 2014; Raab-Steiner & Benesch 2012).

With regard to the response mode, we suggest the uniform application of a seven-point Likert Scale, for which only the two extremes are verbalized (“Strongly Agree” and “Strongly Disagree”) for the following reasons. First, the application of a consistent response mode allows for a relatively uncomplicated aggregation of item-values and enables the deduction of sub-dimension-values based on the single-item responses (Kallus 2010; Schnell et al. 2008). Second, the implementation of a scale for which only the two extremes are verbalized allows for the assumption of an interval-scaled level of measurement and thus the application of more sophisticated statistical measures (Porst 2014). Last, the seven-point scale provides the respondent with a number of potential responses, which

⁴ The provisional development of six to eight items per indicator is a reasonable starting point for subsequent elaboration and examination (Kallus 2010).

allows for a sufficiently differentiated classification, but does not yet cognitively overwhelm the respondent and therefore does not hinder the respondents from reasonably differentiating between the various response categories (Kallus 2010; Porst 2014).

4.2 Developing Item-Sets for “Focus on Commonalities”

After having shortly elaborated the application of formal guidelines and the proposition of a uniform response mode, we will now turn to the introduction of the eighteen question-parts for the items proposed to capture the three sub-dimensions of the “Focus on Commonalities” dimension of TCC.

4.2.1 Sub-dimension “Embracing Commonalities”

As already introduced in the conceptual sections, the willingness and the ability to embrace commonalities is considered an important element of TCC and is thus defined as one of the sub-dimensions constituting “Focus on Commonalities”. A person who is to be considered transculturally competent needs to look beyond apparent cultural differences and must be willing and able to embrace the pan-cultural common bond that cuts through cultural boundaries as well as to embody transcultural virtues (Welsch 1999; Wieland 2010). The following six propositions are proposed in order to capture the sub-dimension “Embracing Commonalities”:

- EC1: I value commonalities.
- EC2: Commonalities are more important than differences.
- EC3: I recognize a bit of myself in every counterpart.
- EC4: I believe in a common bond between all human beings.
- EC5: All human cultures have common values and practices.
- EC6: There are certain values that apply to all human beings.

The six introduced propositions all reflect certain features of the above introduced willingness and ability to embrace commonalities and are thus considered a first set of potential measures to capture the underlying con-

struct in a sufficiently valid manner. EC3, for instances aims at capturing the projection of similarity introduced in subsection 3.2 and EC5 and EC6 point to the operationalized willingness and ability to embrace universal values. While we have tried to factor in concerns regarding content validity by trying to adequately reflect the underlying conceptual notions, only extensive item-analysis and factor analysis will allow to conclusively determine whether the introduced items prove to be suitable to assess the underlying sub-dimension “Embracing Commonalities” in a sufficiently reliable manner.

4.2.2 *Sub-dimension “Genius of the AND”*

“Genius of the AND” as a second sub-dimension of “Focus on Commonalities”, describes a willingness and an ability to see opposites as complementary and enriching, to embrace two alternatives or two extremes of a dimension at the same time, to value the specific strengths of two opposing or alternative views and thus ultimately to break with the existing-mind set of viewing (cultural) differences as contradictory and to rather embrace (cultural) complementarities (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016c; Glover & Friedman 2015). As exemplified, for instance, by GA2, GA3 and GA6, “Genius of the AND” is thus about replacing an exclusive “either/or” mindset with a more inclusive “and/and” mindset (Barmeyer, Davoine & Mark 2016). Since “Genius of the AND” is considered a fundamental dimension for the assessment of TCC, the following six propositions are suggested in order to capture the respective sub-dimension:

- GA1: I view diversity as a threat.
- GA2: I treat opposites as complementary.
- GA3: There are common solutions to every dilemma involving opposing views, values or practices.
- GA4: I am willing to cooperate with people with dissimilar values.
- GA5: Cultural differences are enriching.
- GA6: I value cultural diversity as an opportunity for complementarity.

Again, the six propositions have been considerably developed in order to capture various elements and features of the respective sub-dimensions

and to establish content validity and are thus hoped to represent a good starting point for further examination, but it also needs to be emphasized again that they can only be applied as measures for the sub-dimension “Genius of the AND”, if their psychometric properties⁵ have been comprehensively assessed.

4.2.3 *Sub-dimension “Reconciliation”*

Reconciliation is a term that is already established in the field of study and that is associated with a concept that has been put forward by Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (1998). Even though the sub-dimension “Reconciliation” within the concept of TCC is not fully equivalent to Hampden-Turner’s & Trompenaars’ (1998) notion of “Reconciliation”, which is more comprehensive, their remarks can at least serve as a point of reference. Thereby, “Reconciliation” as a sub-dimension of TCC, refers less to the embracing of cultural commonalities and potential complementarities (as these notions are already captured in the two preceding sub-dimensions) and turns rather towards the signalling of the ability and the willingness to actively attempt to reconcile opposing views and to create synergies and commonalities (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016a; Glover & Friedman 2015; Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars 2006; Trompenaars & Woolliams 2006). Thus, while the two preceding sub-dimensions “Embracing Commonalities” and “Genius of the AND” point to the attitude towards cultural similarities and differences, the third sub-dimension “Reconciliation” represents a more active notion that signals more of a behavioural intent than an attitude. That is also why the six propositions are formulated in a way that explicitly asks for the behavioural intent of the respondents. The following six propositions have been developed to capture the sub-dimensions “Reconciliation”:

- R1: When dealing with differing views, values or practices I try to identify the strengths of all positions.
- R2: When dealing with differing views, values or practices I try to emphasize commonalities.

⁵ Validity, Reliability & Objectivity (Bühner 2006).

- R3: When dealing with differing views, values or practices I try to establish commonalities.
- R4: When dealing with cultural differences I try to reconcile opposing positions.
- R5: When dealing with cultural differences I try to focus on commonalities.
- R6: In encounters with people with dissimilar cultural values I try to establish shared values.

As has been elaborated with regard to the two preceding sub-dimensions, the propositions were developed only after thorough consideration of the various underlying conceptual elements and features and are (in combination with the suggested seven-point Likert-scale) expected to constitute adequate item sets yielding meaningful data to assess and evaluate the respective sub-dimensions and, in aggregate, an entire dimension of TCC (as assembled in Table 1).

Table 1: Subdimensions of “Focus on Commonalities” and respective items

Focus on Commonalities
Embracing Commonalities
EC1: I value commonalities.
EC2: Commonalities are more important than differences.
EC3: I recognize a bit of myself in every counterpart.
EC4: I believe in a common bond between all human beings.
EC5: All human cultures have common values and practices.
EC6: There are certain values that apply to all human beings.
Genius of the AND
GA1: I view diversity as a threat.
GA2: I treat opposites as complementary.
GA3: There are common solutions to every dilemma involving opposing views, values or practices.
GA4: I am willing to cooperate with people with dissimilar values.
GA5: Cultural differences are enriching.
GA6: I value cultural diversity as an opportunity for complementarity.

Reconciliation
R1: When dealing with differing views, values or practices I try to identify the strengths of all positions.
R2: When dealing with differing views, values or practices I try to emphasize commonalities.
R3: When dealing with differing views, values or practices I try to establish commonalities.
R4: When dealing with cultural differences I try to reconcile opposing positions.
R5: When dealing with cultural differences I try to focus on commonalities.
R6: In encounters with people with dissimilar cultural values I try to establish shared values.

Source: Own representation.

However, it also needs to be re-emphasized that the actual applicability and usefulness of those propositions is dependent on the results of the pending psychometric assessment of the introduced propositions or, the questionnaire and that their psychometrical properties cannot be taken for granted only because conceptual and methodological prudence was exercised as they were developed. While the introduced propositions (summarized in Table 1) represent a first item pool for further examination, the introduced preliminary item-pool will inevitably be subject to significant change during the pending item-analysis, factor analysis and cross-validation (Bühner 2006; Kallus 2010). The pending psychometric assessment of the respective propositions is also the reason why some of the propositions have been defined and formulated in a way that might at first appear congruent: Only the required item-analysis and factor-analysis will allow one to determine which of the slightly different propositions actually reflect the underlying conceptual notions best and should thus be used going forward (Bühner 2006; Kallus 2010).

4.3 Proposed Next Steps: Incorporating the Developed Item-sets into a TCCQ

While the remarks at hand have emphasized the dimension “Focus on Commonalities”, future studies have to evaluate how the developed item-sets can be incorporated or elaborated into a comprehensive Transcultural

Competence Questionnaire (TCCQ). In this regard, two approaches can be considered and are thus briefly introduced in the following.

On the one hand, researchers could draw on earlier efforts to extract and assemble associated items and item-sets from assessment tools in the field of cultural ability studies and integrate the developed items for “Focus on Commonalities” as one component of the resulting assembled questionnaire (Kallus 2010; Möhrer et al. 2016). While such an approach is viable, we have previously pointed to the shortcomings of extracting items and assembling them into a new questionnaire, and thus, such an approach should not be considered the preferred way to attain a TCCQ (Kallus 2010). Instead, researchers could follow the blueprint presented in the notions at hand and apply a concept-driven approach to develop particular and adequate items and item-sets for the four remaining dimensions of TCC, which still require proper operationalization (Kallus 2010). While such an approach allows notions from other researchers and items and item-sets from other questionnaires to be used as important reference points, it provides the researchers developing the questionnaire with more flexibility to make sure that all items reflect the common underlying conceptual basis, and are formulated in a sufficiently coherent and consistent manner; thus meeting the requirements in terms of content validity (Bühner 2006; Kallus 2010).

Since such a concept-driven approach provides more flexibility and allows the researcher to coherently reflect the underlying dimensions and facets, and since such an approach reduces the risk of decontextualizing items and item-sets, the notions at hand recommend the concept-driven development of items and item-sets for all dimensions of TCC (Kallus 2010). While it is variously mistakenly assumed that the assembling of already “validated” questionnaire items into a new questionnaire would be less demanding in terms of the assessment of its psychometric properties, the requirements in terms of psychometric quality criteria assessment are equal for the assembled questionnaire and for the questionnaire with conceptually-derived items (*ibid.*). Thus, while lacking the flexibility and the ability to concretely reflect the underlying conceptual notions, researchers applying the extraction and assembling approach are not even gaining in terms of required psychometric assessment efforts.

To sum up, the concept-driven development of items and item-sets appears to be a promising and feasible approach to prospectively develop a first item-pool for all dimensions and facets of TCC. Once such a com-

prehensive, preliminary item-pool has been developed, there are a variety of assessments and measures required in order to determine the adequate satisfaction of the psychometric quality criteria of the item-pool, which has been developed to be shaped into a meaningful psychometric questionnaire (Bühner 2006; Kallus 2010). Of those, a thorough item-analysis and a comprehensive factor-analysis are probably amongst the most important ones (Kallus 2010).

5. *Discussion*

The following section will critically evaluate some of the findings of the chapter. In so doing, we will specifically assess the implications of the theoretical notions on Focus on Commonalities and the ramifications of the development of item-sets for the sub-dimensions of Focus on Commonalities for the broader objective to develop a comprehensive assessment tool for Transcultural Competence, which can serve as a basis for potential future development and training efforts.

Thereby, it is important to note that there are heightened requirements with regard to the objective to adequately and comprehensively capture TCC. Those heightened requirements can be explained on the basis of the introduced complex, multifaceted definition of TCC as a set of dynamic, affective and behavioural resources emphasizing discursive and cooperative discovery and the identification and creation of commonalities in transactions (Wieland 2016). In fact, the introduced definition of TCC as an inter-subjective and transaction-based concept explains why the overall assessment of TCC needs to incorporate more than just self-reported individual ability and capability measures in order to be rightfully considered to adequately reflect all dimensions and facets of the underlying concept of TCC.

Despite the heightened requirements and the conceptual and methodological challenges along the road, we are optimistic that it is possible to arrive at a point at which the conclusive determination of TCC can serve as a conceptual foundation for training programs that foster mutual understanding and that embrace the creation of transcultural commonalities and the generation of transcultural synergies. Thereby, the notions at hand and, specifically, the very first items developed for the assessment of “Focus on Commonalities” can serve as a point of departure for the

development of an integral TCCQ, which, in turn, can serve as a starting point for the development of more holistic, integrated mixed-method multi-perspective assessment designs to comprehensively assess TCC. Proceeding from the respective assessment designs and the accurate and comprehensive observation of TCC, researchers could engage in the examination of possibilities for TCC development and eventually in the development of training programs to induce and foster TCC.

Thus, even though we are at the very beginning of the outlined process, the aspiration to eventually have at our disposal a set of assessment tools which make it possible to comprehensively capture TCC, as well as development programs which allow for the induction, training and/or fostering of TCC is feasible. Researchers need to continue to approximate the outlined long-term objectives step-by-step and continue to exercise a high degree of conceptual and methodological prudence and precision at every stage in order to actually enable the achievement of the outlined aspirations in the medium to long term.

Thereby, an important topic for future research is the need to further elaborate on the fundamental notions of Transculturality and TCC and thus on the theoretical and conceptual framework underlying the notions at hand: Transculturality has not yet been conclusively defined and the conceptualization of TCC has not been conclusively determined and extensively tested (Bird et al. 2010; Deardorff 2009; Möhrer et al. 2016). As a consequence, the present notions call for a continued effort to elaborate on the underlying theoretical and conceptual notions in order to end ambiguity and to develop definitive notions and definitions which can serve as clear reference points and frameworks for further elaboration in the field of study. Thereby, it would be specifically worth proceeding from the notions on Focus on Commonalities and further elaborating on potential pan-cultural commonalities, which could serve as a foundation for a change of perspective from a focus on differences to a focus on commonalities and as a basis for sustained transcultural cooperation.

6. *Conclusion*

In extensively elaborating Focus on Commonalities, one of the major findings of the notions at hand has been that the discussed research area is still somewhat understudied and indeterminate (Möhrer 2016; Möhrer

et al. 2016). While the objective of this chapter was to contribute to the advancement of the field of study, the findings of the notions at hand can only be considered a limited contribution with respect to the challenges that still lie ahead. In order to prospectively achieve the variously stated objectives and to reach a point at which we have a fully explicated and operationalized concept of cultural ability at our disposal that no longer stresses cultural differences and the management of shortcomings associated with cultural difference, but instead emphasizes transcultural commonalities and the potential of cooperation and synergy, sustained scientific efforts as well as a commitment to the satisfaction of a high degree of conceptual and methodological prudence and precision at every single stage along the road are required (Barmeyer & Franklin 2016c; Sachs 2010; Stahl & Tung 2015).

In closing, it has, however, to be re-emphasized that the value of converging towards an encompassing conceptualization of cultural ability, which finally emphasizes complementarities, synergies and commonalities, instead of differences, liabilities and adverse outcomes, should be beyond doubt. In 1963, President John F. Kennedy noted that, in the long run, it will be crucial for humankind to focus on what unites us instead of on what apparently divides us: “So, let us not be blind to our differences – but let us also direct attention to our common interests and to the means by which those differences can be resolved” (Kennedy 1963 as cited in Sachs 2010: 151).

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From Global to Transcultural Competence

Derived Findings for Transcultural Competence
from the Global Competence Assessment by PISA

Tobias Grünfelder

1. Introduction

Where will the next generation of leaders come from and which competences will be needed to face the challenges of the 21st century? This was one of the motivating questions for this work and the implications of this question are on the agenda of many international organizations and education policies around the world.

In 2018 the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) made the attempt to measure how globally competent fifteen-year-old students are in different countries around the world and the results of this international large-scale assessment (ILSA) will be published at the end of 2019. The assessment intends to push the discussions forward towards more awareness for crucial competences in a globalized world. The assessment fostered discussions at various levels and, in this chapter, findings from this international large-scale assessment (ILSA) are derived for the concept of transcultural competence.

The PISA assessment builds on a wealth of literature on and research into intercultural competence (ICC) and global competence (GC), including different conceptualizations and assessment methods. In this context, it can be assumed that transculturality (TC) can add a helpful and practical approach to the discussion of solving intercultural issues. Various players have stressed the importance of GC for students and developing a

global and intercultural outlook is a lifelong process that education can shape (Barrett et al. 2014; Boix, Mansilla & Jackson 2011; Deardorff 2009; UNESCO 2013, 2014a, 2016). Today's societies place challenging demands on individuals, who are confronted with volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity in many parts of their lives¹ and the "future of jobs" report from 2018 concludes that

"policy-makers, regulators and educators will need to play a fundamental role in helping those who are displaced repurpose their skills or retrain to acquire new skills and to invest heavily in the development of new agile learners in future workforces by tackling improvements to education and training systems, as well as updating labour policy to match the realities of the Fourth Industrial Revolution." (World Economic Forum 2018)

If individuals and their communities want to thrive in the future, schools must prepare today's students to acquire a mix of certain competences. As a baseline it has become evident that students need to develop cultural understanding and cultural interaction skills, because the number of socio-cultural encounters (SCEs) among individuals of different cultural backgrounds as well as the degree of complexity in interaction has increased over the last decades. Defining competencies like GC or transcultural competence (TCC) can improve assessments of how well-prepared young people and adults are for life's challenges, as well as identify overarching goals for education systems and lifelong learning (OECD 2005: 4). Prominent concepts that describe the interactions of cultures are interculturality (IC) and multiculturalism (MC) and these have been extensively discussed in previous works (cf. Wieland 2014, 2016; Gilsa 2019; Urthaler 2019; Salice-Stephan 2019; Hofstede 1981, 2003).

TC means trying to overcome differences by focusing on commonalities. TC assumes that transcultural ideals contribute to a successful functioning within diverging cultures and help in identifying and transcending cultural boundaries to move into common grounds (Glover & Friedman 2015). Therefore, the development of TCC can be seen as a valuable approach to solving intercultural issues. Gilsa concludes that youth is the crucial stage in the development of an identity and TCC is developed by

¹ Everywhere we are confronted with VUCA – volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (Mack et al. 2016).

an interplay between personality, socialization and life experience (Gilsa 2019: 50f.). To train leaders to face and solve complex challenges requires the full attention of society in general and implies a call for educational policies.

“The need to develop in leaders and the future generation the attitudes that go beyond tolerance towards embracing differences and living constructively and compassionately in a multicultural world is critical to the survival of humankind and the planet. Leadership qualities are exhibited, recognized, and rewarded differently in every culture. Leaders and people who can function across cultures, who can create and sustain systems that draw on the strength of those differences, and who allow innovative approaches to emerge are essential in every human endeavour and require a new mind-map” (Pusch 2009: 81).

The strength of the transcultural approach with its focus on cooperation and commonalities can be a useful tool for individuals and organizations. Nevertheless, TCC is a relatively ‘young’ concept and the existing frameworks and assessment methods are not yet so advanced. Yet there is no clear academic approach on how to generate TCC. This work aims to provide direction and helpful findings for the conceptualization and assessment of TCC. Therefore, the existing conceptualizations and assessment methods of GC and ICC, such as the assessment by PISA, should serve as a template and inspiration.

The research method employed for this work was a comprehensive analysis of the PISA GC framework and assessment combined with insights from qualitative interviews and discussions with different experts in the fields of ICC and GC. The expert interviews were guided by the works of Gläser & Laudel (2010) and Mayring (2008, 2015). The analysis of the PISA GC assessment and previous works on TC and TCC at Zeppelin University’s Leadership Excellence Institute (LEIZ) were the starting points of this research. Furthermore, the research is connected to the experiences gained at the AFS “Global Competence: Our Future, Our Responsibility” conference in September 2018.² The research was guided by the question as to what findings can be derived from the analysis of GC,

² AFS Intercultural Programs is an international youth exchange organization and during the AFS conference in Budapest useful contacts to different education policy actors were made.

as applied by PISA, with regard to the conceptualization and assessment of TCC. Therefore, this paper connects to and continues the work of Gilsa, Salice-Stephan and Urthaler.

2. *The PISA Global Competence framework and assessment – PISA and its innovative domain*

PISA was launched by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1997, first administered in 2000 and now covers over 70 countries. Every three years, the PISA survey provides comparative data on fifteen-year-olds' performance in reading, mathematics and science. The average age of fifteen was chosen because, at this age, young people in most OECD countries are nearing the end of compulsory education. Since 2012 additional innovative domains have been developed and made available to countries to administer to students. "Global competence" was the innovative domain in the 2018 cycle. According to PISA, GC is needed for different reasons: to live harmoniously in multicultural communities, to thrive in a changing labour market, to use media platforms effectively and responsibly, and to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (OECD 2018: 4). PISA points out the importance of overcoming differences and that contemporary societies call for complex forms of belonging and citizenship, where individuals must interact with distant regions, people and ideas while also deepening their understanding of their local environment and the diversity within their own communities. It is about preparing students to appreciate the differences in the communities to which they belong in order that they can live together as global citizens (Delors et al. 1996; UNESCO 2014b).

During the development process of the GC assessment, different political channels (PISA Governing Board (PGB), OECD Secretariat, PISA National Project Managers, PISA Consortium, field experts, etc.) had direct and indirect influence on the outcome of the framework and assessment. In recent years the OECD, via PISA, has become an influential international education monitor and policy actor with strong media power. According to a survey of country practices, policy-makers across nearly all countries participating in PISA see PISA

“as an important indicator of system performance, and there is evidence that the PISA evaluation has the potential to define the policy problems and set the agenda for policy debate at the national and state levels” (Breakspear 2012: 27).

Concerning the PISA test design and the international comparison of survey results, several different issues have been identified and discussed. These include: materials translation, the measurement model used for the analysis, student sampling, domain representation, student motivation, presentation of the results and consequential validity (cf. Goldstein 2004a, 2004b; Thomas & Goldstein 2008). Hopfenbeck et al. argue that the strong critique of PISA instruments “ensures the OECD is kept under the scrutiny of academic expertise and provides substantial feedback for improving test design and data analysis techniques” (Hopfenbeck 2018: 347). No doubt, PISA provides us with a rich and varied dataset, but it must be remembered that the results derived will always be dependent on the methodology used and the assessment design adopted (Lafontaine & Monseur 2009).

Against this backdrop, the interplay between learning and assessment is to be considered as crucial. What and how learning occurs is affected by educational assessments. This is most obvious in classroom assessments. In ILSAs the connection between the assessment and learning is more indirect because it is mediated through policy, curriculum and assessment design. Baird et al. (2017: 317) argue that:

“if assessment is to serve the learning goals of education, then this discussion on the relationship between assessment and learning should be developed further and be at the forefront of ILSAs.”

It seems that ILSAs have not yet taught us much about learning or contributed to theories of learning, but they have had an impact upon what is learned and how it is learned through education policy (Baird et al. 2017). Considering the lack of transparency of the data, the sparse analyses of what students have learned and “the sometimes pseudo-use of ILSA data by policy-makers, there is room for improvement in the link between assessment and learning in this case” (ibid.: 335).

Furthermore, it must be mentioned that teaching has a political side. Every time curriculum revisions are contemplated, interest and lobby groups line up at the government’s door trying to ensure that their per-

spective is included. Freire (1993) points out that there is no “neutral” in the education process. In his view we are either recreating what is or critically evaluating our world and knowledge. Pitsoe & Mahlangu (2017: 141) argue “that teaching, as a political act, can serve to challenge, enforce, or reconstruct societal norms and values.” In the most OECD countries children and teenagers spend a huge amount of time in formal education systems. Due to the significant developments for students during their youth and adolescence, schools are uniquely positioned and can be highly influential in teaching various competences.

3. PISA procedure and shift in the global competence framework

Clearly, various PISA stakeholders and stakeholders from national education systems have influenced the process and development of the GC assessment. The challenge for PISA is to handle all interests and needs of the participating countries and therefore ends up in being a political negotiating process. The consensual decision to pick GC as the innovative domain for 2018 was taken in 2015, without any detailed description of the assessment and the different dimensions of GC. There is a clear framework and assessment shift captured from 2015 to 2018. The PISA procedure allows countries to stop the development process by contractors, experts and the PISA secretariat and to force them to restart the framework and assessment developing.

After the presentation of the first version in the PGB, some PISA member states had objections and doubts. The first expert team was replaced after around one year in 2016. In fact, many member states dropped out of the GC assessment at this stage. Germany, America, Finland, Ireland, Japan, and many other countries have chosen not to participate. A domino effect was observed. In the end, only 45 countries completed the GC questionnaire and, of these 45 countries, only 26 countries took the GC cognitive test.

The first GC conceptualization was motivated by the competitiveness of the international labour market and which skills students need to be successful because of this competitiveness. Skills and knowledge to be globally competitive were the centre of attention. Simplified, the concept was about language competences plus intercultural communication and

knowledge to work well internationally. After the first developing phase GC was presented to the countries as (Sälzer 2018: 8):

“the capacity to analyse global and intercultural issues critically and from multiple perspectives, to understand how differences affect perceptions, judgments, and ideas of self and others, and to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with others from different backgrounds on the basis of a shared respect for human dignity”.

The assessment of this concept was without a questionnaire and the cognitive test used simulated conversations with multiple-choice questions. The multiple-choice questions covered several response options including behavioural options. Several concerns and critiques were raised by the countries in the PGB about this framework and assessment. Concerns about the validity of the construct occurred, because students could easily understand the idea of the test concept and just pick the politest answer to succeed in the test. Furthermore, the format of multiple-choice only works if students can really find their response answer or behaviour in the given options. Other concerns were raised about the practical implications of the initial GC framework to strengthen student exchange programs and opportunities for people to go abroad, because this is not feasible for all countries participating in PISA.

The first conceptual framework promoted discussions about what is really needed to be globally competent. Most concerns in the discussion were raised by Western countries and the initial framework did not meet with full satisfaction. After this discussion, the development of the framework and assessment had to be restarted.

The final framework, which will be presented later, is closely linked to Global Citizenship Education (GCE) by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the SDGs. The final framework and assessment became an umbrella for different topics. In general, the framework is in line with the SDGs with a little more focus on ICC items. The shift from global competitiveness to integration in multicultural communities with more socio-emotional skills and actions towards collective well-being raised politically sensitive questions such as students' attitudes towards poverty and refugees. Some countries dropped out of the assessment, because it was perceived as problematic to move in a particular political direction or adopt a particular position by participating in this assessment, which was closely linked to GCE. In the

end the assessment design was driven by the feasibility of a computer-based test, time constraints and no possibility to observe students' real behaviour. Furthermore, due to the shift there was no time left to conduct proper and comprehensive field trials. The expert interviews conducted have shown that many different challenges occurred during the development of the GC assessment. The shift to the final framework and assessment strategy was appreciated by the countries, but the framework became more politically charged.

4. *PISA global competence framework design and assessment strategy*

This part of the chapter presents the global competence framework and assessment of PISA. The definition of GC introduced by PISA in 2018 points out that GC is a multidimensional capacity (OECD 2018: 7):

“Global competence is the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development.”

Furthermore, the framework points out that acquiring GC is a life-long process and there is no single point at which an individual becomes completely globally competent (OECD 2018: 7). PISA assesses at what stage fifteen-year-old students are situated in this process, and whether their schools effectively address the development of GC. The goal of GC assessment is therefore to understand at “what level a person is at the given moment, what their knowledge level and abilities are” (Mažeikienė & Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė 2007: 74). The definition highlights four different dimensions:

- the capacity to examine issues and situations of local, global and cultural significance (e.g., poverty, economic interdependence, migration, inequality, environmental risks, conflicts, cultural differences and stereotypes);
- the capacity to understand and appreciate different perspectives and world views;

- the ability to establish positive interactions with people of different national, ethnic, religious, social or cultural backgrounds or gender; and
- the capacity and disposition to take constructive action toward sustainable development and collective well-being.

Figure 1: PISA global competence framework



Source: OECD 2018: 1

These four dimensions are strongly connected. In the PISA GC framework various examples are provided³. Furthermore, four inseparable fac-

³ For example, if students from two different cultural backgrounds work together for a school project, they demonstrate GC. They get to know each other better (examine their cultural differences); try to understand how each perceives his or her role in the project and the other's perspective (understand perspectives); negotiate misunderstandings and clearly communicate expectations and feelings (interact openly, appropriately and effectively); and take stock of what they learn from each other to improve social relationships in their classroom and school (act for collective well-being) (OECD 2018: 8).

tors (“building blocks”) support the four dimensions: knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. The discussion regarding these factors in this section draws upon the conceptualization of these components provided by the Council of Europe (2016a, 2016b). Figure 1 summarizes the four dimensions surrounded by the building blocks. A short overview of the GC building blocks is provided below.

Table 1: The PISA global competence building blocks

Knowledge	Global and intercultural issues and topics: Culture and intercultural relations Socioeconomic development and interdependence Environmental sustainability Global institutions, conflicts and human rights
Skills	Reasoning with information Communication skills in intercultural contexts Perspective taking Conflict resolution skills Adaptability
Attitudes	Openness Respect Global mindedness
Values	Valuing human dignity Valuing cultural diversity

Source: Own representation.

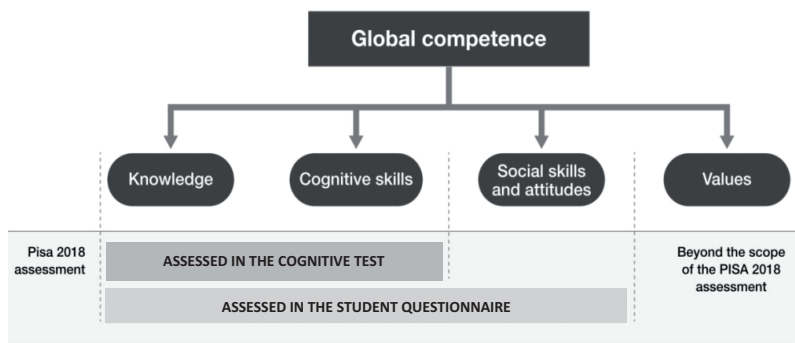
In order to assess the four dimensions, the PISA GC method comprises two components for the assessment (OECD 2018: 21):

- A cognitive test exclusively focused on the construct of “global understanding”, defined as the combination of background knowledge and cognitive skills required to solve problems related to global and intercultural issues;
- A set of questionnaire items collecting self-reported information on students’ awareness of global issues and cultures, skills (both cognitive and social) and attitudes, as well as information from schools and teachers on activities to promote GC.

The cognitive assessment is designed to elicit students' capacities to critically examine global issues, recognize outside influences on perspectives and world views, understand how to communicate with others in intercultural contexts and identify and compare different courses of action to address global and intercultural issues.

In the background, questionnaire information from students, teachers and school authorities is collected. For instance, students are asked to report how familiar they are with global issues, how developed their linguistic and communication skills are, to what extent they hold certain attitudes, such as respect for people from different cultural backgrounds or what opportunities they have at school to develop GC. Answers to the school and teacher questionnaires provide a comparative picture of how education systems foster GC throughout the curriculum and in classroom activities.

Figure 2: The PISA assessment strategy



Source: OECD 2018: 22.

Concerning the four building blocks, and as illustrated in figure 2, knowledge and (cognitive) skills will be covered ideally by the cognitive test and student questionnaire. Attitudes will be assessed only in the student questionnaire and values are, as mentioned before, beyond the scope of the assessment.

In a typical test unit in the PISA cognitive assessment for GC, students read about a case (scenario) and respond to different questions (open and

closed response items) that evaluate their capacity to understand its complexity and the multiple perspectives of the diverse actors involved. For analytical and assessment purposes, this framework distinguishes between four, interrelated cognitive processes that globally competent students need to use in order to fully understand global or intercultural issues and situations (OECD 2018: 25):

- The capacity to evaluate information, formulate arguments and explain complex situations and problems by using and connecting evidence, identifying biases and gaps in information and managing conflicting arguments.
- The capacity to identify and analyse multiple perspectives and world views, positioning and connecting their own and others' perspectives on the world.
- The capacity to understand differences in communication, recognizing the importance of socially-appropriate communication conventions and adapting communication to the demands of diverse cultural contexts.
- The capacity to evaluate actions and consequences by identifying and comparing different courses of action and weighing these actions against one another on the basis of short- and long-term consequences.

PISA provides typologies of the cognitive processes by levels (basic, intermediate, advanced) and describes the development in the four dimensions. The topics of the scenarios should be relevant to all students and should trigger their interest. In this way PISA refers to the idea of putting students in different shoes and of fostering the engagement of the students. Accordingly, PISA produces four formats that assign a particular role: students as researchers, reporters, mediators or team-members and debaters. In addition to the results of the cognitive assessment, the reporting on GC includes country or sub-population level information on students', school principals', teachers' and parents' responses to questionnaire items. The cognitive test and the questionnaire are both computer-based tests.

As described above, the questionnaires try to assess knowledge, skills and attitudes. For the questionnaires, PISA refers to scales that have already been validated in other empirical assessments. The questionnaires include multi-statement items using Likert-type methods. For assessing self-reported skills and attitudes, the most common problem is social

desirability. Especially, attitudes are related to self-image and social acceptance. Table 2 contains the information which the questionnaires aim to access:

Table 2: Information of the PISA questionnaire

The questionnaire for students provides information about:
<p>Skills and Knowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Self-reported knowledge of global and intercultural issues – Self-reported ability to communicate in multicultural contexts – Self-reported adaptability – Self-reported perspective taking <p>Attitudes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Self-reported openness toward people from other cultural backgrounds – Self-reported respect for people from other cultural backgrounds – Self-reported global mindedness <p>Background information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Data on opportunities to learn about global issues and other cultures – Information on students' participation in activities to solve global issues out of school (e.g., volunteering, eco-friendly habits, etc.)
The questionnaire for teachers provides information about:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Teachers' beliefs about diversity and inclusion policies of schools – Teachers' practices facilitating interactions and peer to peer learning between diverse students – Teachers' professional experience and training in intercultural communication and teaching multicultural classes – Teachers' self-efficacy in a multicultural environment
The questionnaire for school leaders provides information about:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Curriculum content: global issues, diverse histories and cultures (e.g., what global issues are taught?) – School policies to facilitate the integration of foreign-born students and non-native speakers – School activities for multicultural learning (e.g., cultural events, exchange programmes, etc.)

Source: Own representation.

5. *Remarks on the PISA global competence framework and assessment*

After briefly introducing the GC concept from PISA, we will now look at some limits of the assessment and framework. As described, the final framework is closely linked to GCE and the SDGs and has therefore become more politically charged. For instance, during the AFS global competence conference, there was a debate among experts and teachers about the terms used in the GC definition. The argument was raised that the term “appropriate” is not fitting and offers too wide an interpretation. Appropriate means suitable or fitting for a particular purpose, person, occasion, etc. and “appropriate behaviour is assessed by the other involved in the interaction” (Deardorff 2009b: 479). During these discussions it was evident that different cultural perspectives and agendas towards a definition of GC exist. There are different perceptions of how to engage with others and what these engagements should look like.

This connects to the work of Gallie on “Essentially Contested Concepts”⁴. Furthermore, the interrelatedness of cognitive components (ideally assessing knowledge and skills) with attitudes and personal preferences is multi-dimensional in a highly complex way. Sälzer (2018: 10) points out:

“that the definition formulated in the assessment framework may serve as a valid starting point for further differentiating and structuring the domain of global competence, but it does not solve the problem of

⁴ W.B. Gallie (1956) argued in his classic essay entitled “Essentially Contested Concepts” that certain concepts, such as art, social justice, or democracy, admit no fixed and final definition. Essentially contested concepts do not succumb (as most scientific theories eventually do) to a definite or judicial knockout. His insight is that a final definition for such terms is impossible because virtually every person or organization that might be a party to the definitional process approaches that process with philosophical values or a programmatic agenda in mind. Consider professionals who teach foreign languages or who conduct intercultural educational experiences or who support international collaboration through the internet or who hire people to represent transnational companies in other countries or churches preparing missionaries or military staff, they all approach GC with significantly different needs, experiences, and personal and professional interests (Hunter 2006: 268). Different actors can be expected to offer definitions that arise from their context and agenda. To conclude, it must be noted that emerging terms like GC or TCC could prove to be contested in a way similar to Gallie’s descriptions above.

finding a minimum consensus for the kind of content that can be assessed in an international comparison through test units and questionnaires.”

Another deficit of the framework is the lack of information provided about the connection between the different building blocks. How are knowledge, skills, attitudes and values connected and how do they support or weaken each other? This is a crucial question for every conceptualization. For instance, the pyramid model of ICC from Deardorff (2006) presents how attitudes, skills and knowledge are (possibly) linked and that certain attitudes are required for ICC. Furthermore, the importance of attitudes and values is discussed and analyzed less in the framework of PISA. Overall, more time, discourse and consensus is needed to develop a more satisfying GC assessment for an ILSA.

Assessing GC in all its complexity requires a multi-method, multi-perspective approach. The PISA GC assessment contributes a development in this direction, although clear challenges and limitations remain. The different performance moderators (e.g., reading capability, attitudes, values, etc.) of the cognitive test have been discussed before. The most salient challenge for the PISA assessment is that it needs to account for the large variety of geographic and cultural contexts represented by participating countries through one single instrument. Students who perform well on a question assessing their reasoning about a global issue are likely to have some prior knowledge of the issue, and the type of knowledge students already have of global issues is influenced by their experiences within their unique social context. On the one hand, cultural variability in the tested population requires that the test material cannot be too biased towards a particular perspective, for example the perspective of a student in a rich country, who thinks about a problem in a poor country. The test units should focus on issues that are relevant for fifteen-year-old students in all countries. On the other hand, leaning too much towards “cultural neutrality” in the design of scenarios and questions reduces the authenticity and relevance of the tasks. Therefore, it is difficult to develop scenarios that are relevant to all fifteen-year-olds and are not related to stereotypes (Sälzer 2018: 13).

The test design is further limited by the time constraints of the PISA testing design and the narrow availability of internationally-valid instruments that measure the behavioural elements of GC. Other concerns can

be raised about the validity of the construct. Compared to the degree of sophistication found in the domains of reading, mathematics and science in PISA (OECD 2016), the current GC assessment framework “fails at least at the point where correct responses of the open-response questions are distinguished from incorrect responses” (Sälzer 2018: 11). The open-response items are scored by using rubrics, which include detailed qualitative descriptions of performance standards for scoring guidelines. The differentiation between basic, intermediate and advanced levels are not always precise, and it seems difficult to create transparency and replicability. Furthermore, it is questionable how to evaluate certain rubric descriptions such as “the student is not yet able to observe, listen actively, and interpret social and contextual clues such as body language, tone, diction, physical interactions, dress code, or silence” by using a computer-based test. How to use rubrics effectively is much discussed by teachers and experts. As the interviews have revealed, PISA does not foster this dialogue in order to use the rubrics in a teaching context with helpful pedagogical tools.

Due to the construct validity, performance moderators, cultural variability, missing authenticity and less participating countries, the results from the cognitive test are clearly limited. The results from the questionnaire seem to be more valuable for gaining an overview of existing GC approaches in different education systems.

6. *From global competence to transcultural competence*

After presenting and analysing the PISA GC framework and assessment, this section will now shed some light on TCC and will present different definitions of GC and TCC. The concept of TC is introduced briefly in order to derive findings for the conceptualization and assessment of TCC.

Many analogous terms have been introduced in recent years such as cross-cultural competence, intercultural communicative competence, global competence, intercultural and socio-pragmatic competence. Over thirty similar terms are used from cultural intelligence in the business context to cultural competence in health care. As the expert interviews have shown, the choice of which term is used depends mainly on the context and the target audience.

Summarizing different existing concepts of GC like the concept from Fernando Reimers (2009), the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (Hunter 2004) and the Global Competence Task Force (Mansilla & Jackson 2011), there are similarities and differences, which could be explained by Gallie's idea of "Essentially Contested Concepts". Different parties from various cultural backgrounds can be expected to offer definitions that arise from their context and reflect their agendas. GC is a 21st century approach and expands beyond models from the past, such as ICC (1980s-1990s) and its predecessor emotional intelligence (1970s-1980s), which does not include a cultural element. The literature, theories and frameworks on ICC, GC and global citizenship originate predominantly from a Western, Euro-American context. However, related concepts exist in many countries and cultures around the world. One interesting perspective on GC originates from South Africa and involves the concept of Ubuntu (cf. Nwosu 2009). To include different perspectives, from around the world could be useful to foster a worldwide discussion and consensus.

GC is reflective of the interconnected global society and economy that we know today, and it implies the ability to interact effectively with cultures around the world. Usually GC includes all components of ICC, as well as additional dimensions such as global mindedness, global awareness, historical perspective of the world, and collaboration across cultures. At the pinnacle of Darla Deardorff's Pyramid Model of ICC (2006) is the ultimate intention of treating others the way that they wish to be treated. Interactions are cross-cultural, meaning exchanges with another culture, however the scope is not across the entire world.

Global citizenship imparts a new layer of complexity, and since "global" is part of both terms, it is critical to use the appropriate term to communicate one's intentions. Global citizenship is a broad term that encompasses the humanitarian component of taking care of the world and its inhabitants. Global issues such as the environment, world hunger and famine, the availability of clean water, social justice, etc. are all significant causes that deserve the attention of all citizens of the world. Addressing these important matters is a step beyond GC and often requires additional skills.

Ashwill & Oanh (2009) define global citizenship as an orientation that universalizes the classical notion of citizenship, which entails certain rights and responsibilities and allegiance to a sovereign state. Rather than pledging allegiance to one nation-state, however, the global citizen's in-

tellectual landscape and sense of connectedness and belonging extend to all of humanity. Therefore, GCE (UNESCO 2014a: 10)

“aims to be transformative, building the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that learners need to be able to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world in order to effectively engage for their own well-being and the well-being of others.”

The idea behind global citizenship is that one’s identity transcends geography or political borders and that responsibilities or rights are derived from membership of a broader class called humanity. Hunter et al. argue (2006) that GC is not global citizenship. However, a global citizen needs to be globally competent. In the case of the PISA GC definition, this distinction is not made, because PISA clearly tries to be an umbrella for GC, GCE and the SDGs.

The transcultural approach offers another focus. Regarding the broad research on cultural concepts, the main distinction between the transcultural approach and most of the intercultural and multicultural concepts is the basic unit of analysis. The debate on IC and MC was embedded in the “debate on nation states as cultural containers which [...] can be found in most modern concepts of culture” (Fischer & Wieland 2016: 34). Hence, the basic unit of most of the intercultural and multicultural analysis is the nation state, and therefore, identity becomes the core of the concept. Overall, ICC, GC and global citizenship refer to the notions of nation state and identity.

Compared with that, TC is a solution-based approach about how to deal with differences. The basic units of the transcultural analysis are cooperation and interaction, thereby looking for shared experiences, commonalities, and how they are created. On the individual level TC is not an identity-related concept. Wieland (2016: 18) describes TC as a

“learning process for the relationing of different cultural identities and perspectives. It is not a form of identity or performs the demarcation of a space (or annuls such demarcation); rather, the prefix ‘trans’ designates the relation, the creation of connection, the building of a bridge between ‘real intercultural interaction patters’ in social interactions through an ongoing process of learning.”

Therefore, TC can rather be seen as a process of bridge building, of an interactive, social generating of commonalities when dealing with intercultural interaction. It is an unbiased approach, abstaining from a normative point of reference, in order to find and create commonalities. This non-normativity inherent in TC “believes in a common ground, which does not necessarily consist of globally shared values, but rather in the first step of a social process” (Gilsa 2019: 46). This process may liberate us from the obsession and convention of culture, which may allow us to participate in, and not negate, the valued traditions of other cultures (Epstein 1995). It is against this backdrop that TCC scholars place the requirement of non-normativity at the core of their approach (Wieland 2019; Gilsa 2019).

In focus are transactions and, in fact, “transactions have become the meeting place of economics, physics, psychology, ethics, jurisprudence and politics” (Commons 1924: 4), representing the nodes of a complex system. Therefore, the characteristics of the nodes and how they are connected determines the performance of the networks (Wieland 2018: 41). A given transaction is influenced by different cultural levels. These levels include national cultures, organizational cultures, the cultures of different professions (such as engineers, managers, bankers, doctors) and the cultural beliefs of individuals. Wieland provides a figure of the transcultural process logic, which illustrates the relocation of the value level, the selection of value events and the recursive influence of levels, events and transactions (Wieland 2018: 177). In sum, TC is not about creating a new cosmopolitan or global culture of values, but about creating a new transactional society, a community of cultural events that relate to each other in a learning process, in so doing creating the stability and productivity of a transaction. From this a certain form or generalized normativity can be established, but it does not necessarily have to be the case (Wieland 2018: 176).

Unlike IC or MC, TC does not seek to overcome the differences, which always has the connotation of implementing one’s own normative beliefs by overcoming given obstacles. The non-normative attitude inherent in TC believes in a common ground, which does not necessarily consist of globally-shared values, but rather in the first step of a social process. A transculturally competent person tries to bridge differences by seeing

commonalities in differences (the genius of the AND)⁵ and realizes these reconciled solutions.

This is just a short overview of the transcultural approach and therefore incomplete (cf. Wieland 2014, 2016 & 2018; Gilsa 2019; Urthaler 2019; Salice-Stephan 2019). Table 3 presents a collection of existing definitions of GC and TCC.

Table 3: Definitions of global and transcultural competence

Author and year	Definitions of global competence
Stanley Foundation & American Council on International Intercultural Education (ACIIE) (1996: 4)	A globally competent learner is one who is able to understand the interconnectedness of peoples and systems, to have a general knowledge of history and world events, to accept and cope with the existence of different cultural values and attitudes and, indeed, to celebrate the richness and benefits of this diversity.
Lambert (1996)	A globally competent person is one who has knowledge (of current events), can empathize with others, demonstrates approval (maintains a positive attitude), has an unspecified level of foreign language competence and task performance (ability to understand the value in something foreign).
Olson & Kroeger (2001: 117)	A globally competent individual has "...enough substantive knowledge, perceptual understanding, and intercultural communication skills to effectively interact in our globally interdependent world"
Swiss Consulting Group (2002: 4)	(...) the capacity of an individual or a team to parachute into any country and get the job done while respecting cultural pathways.
Hunter (2005: 81)	"(...) having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate and work effectively outside one's environment."
Reimers (2009: 35ff.)	GC consists of knowledge (i.e., knowledge of globalization, world history, and geography), skills (i.e., the capacity to speak, understand, and think in various languages) and attitudes (i.e., empathy and a positive disposition towards cultural differences).

⁵ The so called "genius of the AND" is the ability to embrace both forces of a dimension at the same time. Decision makers who follow the yin/yang philosophy figure out a way to have both A AND B: "Long-term AND short-term, profit AND good for the world, low costs AND quality are all possible if the OR can be replaced with the AND" (Glover & Friedman 2015: 63). For more information see: Urthaler (2019).

Boix Mansilla & Jackson (2011: 102)	Students demonstrate GC through awareness and curiosity about how the world works – informed by disciplinary and interdisciplinary insights. Specifically, globally competent students are able to perform the following four competences: investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, recognize perspectives, others’ and their own, communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, and take action to improve conditions
Todd (2013: 45)	GC is one’s embodiment of four elements: A disposition toward culturally diverse peoples set into motion by open-mindedness; a body of knowledge founded on an understanding of one’s own cultural background, globalization, and world languages; a set of skills such as the abilities to collaborate, investigate globally pressing issues, and communicate effectively, with these three elements uniting for the purpose of taking action for the global good, thus rendering the globally competent individual a cosmopolitan.
PISA (2018: 7)	GC is the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development.
Author and year	Definitions of transcultural competence
Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1994: 355)	The capability to connect different points of view through the elicitation of dilemmas and their reconciliation (reconcile differences). The capability to deliver the business benefits of cultural reconciliation through servant leadership (leverage business benefits).
Glover & Friedman (2015: 8)	TCC involves being able to adapt to various sociocultural settings anywhere in the world, with or without prior knowledge of the cultural orientations of those people and societies they are encountering. This general cultural adaption requires more sophistication and a greater level of awareness and understanding on how culture works, regardless of the specifics of the sociocultural encounter.
Wieland (2018: 225)	TCC describes the ability to cope with cultural difference and diversity and is not only constitutive, but above all in global value chains. This can be a result of individual, professional, organizational, regional and national cultural patterns. In addition, TCC is the ability to recognize and accept such differences and is reflected in the successful creation of new shared horizons with new ways and methods of problem solving, and new forms of collaborative communities.

Gilsa (2019: 65)	TCC is a cooperation-oriented ability to find and create commonalities, regardless of the specifics of the SCE. Self-awareness, understanding of how culture works and experiences lead to value-free openness. The developed ethno-relative perspective perceives socio-cultural encounters as contingent processes in order to generate mutual understanding. By perceiving culture as a network, a dynamic, open concept is established. The concepts of reconciliation and the genius of the AND are able to bridge differences by seeing commonalities in differences and become an important component of TC and its competence.
Salice-Stephan (2019: 89ff.)	TCC is a cooperation-based ability to identify commonalities and to derive reconciled solutions in a culturally diverse environment. It comprises the perception that SCEs bear a synergistic potential, from which transcultural competent persons can derive creative solutions. This competence is based on the understanding that cultural values are not static but multi-dimensional. TCC is a self-reflective dynamic process that consists of avoiding inner-directedness, enabling non-normative openness through ethno-relativity and mindful interaction. Being able to reconcile various worldviews by engaging in multi-perspectivity and applying the genius of the AND results in shared values that will generate cultural synergy and complementarity. TCC consists of six core dimensions, which are self-awareness, cultural knowledge, non-normative openness, mindful interaction, focus on commonalities and synergy/realization of reconciled solutions.

Source: Own representation.

7. *Derived findings for transcultural competence*

The final part of this work will present, the derived findings from the conducted analysis for the conceptualization and assessment of TCC. The PISA GC framework and assessment, which draws on the experience of various research and assessments in the field of ICC and GC, served as an ideal template to gain a broader understanding of assessment and teaching tools for complex competences such as TCC.

7.1 *Takeaways from the PISA global competence assessment*

Considering the PISA GC assessment, a format with open and closed questions seems feasible and promising. An assessment for TCC could put employers or employees in different decision-making scenarios and

roles. Obviously, the strengths of TCC have to be emphasized in an assessment, and an ongoing reflective learning way with clear and simple guidelines should be provided in addition. With the help of a group of leading intercultural experts Deardorff (2009b: 478) identified the most promising assessment methods for ICC. According to their analysis, case studies, interviews and a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures are the most suitable instruments. A cognitive test provides (limited) insights into the knowledge and skills of the test taker. This could be valuable information for the personal development of the test taker. Furthermore, some of the questions applied in the different constructs in the student questionnaire can be used for the development of a TCC assessment. Constructs like perspective-taking, adaptability, awareness of intercultural communication, interest in learning about other cultures and respect for people from other cultural backgrounds contain many questions, which are crucial to TC as well. Questions about attitudes like respect, adaptability and openness are an important piece of TCC. Some of the questions are quite similar to the questions used by Salice-Stephan (2019). Nevertheless, TCC assessment needs to focus on the relevant components such as the ability to cooperate, the focus on commonalities and the realization of reconciled solutions. Overall, the PISA GC assessment showed that time, discourse and consensus are needed to create a successful assessment that is accepted and used by participants. A Delphi technique could be employed to create consensus among experts and organizations about the definition and components of TCC.⁶

7.2 A bridge between global competitiveness and global citizenship

Globalization has an undisputable impact on education systems around the world and in recent years different initiatives like GCE and education for sustainable development have been conceived by political theorists and educational philosophers as a way to speak back to the impacts globalization. UNESCO and related intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations broadly promote these initiatives. The shift of the PISA GC

⁶ Deardorff (2006) used the Delphi technique for ICC and Hunter (2005) for GC to establish consensus among a panel of experts.

framework from 2015 to 2018 shows the difficult balancing between these different perspectives on globalization.

“Economic competitiveness is largely about acquiring technical skills to improve one’s region or nation’s position vis a vis others. Global civility, by contrast, is largely about understanding, solidarity, and empathy with others. Global competitiveness and global civility are not conterminous.” (Reimers 2009: 193).

Both perspectives usually refer to the notions of nation and identity. In this case TC provides an approach that is not derived from identity and could form a bridge between these two viewpoints. In addition, justice and solidarity could be pragmatically useful in this case of global interconnectedness. In a world where we are all interconnected, it is useful and beneficial to think about all of us. Global challenges could force different positions to cooperate and work together. Therefore, the transcultural approach can provide a more practical approach of how to deal with cultures and focus on commonalities. The development of required competences to solve these challenges will be a task for the whole of society and a call for educational policies. TCC is a process that aims to create new forms of collaborative communities (Wieland 2018).

In fact, the contemporary definition of the relatively young and diverse term TC excludes neither the cosmopolitan nor the intercultural perspective. It is neither the extension of IC, nor its dissolution in cosmopolitanism.

“A transcultural person has roots within a specific culture. There is no need to deny one’s own origin. Cooperation with people from other cultures to mutual advantages occurs on the basis of one’s own cultural and moral conditioning. From a transcultural point of view one would accept that there is one world but also recognize that people live in different cultural contexts. Different individuals integrate elements stemming from other cultures in different ways“ (Fischer & Wieland 2016: 38).

The transcultural approach as a more practical approach with a focus on commonalities could function as a bridge between different perspectives and could initiate a social learning process.

7.3 *Conceptualizing of transcultural competence*

During this work the need for a further conceptualization of TCC has become clearer. TC is a very young concept. During the expert interviews, on the one hand, the interest in the concept and, on the other hand, the need for more information was noticeable. A conceptualization of TCC could foster the development of assessments and connect TCC to various other models of ICC and GC. A comprehensive conceptualization of TCC addresses three questions:

- What are its core elements? (Key indicators and components of TCC)
- What is the relation of these elements? How is TCC structured and what are the antecedents and consequences of it? (Structure and nomological network of TCC)
- How do the elements of TCC manifest themselves in actual SCEs? (TCC in actual SCEs)

Answering these questions takes time, discourse and consensus. Different types of model can be developed to conceptualize TCC. Compositional, co-orientational, adaptational, causes process or developmental model are possible options for TCC. For instance, Bennett (1986) created the well-known developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS). Spitzberg and Changmon (2009: 9ff.) provide an overview of various models used for ICC. To conceptualize and structure TCC the works of Salice-Stephan (2019) and Gilsa (2019) are a starting point. Both used the work of Matveev & Merz (2013) to identify key dimensions according to the cognitive, affective and behavioural nature of TCC. Outcomes of these three dimensions such as (1) knowledge and attitudes, (2) attitudes and (3) skills can again impact all dimensions. Furthermore, the work of Urthaler (2019) can be used to work out a key component of TCC, namely its focus on commonalities. In the following a compositional and a process model of TCC are presented. The compositional model (Table 8) tries to collect the findings of this work and the works of Gilsa (2019), Urthaler (2019) and Salice-Stephan (2019) as an outlook and for further research.

Table 4: Transcultural competence components

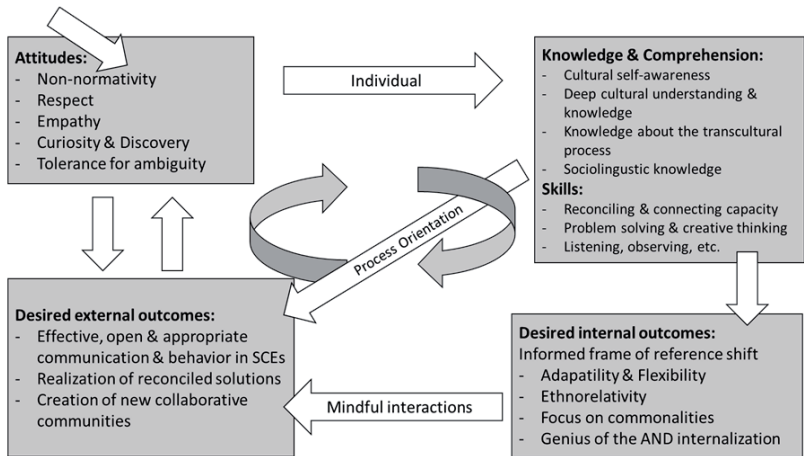
Variable	Original Indicators	Core Indicators
Disposition/ Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ethno-relativity ▪ Respect ▪ Non-normativity ▪ Openness ▪ Appreciation of otherness ▪ Adaptability ▪ Empathy ▪ Self-reflection ▪ Self-awareness ▪ Self-confidence ▪ Tolerance for ambiguity ▪ Flexibility ▪ Creativity ▪ Cosmopolitan outlook ▪ Global Mindedness ▪ Sensitivity ▪ Sense of humility/compassion ▪ Curiosity ▪ Patience ▪ Emotional resilience ▪ Non-stress tendency ▪ Inner purpose or spirit of adventure ▪ Optimism and trust giving ▪ Willingness to be involved in a trans-cultural learning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-awareness ▪ Non-normativity ▪ Tolerance for ambiguity ▪ Empathy ▪ Respect
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural understanding ▪ Culture-specific knowledge ▪ Cultural self-awareness ▪ Cultural awareness ▪ Cultural motivation ▪ Deep understanding and knowledge of culture including context, role, identity and impact of culture on worldviews ▪ Knowledge about the world and inter-cultural issues ▪ Socio-linguistic knowledge ▪ Knowledge about the transcultural process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deep understanding and knowledge of culture ▪ Cultural self-awareness ▪ Knowledge about the transcultural process

Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to recognize and accept differences ▪ Ability to cooperate ▪ Positive social relationship skills ▪ Friendly and positive manner/politeness ▪ Nonjudgmental reactions ▪ Behavioral flexibility ▪ Communicative appropriateness ▪ Ability to share ideas, information, networks and knowledge ▪ Ability to find a common denominator ▪ Competent language user and language proficiency ▪ Mindfulness action: observe, describe, interpret, create new categories ▪ Active and mindful listening ▪ Critical thinking and evaluating ▪ Connecting and reconciling ▪ Focusing on commonalities ▪ Reconciling (Genius of the AND) ▪ Understanding TC as a process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ability to cooperate ▪ Reconciling and connecting capacity ▪ Problem solving ▪ Creative thinking ▪ Ability to share (information, ideas, networks, etc.)
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus on mindful interactions and commonalities ▪ Working effectively in diverse teams ▪ Appropriate and effective communication ▪ Cultural mediator and problem solver ▪ Realization of reconciled solutions ▪ Reflective manner ▪ Task accomplishment and completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Realization of reconciled solutions ▪ Focus on mindful interactions and commonalities ▪ Bridging differences and collective action ▪ Creation of new collaborative communities

Source: Own representation.

The TCC process model (Figure 3) refers to the compositional model and is inspired by the ICC model of Darla Deardorff (2006). “Table 4” and “Figure 3” are just for the time being and require more research. “Figure 3” begins with attitudes and moves from the individual level (attitudes) to the interaction level (outcomes). The degree of TCC depends on the acquired degree of attitudes, knowledge/comprehension, and skills. TCC development is an ongoing process, and thus it becomes important for individuals to be given opportunities to reflect on and assess the development of their own TCC over time.

Figure 3: Transcultural competence process model



Source: Own representation.

7.4 Promising assessment methods for transcultural competence

Derived from the analysis and the limitations of every assessment the difficulty of evaluating ICC, GC or TCC emerges when it is necessary to perform a holistic assessment that must involve all the components of the competence. Therefore, the relevant components must be selected carefully (Mažeikienė & Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė 2007: 80). It could be useful to identify the core components of TCC and focus on them. Due to the analysis of the PISA GC assessment and the work of Gilsa (2019), Urthaler (2019), and Salice-Stephan (2019), there are several takeaways for creating a promising assessment for TCC.

First, every assessment needs a clear purpose. It starts with the question as to why we want to assess something. Another important first step is to define the target audience and who should be tested. In the next step, a clear definition of successful outcomes is needed and proper assessment tools and strategies that are aligned with the learning objectives have to be selected. A clear assessment procedure is needed that shows how the test is administered, evaluated and scored. Different aspects of the tests must be evaluated for their scope, efficiency, and

length as well as their validity and reliability. And finally, ongoing and not just end-testing should be provided (Fantini 2009: 461).

One clear purpose of a TCC test is to provide a more practical and positive cross-cultural approach for SCEs and cultural dilemmas. The target audience should be people who are working in multicultural environments and who have the potential to become involved in cultural dilemmas. Furthermore, PISA claims that everything that can be measured receives more value and attention. This is obviously up for discussion in the case of GC or TCC. Does such a complex competence gain value simply by being measured? The most important purpose to assess TCC goes in line with an ongoing and reflective assessment that provides the assessment taker with the opportunity to foster his or her TCC. In this case the purpose of the assessment is linked to an assessment that is combined with the learning and training of TCC. Linked to the components and indicators of TCC, there should be a careful selection and identification of which components should be assessed.

Different test types exist and each test type provides different advantages. Fantini (2009: 463) provides an overview of these different test types. In the case of TCC the following test types could be employed: readiness test, diagnostic test, aptitude test and formative test. Another question is whether TCC applied by a person in a certain situation will always appear in the same way and have the same solution or outcome. By choosing a certain test type different techniques and strategies have to be considered. Findings of educational research are quite helpful in this regard. As Darla Deardorff (2009b: 477) points out it is necessary to use a mix of techniques and strategies. A mix should include closed and open-ended questions with various scorings (e.g., matching items, true/false questions, multiple-choice, close or gap-filling items, personal rubrics for self-evaluation, etc.). It is even possible to work out active and passive activities for individuals and groups. Gilsa (2019) provides a helpful overview in his work on different assessment tools and Fantini provides a comprehensive chart of ICC assessment instruments that have been used over the last decades (Fantini 2009: 466ff.).

Taking these findings into account, a portfolio or e-portfolio assessment for TCC seems promising, practicable and purposeful. A transcultural assessment should not just be a placement test, where the test takers are placed into different categories and are left without reflective questions and further suggestions for development. TC is a very new concept

and therefore it needs education and explanation. A comprehensive e-portfolio or paper portfolio assessment could provide such space for educational and explanatory sections about culture, the genius of the AND, the focus on commonalities and so on. Portfolios can include personal statements, papers, reports, writing samples, lesson plans, lessons learned, personal statements, reflections, reports, sharing experience, evaluation, assessment, resumés and helpful descriptions. Detailed structured templates and guidelines with proposed theories to analyse and opportunities to propose new structural elements are crucial for successful portfolios. It could be possible to develop an e-portfolio (e.g., in the form of an app), which is a guideline through the process of TCC with different assessment categories and examples of successfully realized reconciled solutions. The portfolio should be designed to report growth and failure at the same time and provide feedback and possible toolkits for further development. For instance, the dilemma reconciliation process, with the charting of cultural spaces, from Glover and Friedman is a helpful toolkit (2015: 70ff.). In the assessment of Salice-Stephan (2019) the realization of a reconciled solution is excluded. With an e-portfolio assessment authentic evidence can be created and it would be possible to assess or make the realization of reconciliation visible.

Another assessment that seems promising for TCC would be a type of aptitude assessment. An aptitude test is a systematic means of testing abilities to perform specific tasks and react to a range of different situations. The assessment of GC from the Global Competence Association, which was mentioned earlier, and the Intercultural Competence Profiler (ICP) offered by Trompenaars-Hampden-Turner Consulting are good starting points. Gilsa (2019) concludes that the ICP (Reconciliation and 4R model) shows steps towards non-normativity. This could be a foundation for TCC and could be further developed with an emphasis on the genius of the AND.

To sum up, the connection of an aptitude assessment with a following e-portfolio for TCC development seems promising. To start the transcultural learning process, an aptitude assessment could provide helpful insights. After such a test strengths and weakness can be pointed out and suggestions for further development can be derived.

7.5 *The interplay between assessment and learning*

Against this backdrop of promising assessments, the interplay between learning and assessment must be considered. It is important to develop assessments that foster learning and training. Merley an assessment of TCC will not meet the complexity of this learning process. Therefore, TCC needs more practical training methods that are linked to the personal process with aligned assessment tools. The increase in cultural diversity within many countries due to immigration, resettlement and other factors combined with the evolving demands of globalization and global value creation have led to an increase in the demand for cross-cultural training. The term ‘cross-cultural’ explicitly refers to any sort of interaction where more than one culture is involved. Put simply, cross-cultural training means any training that helps overcome cultural challenges in work or in life when interacting with others whose culture, values and beliefs we are not fully aware of.⁷

It would be promising to analyse existing (skill focused) cross-cultural training in different cultural regions and business to work out a transculturally-based training method. Different trends in cross-cultural training must be considered. Thanks to new technologies, virtual global teams are increasing and people who work in such teams never meet face-to-face with their fellow team members. The content of cross-cultural training has to be adjusted to meet the special needs and demands of the people engaged in these virtual interactions (Storti 2009: 284). In addition, the delivery of cross-cultural training will probably change. The future of most training will be computer-based e-learning combined with face-to-face training and workshops. Another trend for cross-cultural training is the rise of “domestic” training for people who interact on a regular basis with people from different cultures. This audience is different because their contact with foreigners is relatively limited and takes place in the

⁷ Generally cross-cultural training can be divided into two different areas: country-focused, and skill-focused. Country-focused training will only look at one (or a few) culture(s), e.g. Chinese, Japanese, Turkish, etc. The content will look at specific areas if the culture whether that be etiquette, communication or negotiation. Skill focused training on the other hand is a more generic type of course which looks at areas such as communication, management, persuasion, leadership, negotiation, sales, etc. and then addresses cultural differences within that framework.

participants' home country. These trends have to be taken into account for the development of transcultural training.

Another helpful way for the development of TCC training could be the identification of successful transcultural solutions. An overview of organizational and individual success stories, which are good examples of applied TCC in cultural dilemmas, could be a good starting point for the development of transcultural training. A list of these cultural dilemmas and solutions would help to visualize the process and results of TCC. The power of storytelling could be used to provide helpful insights into the process of transcultural learning. Such a collection of transcultural examples could serve as a template for the development of scenarios, training and portfolio assessments. It could be possible to present success and failure stories of SCEs and add reflective questions for transcultural learners. Even an interactive app with transcultural stories and reflective tasks and questions is feasible.⁸ Because the transcultural approach always looks at specific SCEs and cultural dilemmas (transactions), it could be helpful to identify, collect and present specific reconciled solutions.

8. *Conclusion*

As the analysis has shown there are several findings that can be derived from the PISA GC framework and assessment for TCC. Youth is the crucial stage to initiate a social learning process and following the message of the “future of jobs” report of 2018, the way schools and education systems respond to growing economic interdependence, cultural divides, new digital opportunities and increasing calls for sustainability will have a significant impact on the well-being of all members of the communities they serve.

“Schools have been guided at different times by different purposes, from building nations, and national and political identities to helping the poor, from improving national competitiveness to assimilating im-

⁸ For instance, the “Culture for Business” app is based on Fons Trompenaars’ Seven Dimensions of Culture model and is supported by data on the cultures of over 140 countries. It provides business travelers, (international) managers or any individuals who are interested in understanding other cultures with specific tips for meetings, management and negotiations.

migrants, from educating citizens to educating workers. The proposition that schools should aim to educate global citizens competes with alternative purposes.” (Reimers 2009: 193)

Achieving GC through education will require significant changes in the classroom: changes concerning what students learn about the world and other cultures, the opportunities they have to practice what they learn, and how teachers support this learning by working with culturally-diverse students. Overall, no single assessment can fully account for the complexity of GC as a learning goal and PISA is using its power to set the media agenda to promote the inclusion of GC in the school curriculum. The GC assessment conducted by PISA reflects the constraints of an ILSA and some limitations (social desirability, construct validity, performance moderators, etc.) cannot be ignored. More efforts, beyond 2018, will be needed to build on the lessons learnt from this initiative to further improve the measurement of complex competences such as GC.

Indeed, as Reimers (2013) concludes, evident deficits in global competency will not be solved by doing more of what has been done in the past; an education with a heavy bias towards contemplation, and too little focus on developing the capacity for engaged and effective global citizenship. Naturally, designing new approaches has implications for curriculum design, schools, teachers and as well as the delivery of content. Most schools are guided and controlled by national policies and instructs. Nevertheless, international school networks are growing, and schools are shaped by globalization in various ways. Nowadays, in many schools, people from different cultural backgrounds interact with one another and the stakeholders of schools are becoming more diverse. One of the essential requirements to advance global education is to develop high quality curricula, teaching materials and opportunities for teacher education.

The practical approach of TC could be helpful for teachers and education systems to foster cooperation among students and the different stakeholders of schools. In the highly political discussion of what to teach and how to teach it, notions of national identity often hinder the development of common ground. In this context, the transcultural approach offers a helpful and practical way of creating commonalities and new solutions to cultural dilemmas by focusing on the social learning process.

By looking at TC, it would be promising to develop an ongoing TCC assessment method that is closely linked to the transcultural process with

helpful training tools. As analysed, the interplay between assessment and learning is crucial to foster TCC. E-portfolios are possible tools to guide and facilitate the transcultural process and an aptitude assessment with open- and closed-response items, including scenarios of SCEs and cultural dilemmas, could be a helpful starting point. Therefore, it could be helpful to identify, collect and present specific reconciled solutions. In addition, the conceptualization of TC needs to focus on the key components (focus on commonalities, cooperation, genius of the AND, etc.). The development of a detailed cause path model, which shows the relation between these elements and the manifestation of these elements in actual SCEs, could be a promising step. In a world where we continuously have to learn, unlearn and relearn, TC offers a social learning process for new collaborative communities.

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Transcultural Management in Global Firms

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1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of an empirical study conducted with interview partners from globally operating companies on the topic of transcultural management.¹

Against the backdrop of globalization, companies are constantly under pressure to use their resources effectively and innovatively in order to gain competitive advantage, not only within one country but also across borders. Employing a diverse workforce and managing different working cultures brings along countless opportunities, but also risks. When not managed properly, diversity within a company's staff could potentially have a negative impact on its performance. In this context, transcultural management is a subject of growing interest as it offers a rather new approach with regard to managing diverse cultures, namely national, organizational, professional and individual ones, in an effective and sustainable manner.

So far, in the business world, intercultural training was and is still used to develop the ability and willingness to cope within a culturally diverse workforce, as well as in contact with external stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds. Nonetheless, intercultural management

¹ This chapter presents the results of a field project of the doctoral program "Ethics and Responsible leadership". It was conducted by the Leadership Excellence Institute Zeppelin | LEIZ, in cooperation with Wittenberg Center for Global Ethics. The study was supported by the Karl Schlecht Stiftung.

and intercultural training places strong emphasis on the differences between cultures. However, in order to enable higher levels of cooperation and to build a basis for mutually beneficial interaction, a certain sense of togetherness between the parties concerned is necessary. Therefore, research in the field of transcultural management suggests that the emphasis should rather be on commonalities between cultures, than on differences. In short, intercultural management mainly focuses on overcoming differences and avoiding conflict. Thus, it can help reduce barriers both in the workforce and in relation to external stakeholders. However, transcultural management goes one step further. It aims to identify existing commonalities and to create new ones by, for instance, investing in a shared value understanding within teams. In this way, transcultural management focuses on discovering opportunities for cooperation, considering diversity as a potentially productive resource for innovation and successful global value creation. Transculturality can therefore be described as an ongoing learning process towards creating and strengthening commonalities and thereby exploiting promising potential for cooperation.

For globally operating firms, the question is how transcultural management can be lived and sustained in daily business. Therefore, the objective of this project is to further enhance the understanding of transcultural management practices within these kinds of firm by analyzing the status quo. For this purpose, data was collected from two global firms from different industries through explorative case study research, which mainly consisted of document analysis and interviews, conducted at subsidiaries of those firms based in Germany, India and Singapore. In this way, the internal perspectives of those companies on questions on transcultural management practices could be observed and analyzed. Distinct focus areas were selected during this research process, namely Corporate Culture and Values, Global Human Resources, Diversity Management, Compliance Management, Integrity Management and Leadership Traits.

To give the reader a holistic view on transcultural management and, specifically, transcultural learning, the report begins with a brief theoretical introduction to the field. Then, the methodology of the research project and the sample are described. Following that, the findings of the interviews are presented per focus area and region, starting with Europe and continuing with Asia. Finally, we present a short comparison of the findings per region and end the report with a brief conclusion and an outlook for possible further research.

2. *Theoretical Reflections on Transcultural Management*

This report aims at describing the status quo of transcultural management in selected focus areas in two global firms. More precisely, as part of a “field project”, we conducted case study research which allowed us to understand and describe transcultural learning processes that we consider constitute an inherent and fundamental element of transcultural management. In the following, we will briefly outline the major theoretical concepts behind transcultural management and transcultural learning, which serve as a basis for conceptualizing and analyzing our case study research.

Transculturality and transcultural management: Creating commonalities

Transculturality is a highly relevant construct when it comes to handling the global challenges of the twenty-first century (e.g. Möhrer et al. 2015; Transcultural caravan 2016; Wieland 2010a, 2010b, 2014, 2016). In its essence, transculturality can be understood as an informal governance structure which enables the management of cultural diversity in daily business transactions. Cultural diversity in this context comprises not only distinct national cultures, but also distinct individual, professional and organizational value systems (Wieland 2016: 21). Transculturality is defined as a “process of relationing different cultural identities, [which] aims [...] to make cooperation by culturally diverse individual and collective actors institutionally and organizationally possible” (Wieland 2016: 22). As such, transculturality serves as a “productive resource and an informal institution for cooperative economic value creation” (ibid.: 13). Hence, transculturality functions as “an element [...] of local and global cooperation [that] allows the productive handling of cultural diversity and the curbing of its potential destructiveness” (ibid.: 13).

For the purpose of definition and demarcation of related concepts, inter- and multiculturalism are mainly based on the idea of separate homogeneous cultures (e.g. Welsch 1999) and focus on the management of (ethical) differences between cultures (e.g. Hofstede 2001; Hofstede et al. 2010). Transculturality, however, aims at shifting the focus to creating and strengthening commonalities through learning processes (Wieland 2016: 22). Its reference point for “cultural learning is the development of

similarity and not the continuation of difference” (ibid.: 17). As such, the concept of transculturality supports the notion of perceptions of shared global values and principles that span cultural systems – in addition and as a complement to the unquestionable existence of cultural diversity.

In global business, the challenge for firms and individuals is twofold. First, firms and individuals are supposed to define and learn about these perceptions of shared global values and principles. Second, they must transform these global value *descriptions* into local value *interpretations*, i.e., they must implement them in daily activities. It is against this background that a new type of transcultural management is called for which contributes to both – individual and corporate learning. In this sense, transcultural management is, at its core, about creating new commonalities as a basis for cooperative economic value creation in transactions among culturally diverse actors (Wieland 2016: 22).

Transcultural learning: From thin to thick value interpretations

These new commonalities are the result of an ongoing transcultural learning process. In globally operating firms, this process occurs for individuals and the firm as a “cooperative discovery” in daily business and is therefore social and interactive by nature (Wieland 2016: 22). It seems straightforward for organizations to use a code of conduct to proclaim global values. However, as Leisinger (2015) indicates, the challenge is to implement those values in daily operations by creating a mutual understanding and generally accepted ways of practicing them.

[A]n acknowledgment of global values and abstract normative principles remains ‘thin’ in the sense of being general and out of context. [...] An effective discourse to determine transcultural corporate responsibility principles and standards must consider the plurality of local values and normative principles. Respective responsibility guidelines and codes of conduct have to be made “thick” in the cultural and normative setting of the host countries. (Leisinger 2015: 42)

This process of transforming proclaimed values into a shared cultural bond can be described as *the transformation of thin value descriptions into thick value interpretations* (Leisinger 2015; Walzer 1996; Wieland 2016). This is precisely what is meant by the transcultural learning pro-

cess: It is the process whereby shared thick value interpretations (local priorities) in firms are created on the basis of thin value descriptions (global principles) (Wieland 2016). This process justifies the definition of transculturality as a productive resource because it potentially increases the “stock of shared moral interpretations of economic transactions and hence also the volume of feasible, mutually advantageous cooperation projects” (ibid.: 29).

In transcultural learning, “[t]he development of globally accepted and transcultural norms of good business behavior sets the priority on common experience” (Wieland 2010a, italics added). Transcultural competence in this context is developed as the “behavioral proficiency to effectively establish a common working culture based on the sharing of local experiences” (Möhrer et al. 2015: 1, italics added). Hence, transculturality is the result of shared local experiences. The transcultural learning process itself can be conceived as a “practice arena” that contributes to the task of understanding “thin” strategic ideas or value descriptions (Wieland 2016: 27).

Moreover, as mentioned previously, transcultural learning is about creating new commonalities as a basis for cooperation among culturally diverse actors (Wieland 2016: 22). Research suggests a sequence of three steps as a framework for understanding this notion (Wieland 2014, 2016): Imagining the encounter of people who are characterized by diverse backgrounds and nationalities, the first step in a transcultural learning process would mainly consist of non-normative observation of processes and the subsequent analysis of potentially existing differences among those people. Following that, the focus would shift away from those differences to existing commonalities, which would be discovered and strengthened through, for instance, common experiences and the exchange of knowledge. Finally, as a third step, people would engage in the creation of new commonalities, for example, by committing to common perspectives, goals and actions.

Based on these theoretical notions, we conceptualized and analyzed the case study research at hand, aiming at understanding and describing the status quo of transcultural management – focusing on transcultural learning – within globally operating firms.

3. *Project Description: Transcultural Management in Global Firms*

3.1 *Research Question*

The major objective of our project is to understand and describe the status quo of transcultural management in global firms, placing the emphasis on observing and describing the phenomenon of transcultural learning. One objective was to identify indicators for, and manifestations of, transcultural learning, which should contribute to its theoretical conceptualization. To explore transcultural learning in the firms in question, the following research question was used as a major focal point for developing, conducting and analyzing interviews as part of our case study research:

To what extent and in what form can transcultural management in general – and transcultural learning in particular – be observed and described in the respective focus area?

To derive findings from the interviews in a structured manner, the results are analyzed alongside the six focus areas (Corporate Culture and Values, Global Human Resources, Diversity Management, Compliance Management, Integrity Management, and Leadership Traits), which is also reflected in the structure of this report. With regard to the analysis scheme applied throughout this report, we understood during our research that transcultural learning can be triggered through distinct measures and/or processes on two distinct levels, namely individual and organizational. Additionally, each measure and/or process is most often put into practice in order to achieve a specific goal. Therefore, to summarize the findings of our research in a consistent manner, we developed the following conceptual table (Table 1). This table will be used to systematize the key findings per focus area in Chapters 4 and 5, as well as to serve as a basis for the comparison in Chapter 6 and the conclusion in Chapter 7.

Table 1: Template to Summarize Findings

Findings on Transcultural Learning per Focus Area		
	Measure/Process	Goal
Individual level		
Organizational level		

Source: Own representation.

3.2 *Methodology: Case Study Research*

To address the research question, we applied case study research in which we combined the findings from a series of interviews with representatives from two companies (for the description of the sample, see chapter 3.3), as well as from complementary document analysis (mainly concerning company information). To obtain a comprehensive global perspective on transcultural management practices – particularly related to transcultural learning as indicated by our research question – a team of three researchers conducted the interviews with representatives from Germany, India, and Singapore.

The questions in the semi-structured interview script were developed with regard to the aforementioned focus areas: Corporate Culture and Values, Global Human Resources, Diversity Management, Compliance Management and Integrity Management. The chapter on Leadership Traits was added as an additional focus area during the project. We intended to conduct the interviews with representatives from four distinct functions, namely Global Human Resources, Diversity Management, Compliance Management and Integrity Management. These functions were selected based on the expectation that the interview partners would be able to give insights into processes not only regarding their function and department, but also cross-departmentally, namely corporate culture and leadership traits. Before the interviews were conducted, the interview partners were not informed about the research subject, so as to lower or even limit tendencies to give ‘socially desirable’ answers. After the interviews, the interviewees were given detailed information about the theoretical background of the research project.

The interviews were analyzed with the software program MAXQDA, using a coding technique that is known as a standard approach in the field of qualitative research. Since transcultural management and transcultural learning measures can be understood as a means to an end, the key findings per focus area were structured according to their respective goals, e.g., creating a shared value understanding, facilitating shared experiences or enabling a constant dialogue.

3.3 *Description of the Field:* *Global Firms in Germany, India and Singapore*

Our research was conducted in two companies, for anonymity reasons called A and B, which will be described in the following. Both companies are transnational corporations operating on a global level.

Company A is a globally operating industrial firm with its headquarter in Germany, its parent company in another European country, and subsidiaries in Germany and worldwide, including Singapore. Organizationally, this leads to a hierarchical relationship between the parent company and the headquarter in Germany, with the latter being the executing partner, which, as a result, adapts to the strategies developed in the parent company. These structures also apply to the Asian subsidiary of company A, which at the same time is wholly owned by the same parent company. Interviews were conducted with representatives from Germany and Singapore. Four interviews were conducted with representatives in senior management positions in Germany; one interview was conducted with a representative in Singapore.

Company B is a German industrial firm that operates on a global level. Its headquarters is in Germany and functions as the parent company to the firm's worldwide subsidiaries, e.g., the Asian office that was part of our sample. Interviews were conducted with representatives from Germany and India. Three interviews were conducted with representatives in senior management positions in Germany and two interviews with representatives in India.

For reasons of anonymity, the quotes cited throughout this report will not be attributed to the particular companies and/or positions of the interviewees.

4. *Findings from the Field: Insights from Germany*

In the following chapter, we will describe our findings related to the German perspective. We will begin by outlining current major challenges of the firms before looking at the sub-challenges and key findings per focus area.

Based on the interviews, it seems that the major challenges for company A stem from ongoing post-merger integration processes as well as

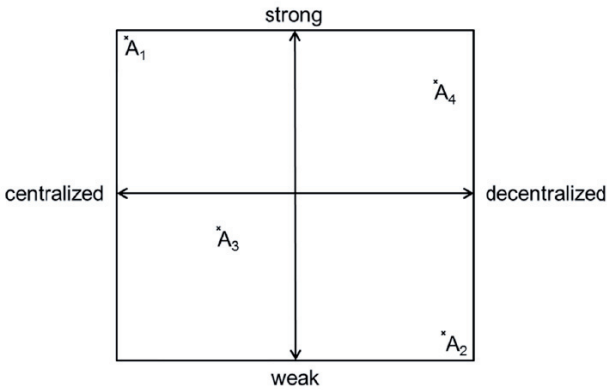
internationalization processes. For example, management focus seemingly lies on increasing efficiency through merging different departments and tools, while at the same time integrating distinct corporate cultures. This process of alignment has apparently led to a certain resistance within the workforce. Thus, the firm's major challenge seems to be the alignment of management processes and the creation of a group-wide, common identity, based on a shared understanding across locations. In company B, internationalization, especially through new mergers and acquisitions in emerging markets, seems to represent a major challenge. Besides, focusing on a strong and internationally-appropriate corporate culture seems to be of high importance for the company. Thus, the challenge seems to be two-fold: On the one hand, remain flexible towards distinct cultures and business models; on the other, provide orientation and guidance to ensure effective processes.

Having these major challenges in mind, we will now turn to the findings in the selected focus areas Corporate Culture and Values, Global Human Resources, Diversity Management, Compliance Management, Integrity Management and Leadership Traits. After briefly introducing the respective focus area and the particular challenges it implies, the key findings derived from the interviews will be described and interpreted.

4.1 Corporate Culture and Values:

Strengthening Shared Values as a Basis for Growing Together Globally

Transcultural management comprises the determination of the strategic cultural orientation of a firm by its leadership for performing transactions (Wieland 2016: 27). It is "the art of finding the right mix of the four dimensions of corporate culture and determining how to handle the trade-offs between them, which will then determine the direction of the transcultural learning process" (Wieland 2016: 28; cf. Figure 1). A strong corporate culture focuses on homogenizing values whereas a weak corporate culture allows for heterogenous values. A centralized corporate culture is developed and carried out by the headquarters whereas a decentralized corporate culture takes the autonomy of regions into account when developing and carrying out culture policies.

Figure 1: Strategic Culture Management and Transculturality

Source: Wieland 2016: 28.

Following the idea of transculturality, globally acting companies face the challenge to develop common ground in terms of corporate culture and a shared understanding of values, while, at the same time and up to a consciously defined extent, allowing for situational meanings and local interpretations of those common values. This task would be supported by a transcultural learning process which served as a practice arena for understanding and implementing abstractly-defined global values while taking local mindsets into account. Against this background, our objective was to understand how corporate culture is perceived, experienced and implemented within the two firms, and to what extent and in what forms transcultural learning can be observed and described in this regard. According to our findings, the two firms are in distinct stages regarding the development of their corporate culture. While one firm is seemingly focusing on reconciling distinct corporate cultures as part of a post-merger-process, the other firm is further strengthening its already well advanced, strong corporate culture.

Irrespective of the distinct stages, transcultural learning processes have been triggered at both firms through organizational and individual measures in order to facilitate a coherent corporate culture across borders which reflects the company's strategic cultural orientation, as indicated in the figure above. An important goal of both firms seems to be overcoming cultural differences in order to establish or strengthen an inte-

grated corporate culture based on the creation of a shared understanding of values. Looking at the individual level, transcultural learning towards a common corporate culture seems to take place most intensively through reflection, sharing of experiences and maintaining a constant dialogue within relationships – among staff and between management and staff. Relationship-building across regions seems to strengthen tolerance because it facilitates the identification of commonalities and the creation of a bond across cultural spaces.

This is supported by formal measures on an organizational level, such as group-wide cultural programs, which are rolled out globally through, for instance, interactive training programs which enable a shared understanding of values across cultural spaces as a basis for an effective corporate culture. At the same time and according to the concept of transculturality, the development of corporate culture does not aim at neutralizing existing differences, but at building and strengthening common ground as a basis for effective diversity management as will be described in the following chapter (4.2). Before we turn to this aspect, Table 2 summarizes the key findings for the focus area Corporate Culture and Values.

*Table 2: Findings on Transcultural Learning –
Focus Area Corporate Culture and Values*

	Measure/Process	Goal
Individual level	Reflection about differences in values and corporate cultures, and homogenization of values	Overcome differences and cultural clashes and establish an integrated corporate culture based on a shared understanding of values
	Investment in network-building, in dialogue processes and in shared experiences	Relationship-building across regions to strengthen tolerance, to identify commonalities and to create a bond across cultural spaces
	Transparent communication and expectation management	Reduce uncertainty and increase commitment as well as motivation
	Organization of intercultural trainings	Increase intercultural awareness to facilitate collaboration based on realistic expectations
	Reflection about personal experience with the firm and about personal values	Act as role model to exemplify (written) values and improve collective understanding thereof

Organizational level	Organization of group-wide cultural programs, supported by interactive measures such as trainings, team events and work-stream-talks	Strengthen learning process towards a shared value understanding across the workforce; enable shared experiences to create commonalities
	Definition of globally valid values and provision of a collection of written documents and technical tools	Enable a shared value understanding across cultural spaces as a basis for an effective corporate culture
	Implementation of internal online networks and communication platforms	Enable constant dialogue, productive discussions, collective opinion building and community building
	Organization of programs dedicated to leadership culture	Change leadership culture and enable leaders to act as role models

Source: Own representation.

4.2 Global HR and Diversity Management:

Facilitating Integration and Productive Collaboration across Borders

The global human resources department within a firm is responsible for recruiting, developing and retaining the firm's talent. Finding the right talent and facilitating collaboration across functions, regions within countries and even across national borders are topics of increasing importance against the backdrop of globalization. Usually, the human resources department helps employees to become interculturally aware by organizing and running intercultural training. In addition, we understand a human resources department as the appropriate department for developing and implementing transcultural management tools and measures that focus on identifying and creating commonalities among the workforce in order to facilitate productive collaboration. Hence, a global human resources department is, in our view, a designated enabler of transcultural learning processes, which usually start with recognizing and overcoming differences – mainly through non-normative observation and analysis – and proceed with identifying and creating commonalities among the workforce as a basis for productive collaboration – mainly through facilitating shared experiences and fostering a shared commitment towards common goals and actions.

The success of a firm's ongoing transformation, which includes the integration of its strategy, organization and culture, also depends on the management of diversity. Proper diversity management enables the realization of productive synergies and reduces the potentially destructive effect of diversity (Wieland 2016: 26).

Following the idea of transculturality and on the basis of an effective corporate culture as described in the previous chapter, systemic diversity management acknowledges the importance of defining and communicating globally-applicable values in written documents (e.g. a code of conduct). However, to transform abstractly-defined global values into practicable local behavior, several steps are necessary which can be considered part of a transcultural learning process, e.g., information, communication, discussion, acting, monitoring and reporting. Embedded in shared experiences these steps facilitate a shared understanding of values and their local implementation.

Against this backdrop, one of our objectives was to understand to what extent and in what form transcultural learning can be observed and described in global human resources departments and in diversity management at the firms. Regarding global human resources, a major challenge at one firm seems to be the integration of distinct departments as part of a post-merger integration process.

The major challenge is to build one unified organization that is beneficial for the client, and for us as the HR department. It starts with processes, but leadership culture is also a driver.

The firm invests heavily in individual and organizational measures which facilitate knowledge exchange, a constant dialogue as well as shared experiences as a means towards achieving that integration. This is achieved, for example, through the implementation of work-stream talks and the implementation of functional counterparts across borders. To align individual activities towards the overall strategic goals key activities are defined for employees in leading management positions. Those activities are used as an 'orientation for action' because they facilitate priority setting. Moreover, leaders proactively engage in cross-border dialogue and act as role models within their teams to facilitate the path towards a unified firm.

Turning to diversity management: even though diversity seems to be a topic of increasing importance at both firms, they are at different stages regarding the institutionalization of diversity. One firm has just started managing diversity by assigning the responsibility for the topic to specific roles, whereas the other firm is already managing diversity through dedicated departments and working groups:

We have been working on the topic of diversity in an institutionalized manner since the early 2000s. We have continuously developed the topic further, taking into account the internationalization of the company. [...] What we do is diversity management; that is more than simply acknowledging and facilitating diverse teams in terms of ethnical background. Managing diversity means managing products and providing services while taking diversity aspects into account.

Therefore, diversity management at this firm seems to be advanced. For example, the firm offers a holistic diversity model for its global workforce, which contains a comprehensive interpretation of the value “diversity” and a catalogue of possible implementation measures for a wide array of topics ranging from recruiting to product management. These measures are not meant to be globally binding but can instead be adapted according to specific local or functional needs. This model is supposed to function as a compass, which provides orientation. At the other firm, diversity is increasingly dealt with at an abstract level, for example, in seminars through theoretical input. Despite the fact that both firms are at different stages regarding diversity management, similar measures that indicate transcultural learning on an individual as well as on an organizational level could be observed at both firms. For example, both firms place strong emphasis on transparency and communication. Moreover, role-modelling plays a vital part in implementing diversity at both firms. The detailed findings are summarized in Table 3.

*Table 3: Findings on Transcultural Learning –
Focus Area Global HR & Diversity Management*

	Measure/Process	Goal
Individual level	<p>Reflection and determination of key activities</p> <p>Proactive communication about systemic and legal country differences</p> <p>Foster a constant dialogue within the team and develop (unwritten) guidelines and principles</p> <p>Maintain an open-door policy</p> <p>Work on a shared understanding of the leadership culture</p> <p>Ongoing discussions, not only at top-level but also throughout the entire workforce, e.g., regarding gender</p> <p>Reflection about individual attitude and behavior and acknowledgement of the importance of diversity as a topic which must be “managed”</p>	<p>Align individual actions with the global strategy and define priorities</p> <p>Strengthen transparency and find solutions to facilitate integration efforts</p> <p>Facilitate a shared understanding of goals and strengthen voluntary commitment/motivation of employees</p> <p>Create and maintain an atmosphere of trust and facilitate communication</p> <p>Facilitate collaboration and enable role modeling</p> <p>Find common ground, understand the facets of diversity and ultimately institutionalize diversity management</p> <p>Act as role-model and reap the potential benefits of diversity</p>
Organizational level	<p>Develop strategies holistically while allowing for local adaptation</p> <p>Implement dialogue formats, such as institutionalized work-stream or department meetings / huddles</p> <p>Definition of key activities in constant dialogue processes</p> <p>Definition of global roles and functional counterparts</p> <p>Introduction of a common IT-system</p>	<p>Facilitate creation of commonalities whilst tolerating regional differences</p> <p>Foster exchange of knowledge, constant dialogue and shared experiences</p> <p>Facilitate priority setting and a shared understanding of those priorities</p> <p>Facilitate integration and alignment across borders</p> <p>Support integration technically and reap the benefits of digitalization</p>

	<p>Implement a cross-border learning platform (merge existing platforms)</p> <p>Offer international leadership development programs</p> <p>Creation of functional roles, diversity departments and dedicated, diverse working groups</p> <p>Organization of diversity working summits for participants across divisions and regions</p> <p>Development of a holistic diversity model in a co-creational process</p> <p>Offer value interpretations, abstract ideas and a catalogue of suggestions for implementation within the model</p> <p>Make diversity a topic in training and leadership development programs</p> <p>Facilitate virtual discussions on the topic on internal online network</p> <p>Design selection processes that allow the recruitment of diverse talents</p> <p>Monitoring and reporting through KPI systems (globally valid or country-specific guidelines)</p> <p>Reflect “diversity” in product development and management and offer targeted products</p>	<p>Facilitate knowledge sharing and collaborative learning</p> <p>Overcome silo-thinking and increase awareness for local and cultural peculiarities through shared experiences while building a network</p> <p>Institutionalize diversity, strengthen discourse and create common knowledge</p> <p>Exchange knowledge, identify common topics and define collaborative working modes while building a community</p> <p>Ensure the relevance of the model</p> <p>Give orientation and foster a shared understanding of diversity while allowing for local adaptation of measures</p> <p>Change leadership culture and enable people to act as role models</p> <p>Increase awareness and nurture the sense of community</p> <p>Enable diversity in teams to increase productivity</p> <p>Ensure adherence to diversity requirements, e.g., regarding women in management / leadership positions</p> <p>Strengthen customer base through relevant products and services</p>
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Source: Own representation.

4.3 Compliance and Integrity Management: Creating Trust and Making Integrity a Corporate Value

In the following, compliance management will be defined as all formal and informal governance structures within an organization that help make its management efficient and effective regarding the identification and prevention of fraudulent actions by its members (Wieland 2004). Compliance is typically part of the strategic and operative management of a company and aims to secure not only its sustainable, legal, economic and societal existence but also the achievement of its goals (Wieland 2004). Integrity, however, is understood as an individual trait as well as a resource of the organization. It is of practical interest to the company as it can help achieve results more successfully by helping the employees to deal more effectively with the complexity of organizational decision-making (Wieland 2014). Thus, integrity management deals with implementing values that apply integrity to its corporate culture and its management processes. Additionally, implementing measures to foster the personal integrity of employees is a further dimension of a company's integrity management. However, owing to few resources within the company, only one of the companies has a separate department for integrity management so far. When it comes to the insights gained throughout our research, it needs to be stated firstly that, due to the different structure of the companies, the compliance departments in both companies must deal with different legal contexts and regulations. Additionally, when creating and communicating compliance guidelines to the whole company, different cultural backgrounds have to be taken into account. Regarding transcultural learning processes within the compliance departments of the companies, character traits but also certain values seem to be of great relevance. Apart from important structural prerequisites, such as allowing for local participation and adaption of the regulations, opening up for a local mindset seems to be of high importance in this department. Especially when working with different cultural and structural settings, it is important to have the varying contexts in mind. Therefore, creating a shared understanding of the compliance regulations coming from the parent company, while still allowing for local adaptation, seems to be effective. When implementing the strategy, authenticity, honesty and respect seem to lead to high levels of trust, which are necessary for employees to actively engage in the successful execution of the compliance

strategy. Thus, the transcultural management approach partly seems to have been put in place already.

Furthermore, when analyzing the interviews, one interesting commonality between the interviewees became apparent: Both interview partners, holding leading management positions in the compliance departments of their respective companies either grew up abroad or had international working experience with high-risk groups or in the field of international mergers and acquisitions. It seems that these experiences made them more sensitive to the need to take into account cultural differences when implementing and working with group-wide standardized compliance measures.

We are in the process of harmonizing and aligning it [the compliance department] with the parent company, to the extent possible and necessary in light of different business models and related risk profiles. From my point of view, that makes total sense. As a matter of fact, it is the parent company that sets the tone in matters of global importance and reach. That's where the strategic decisions are made and are then cascaded down to and implemented at the level of subsidiaries. Still, national specifics are taken into account.

This competence seems of high importance in globally-acting compliance departments, as decision-making in this context requires sure instincts since no situation is quite like another one, and there has to be room left for adaptation to local values.

With regard to integrity management, we were able to derive from the interviews that both firms emphasized the importance of embedding integrity and integrity-related values into their corporate cultures and of sensitizing their staff to integer decision making in the business context. Thus, our interview partners were well aware of the importance of their employees' intrinsic motivation as well as the importance of strengthening their employees' mindsets in terms of integrity-related attitudes. Therefore, they engaged in dialogue with the employees and introduced measures to trigger learning processes. Thanks to these measures, the companies aim to raise levels of awareness on integrity-related issues, respect, honesty, authenticity and build a stronger sense of accountability/taking responsibility. These values are also identified to be relevant in a transcultural setting. Thus, by aligning various personal values that, altogether, can contribute to integrity among staff, a shared understanding of an other-

wise rather abstract and thus thin description of integrity can be achieved, whilst still allowing for local interpretations:

There can't be "the same" understanding of integrity across regions, because this understanding depends greatly on how certain values are interpreted locally.

Hence, by strengthening this mindset within the firm, levels of transcultural competence among the staff are expected to rise as well. Based upon our findings, this could be confirmed, as the interview partners at management level already seemed to embody high levels of transcultural competence. This finding will be described in detail in the following chapter, when analyzing leadership traits of transculturally competent leaders. Table 4 provides an overview of the measures and processes described above.

*Table 4: Findings on Transcultural Learning –
Compliance and Integrity Management*

	Measure/Process	Goal
Individual level	Leading by example and being a reliable contact person for employees	Creating a sphere of trust through authenticity, transparency and honesty
	Personal interviews by leaders of the compliance department in the internal newsletter	Bringing staff closer together, creating a sense of togetherness
	Compliance rules and regulations can be interpreted by the leaders and can – within a certain range – be adapted to the needs of the situation	Facilitates individual learning processes; leaders engage with each case and take responsibility
	Implementation of a direct line between leader and employees of the compliance department with monthly update calls	Creates a platform for shared understanding and fosters communication
	Managers in Compliance and Integrity put emphasis on leading by example and thus, motivate other leaders to do the same	Strengthen the willingness to take responsibility whether for own tasks or for cross-departmental issues
	Organizing meetings for the entire department on compliance and integrity issues	Build a sense of togetherness and raise identification with the company's values

	Be transparent, honest and reliable as a leader	Raise awareness for integrity-related values and pass this behavior on to the employees, bottom-up approach for integrity
Organizational level	<p>Regular team meetings for a better understanding of the compliance strategy</p> <p>Use of new media channels to foster the employees' interest in compliance topics</p> <p>The main part of the set of rules in compliance can to some degree be adapted to the local context</p> <p>Implementation of new media types to enhance knowledge on compliance</p> <p>Use of case studies in compliance training to encourage knowledge transfer processes</p> <p>Adaptation of training material to each target group</p> <p>Open dialogues to discuss the meaning of integrity</p> <p>High levels of global participation in creation of integrity management strategy</p> <p>Creation of a training material toolbox that is highly adaptable to the context of the user and the target group</p> <p>Use of a mobile device application to raise awareness of integrity in a business context, specifically built for the needs and background of the company</p>	<p>Foster shared experiences and common learning processes, raises levels of trust</p> <p>Raise awareness for compliance issues and communicate values behind the regulations</p> <p>Give room for diversity, communicates equality of cultures, promotes sense of togetherness</p> <p>Communicate values and knowledge across cultures</p> <p>Creating a shared understanding among the staff and raises levels of self-identification with regulations</p> <p>Improves learning experience and creates a higher level of allegiance among the groups</p> <p>Create shared experiences and consequently a shared understanding of integrity among staff</p> <p>Collective definition of integrity led to a globally-shared understanding and strong global involvement</p> <p>Use of case studies raises awareness, relation to context of participants leads to shared understanding, through adaptation to each target group, each group has a uniquely connecting experience</p> <p>Personal learning experience helps to develop higher levels of awareness and more sensitivity among staff to integrity-related issues</p>

Source: Own representation.

4.4 Transcultural Leadership Traits: Growing Closer Together Through Common Values

During the analysis of the interviews, one additional subchapter was added, namely this one on leadership traits. When analyzing the interviews, we found that, although in some cases the structural background within the companies didn't particularly favour transcultural management processes, some interview partners did incorporate character traits that allowed them to manage highly effectively across cultures. Hence, to be able to describe and specify the information on this potential discrepancy, the subchapter on leadership traits of a transculturally competent leader was added. During the project, one aspect became evident: Even when the management structures in the departments of the interviewees did not explicitly promote transcultural management, the leaders themselves seemed to possess some of the competences of a transculturally competent leader. Therefore, the aim of this subchapter is to give a brief introduction to the underlying concept of transcultural competence and analyze the interviewees' character traits in this regard.

Transcultural leadership aims to facilitate the creation and implementation of commonalities throughout global organizations. Thus, a transculturally competent leader would be able to recognize, manage and use the diverse values and ideas within a company. The development of the concept of transcultural leadership is based on nine fundamental values that are understood to be globally accepted, namely: respect, empowerment, integrity, protection, cooperation, ethical leadership, fairness, development of people and sustainability (Moehrer et al.: 2015). Therefore, derived from these guiding values, a transculturally competent leader should be able to see and treat others respectfully and be open to other opinions, ideas and values. In this context, international experience seems to influence awareness regarding diversity. As such, it can be considered a key factor for building this competence. Following the concept of transculturality, one way to allow for diverse ideas in a business context would be to leave room for local adaptation when introducing new processes and instruments. Furthermore, according to our understanding, a transculturally competent leader should place strong emphasis on supporting others, on fostering individual integrity, on cooperating with colleagues and on nurturing fairness amongst his staff. Based on these personal traits,

a leader would be expected to support the creation of a shared understanding of values among his or her team.

Hence, the objective of the analysis is to understand whether the values mentioned above play a role within the leadership concepts observed during the interviews with the representatives of the two companies and whether other values were identified as being important by the interviewees when asked for qualities of a “good” leader. From the nine values of transculturally competent leaders stated above, more than half of them were confirmed to be important in international working environments. Additionally, in one firm, empathy, international experience, authenticity and trust-building were listed as relevant for successful workplace experience. In the other, the interview partners named respect and empowering others as being important values for successful cooperation within teams. As a consequence of the global dialogues that were organized in the company, the interview partner gained deeper insights into values related to integrity on a global scale. Based on the findings, they worked on strengthening the employees’ respect towards each other and their sense of appreciation for their colleagues’ work. As the interviewee personally emphasized the focus on cooperation within the team in order to show appreciation for their co-workers, it could be concluded that both, respect and appreciation of others, have a positive effect on cooperation levels within teams.

In conclusion, among the interview partners, high levels of personal transcultural competence, based on the assumptions mentioned above, could be identified. One important prerequisite of becoming transculturally competent seems to be international experience. Through this change of perspective that the interview partners experienced by spending time abroad, they seemed to have gained the ability to empathize with other parties to a very high degree. In some cases, this was supported by existing management structures, but in any case, it helped the interviewees to translate their intention or objective in a way that was better understood and accepted by the other party. Through authenticity, honesty, transparency and high levels of self-awareness, the interview partners managed to be credible in their decisions, which seemed to lead to higher levels of trust and a higher willingness to cooperate on the side of the employees. These findings are listed in Table 5.

*Table 5: Findings on Transcultural Learning –
Focus Area Leadership Traits*

	Measure/Process	Goal
Individual level	Be authentic, reliable and honest and live up to your own values, create a culture of speaking up	Building trust → through higher levels of trust, cooperation within the company can be raised
	Act as a role model and stand up for others and their needs	Create a respectful environment for the team and implement open communication
	Respecting and empowering colleagues	Be the first to cooperate with others and lead by example
	Work on one's own awareness and sensitivity towards others through self-experience and training	Be empathetic and able to put yourself into someone else's shoes
	Be transparent about your own actions and communicate your values openly	Fostering the employees' personal integrity and creating a shared understanding

Source: Own representation.

5. Findings from the Field: Insights from India and Singapore

In the following, we will begin by outlining the significant challenges that the two firms are currently facing followed by reflecting on the status quo of transculturality and transcultural learning processes in business operations in India and Singapore based on our research findings.

India and Singapore are both multicultural countries and hence pose significant diversity challenges for firms with subsidiaries there. One such challenge is the management of cultural differences and varying preferences while handling business operations, including relationship management of both internal and external stakeholders. For example, in one company the focus seemed to be more on creating and sustaining fruitful stakeholder relationships outside the organization whereas in the other company, creating and fostering collaboration among diverse working groups within the company is observed as a significant challenge.

Bearing these challenges in mind, we will now turn to our findings in the selected focus areas.

5.1 Corporate Culture and Values: Fostering a Culture to Facilitate Collaboration and Growth

Within the project, our purpose was to understand how corporate culture is perceived, implemented and to what extent and in what forms transcultural learning can be observed. Correspondingly, we interpret from our analysis that companies strive to achieve and develop a culture that promotes commitment towards a collaborative way of working. Hence, on an individual level, effective collaboration can be deduced to be a starting point for a transcultural learning process. One of the interviewees reflected on the firm's willingness to promote an open and transparent culture as a means to reconcile differences. Through various measures and initiatives, employees are encouraged to voice their opinions whenever they disagree with their team or manager, for example, regarding the so-called "Yes, sir" or traditional hierarchical organizational culture. An organizational initiative to overcome the challenge in this context is to encourage healthy conflict management across all levels by promoting an open culture rather than a culture that respects power and position, as illustrated by the quote below.

There must be constant healthy conflict management across hierarchy; without conflict there is no progress.

Furthermore, the firms are also seen to be dedicated to drive such initiatives through formal measures. For example, one such initiative to be rolled out soon is "reverse mentoring." Under this process, top management representatives are supposed to have local mentors from lower levels of hierarchy. The basic idea behind the initiative is to promote the sharing of knowledge across management levels, as illustrated by the following quote.

All our top management will soon have a mentor who is from a lower level in the hierarchy for the purposes of knowledge exchange related to new global trends such as digitalization, social media.

We can summarize that, according to our findings, a transcultural learning process can be described as an ability and willingness to share knowledge and experience to promote a collaborative way of working. There seem to be initiatives that promote learning by enabling employees to integrate

and connect freely with diverse groups. In Table 6 below, we summarize the key findings for the focus area Corporate Culture and Values.

*Table 6: Findings on Transcultural Learning –
Focus Area Corporate Culture and Values*

	Measure/Process	Goal
Individual level	Promote a collaborative way of thinking and working Homogenize values by communicating and respecting differences Committed to enabling employees to be the ‘voice of reason’	Create a shared bond across cultures and hierarchy in organization Embrace diversity Overcome the culture of “Yes Sir”; be globally competitive
Organizational level	Retain diverse group of new millennial talents and collaborate efficiently. Encourage healthy conflict management by promoting an open culture rather than a culture that respects power and position Initiatives like “reverse mentoring” (people development) where the top management representatives are supposed to have a mentor from a lower level in the hierarchy.	Reduce uncertainty and attain high level of commitment Create a bond among varying cultures → enable staff to integrate and connect freely with diverse groups Promote knowledge sharing across hierarchy; respect and equality.

Source: Own representation.

5.2 Global HR and Diversity Management: Managing Change as a Key to Success

Finding a right talent, training employees to strengthen their professional development, managing work culture, embracing diversity, resolving conflicts, managing the relations between employees and towards external and internal stakeholders are just a few of the tasks and responsibilities associated with global human resources departments. The effective management of the aforementioned responsibilities can be perceived as a reflection of our changing world. Correspondingly, during the interviews, the companies’ representatives described their awareness of the fact that

individuals in the organization need to recognize how the workplace is changing and evolving. Through various measures, companies seem to focus on establishing processes and practices that enable multi-cultural cooperation. Furthermore, initiatives that can help to promote multi-cultural cooperation include constant dialogues, open communication systems, as well as a cultural exchange to spread awareness about cross-cultural behavior, as illustrated by the following quotes from the interviewees:

We promote constant dialogue and communication with the employees to create awareness about change.

We send our people very frequently to Germany because they are part of a German organization. They go there for more extended periods, sometimes for a whole year, and work within German departments, and they know how it works and when they come back, they are precisely in line with the ‘thinking philosophy’ of the company.

The organization perceives that employee integration programs (e.g., formal cultural training and exchange dialogues) enable individuals to be committed to the rules of the organization. One of the interviewees’ mentions that “classroom training” plays a crucial role in managing staffs. Nevertheless, the training programs are not understood to be the only source of managing cultural change; the strategy is to enable employees to recognize opportunities to learn when they participate in conversations on a global level. In this context, one interviewee talked about a formal organizational process, namely the 70-20-10 principle, which they followed to make sure that overall learning and development takes place for an individual, as exemplified by the following quote.

Classroom training only has a 10% impact. If there is any training or proper development to be done then the 70-20-10 approach is realistic, i.e., 70% is always on the job; 20% on working in projects and 10% through training. The language Institute takes care of the 10%, or we also have language courses in our company. With language employees also learn about the new culture. However, that is only 10%; the bulk, the 70%, happens when they go to other countries and work with the international teams.

Initiatives such as training programs on conflict management play a crucial role in motivating individuals to communicate and collaborate authentically. The interviewee’s basic underlying assumption observed during

the discussion is that positively resolving conflicts can lead to much-improved professional and personal relationships. Moreover, an initiative such as emotional intelligence (EI), which can help to develop a self-management technique to deal with complex situations, was also mentioned, as illustrated by the following quote.

We have training programs for managing the different priorities and ways of working of our employees; one is conflict management, and the other is emotional intelligence (EI).

Based on our findings, gender-related issues are one of the prime focuses of diversity management. The interview partners at management level seem to be committed to embracing diversity and respecting individual differences through initiatives aimed at empowering women and achieving gender equality. Interviewees showed their global attitude by mentioning that companies have much to gain by hiring women and thereby respecting gender diversity and need to go the extra mile to retain them; which can be illustrated by the quotes below.

We try to establish women more and more in work positions. For example, last time we set a target that 30-40% of newly recruited employees should be women.

We do have individual initiatives for women on how to demonstrate executive presence along with skills to handle pressure.

Women-focused initiatives at an individual level seem to help create a sense of security and togetherness, whereas at an organizational level there are training programs to enable women employees to handle responsibilities of executives or leaders and not only junior staff members. Simultaneously, with an intent to uphold gender equality the firm is also seen to focus on training male employees through programs that facilitate the behavioral skills and encourage respectful collaboration among working groups, as illustrated by the following quote.

We do have training programs for male employees to make sure they behave in a way that makes the women in the workforce comfortable to discuss [issues/problems] freely.

We deduce that companies with initiatives like “reverse mentoring” can reconcile differences both at an informal and formal level. It seems to allow generational differences to be reconciled by tailoring management practices through exchange of an individual’s strengths, personalities, and aspirations. With a motive to create the best talent pool, organizations need to hire staff that can be up to three to five generations of employees working together. Moreover, they may have a mixture of other diversity structures. Each of these groups will have its motivations and aspirations as illustrated by the following quotes.

Today maybe we have 30% of people who are younger than 30, but later maybe there will be 70% of people of a young age.

Down the hierarchy people are young and they are ready to change, whereas top management would also need to adjust to new trends. For example, as an initiative, we are starting “reverse mentoring” now.

Working with older employees and trying to balance their aspirations with different diversity structures.

Apparently, the initiatives mentioned above tend to have a positive impact on organizational success, by helping people to respect differences and look for opportunities to cooperate. In Table 7, we summarize the key findings for the focus area Global Human Resources and Diversity Management.

*Table 7: Findings on Transcultural Learning –
Focus Area Global HR and Diversity Management*

	Measure/Process	Goal
Individual level	Help employees identify and resolve conflict within the workgroup	Improved professional and personal relationships
	Learning through different/conflicting viewpoints while managing employee relations	Respect differences in opinion
	Empathizing and sharing motivations of diverse groups	Create a sense of togetherness

Organizational level	<p>Region-specific programs/ initiatives to enable staffs to compete globally</p> <p>Endorse cultural cooperation through various initiatives such as constant dialogues, open communication systems, and cultural exchange, as well as spread awareness of cross-cultural behavior</p> <p>Training programs on conflict management and emotional intelligence</p> <p>Women-focused initiative to retain them by recognizing and prioritizing their motivations and aspirations</p> <p>Training programs for women to develop skills to handle pressure</p> <p>Training programs for male employees to develop their behavioral skills to enable respectful collaboration among diverse team members</p>	<p>Promote a sense of togetherness through people management programs that enable knowledge sharing and collaborative learning</p> <p>Enable staffs to respect differences in opinions and preferences</p> <p>Motivate individuals to be authentic; develop a self-management technique to deal with complex situations</p> <p>Equal opportunities → empowerment of women</p> <p>Strengthen commonalities; reconcile differences</p> <p>Gender equality</p>
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Source: Own representation.

5.3 Compliance and Integrity Management: Staying Connected to Achieve Organizational Integrity

In this section, our purpose is to understand the transcultural aspects of the work of the compliance and integrity department and to what extent the department engages in the transcultural learning process. In conclusion, we intend to present the facts and processes which show or reflect some of the aspects of transculturality within our cases. In the light of our research question, we can confirm that transcultural measures and practices are seen to exist partially in the interviewees' responses about the impact of globalization towards the compliance and integrity role and functions. Company representatives from both locations, India and Singapore, acknowledged that globalization had made work more accessible

and the existence of their role as a compliance manager is due to the demands of internationalization. During the discussions with the interviewees from India and Singapore, we gained the impression that the compliance related awareness programs enable effective collaboration among staffs working in different parts of the world. The programs on international level help gaining a shared understanding about the anti-bribery and anti-corruption topics, as the following quote illustrates.

We have boosted our activities in relation to awareness through campaigns across the globe. The awareness activities have shown positive results, also due to the fact that people in different parts of the world can now engage more easily with each other on such topics as they have the same underlying understanding as a result of these campaigns.

In the context of our sample, the compliance management system refers to the specific guidelines which promote shared norms/rules and are common to all parties; this acts as an enabler for employees to take decisions and reduces the chance of uncertainty. A well designed communication system (e.g., online and face-to-face training programs, dilemma games) is considered to be one of the most important criteria for the effectiveness of compliance management system. A well-designed system also maximizes the individual's abilities to communicate effectively and efficiently that seems to create receptiveness among staffs. An effective communication system can hence be assessed as a firm's long-term investment to enable continuity of cooperation.

When we talk about implementing compliance/business ethics in day to day business, it requires much communication. The only way to do it is to be connected and make people at ease while we are talking. This helps create receptiveness and supports implementation of the processes for a long term.

The compliance officer is most competent when he or she is in direct interaction and communication with the staff on compliance related topics.

The communication system can be derived as an essential tool for spreading awareness about the needs and benefits of being compliant and for ensuring continuity of cooperation. There are signs of willingness to recognize local needs and respect differences as the parent company appeared to be tolerant of the local requirements that were different to those

in their home country. Increased ability of individuals to communicate effectively is also seen to reconcile cultural differences by promoting respect for diversity. Accordingly, various practices such as integrity dialogues, town hall meetings etc. seem to create such cooperative environments that help develop a sustainable compliance culture.

Activities such as integrity dialogues, external speakers, town hall meetings, the tone from the top, email information and a message from CEOs/CFOs help develop a sustainable compliance culture.

However, the transition from compliance to integrity is something that is new and is considered to be vital to be globally competent, which seems to be a significant challenge:

Transcending from compliance to integrity is something which is challenging and new, both for organizations and individuals, and we have successfully achieved the same.

However, various initiatives such as tone from the top and external guest speakers are seen to play a crucial role in enabling successful transition. As part of these initiatives, dialogue exchange is promoted with expert speakers; people who are known for their high integrity from the field of sport, for example, to learn how they handle conflict and situations of moral dilemma. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that subsequently, proper due diligence is a prerequisite for selecting partners, a well-supported whistle-blowing policy and independent compliance managers who can perform their duties are considered to be pillars of successful compliance and integrity management.

The first pillar is a proper due diligence process for selecting an organizational partner. The second would be a whistle-blowing system; one should have a stable and robust compliance management system. The third is continuous risk assessment and freedom for a compliance manager to perform his/her duties.

Furthermore, there should be platforms for sharing knowledge, and compliance managers should be invited to international meetings. To ensure the effectiveness of local programs, the vision discussed at the global level should be articulated transparently at the local level.

Local (country-specific) compliance managers' engagement in global compliance meetings is one of the important aspects for management's compliance message to get through in a meaningful way.

Table 8 summarizes the key findings for the focus area Compliance and Integrity Management.

*Table 8: Findings on Transcultural Learning –
Focus Area Compliance and Integrity Management*

	Measure/Process	Goal
Individual level	<p>Spread awareness about needs and benefits of being compliant</p> <p>Stay connected with departments and subsidiaries</p> <p>Self-commitment towards providing appropriate training sessions to sensitize employees to organizational values</p>	<p>Raise awareness about compliance issues and trigger a shared learning process</p> <p>Communicate knowledge and values across culture</p> <p>Enables and promotes an integral way of thinking</p>
Organizational level	<p>Efficient communication system</p> <p>Human Resources integration initiatives enable compliance manager to travel to subsidiaries and spread awareness about compliance</p> <p>Awareness programs via online and face-to-face training programs and (moral) dilemma games</p> <p>An efficient due-diligence process before selecting local business partners</p> <p>Develop an expected culture of compliance and Integrity through various initiatives such as integrity dialogues (open communication) and external guest speakers, town-hall meetings, the tone from the top, regular email exchanges, messages from CEO/CFO</p>	<p>Foster shared experiences and collective learning processes</p> <p>Raise awareness of compliance issues across the hierarchy</p> <p>Improvement of learning experiences creates a higher level of adherence among the groups</p> <p>Creating a shared understanding among employees → open communication → transparency</p> <p>Avoid the risk of fraud</p> <p>Make employees aware of and sensitive to global and organizational expectations</p>

Source: Own representation.

5.4 Transcultural Leadership Traits: Facilitating Authentic Collaboration

Of the nine values of transculturally competent leaders described in chapter 4.6, almost all of them were confirmed to be important to both Indian and Singaporean corporate leaders. Additionally, agility, authentic collaboration and the ability to embrace change are seen as important competences for successful cross-border cooperation. There seems to be a willingness among leaders to collaborate and create a working culture in which the ability to embrace change is as natural as breathing.

As far as business is concerned, there are no boundaries. We are powerful enough to make the situation work out the way we want it to, and that is a cultural power. We should be willing to collaborate authentically.

It was quite noticeable that the interviewee quoted above recognizes that organizational leadership is most effective only when leaders empower others to be their best selves, as illustrated by these quotes:

We must collaborate to make sure we partner in creating a better world.

The strategy should be collaborative, and the firm should be committed to overall people development by empowering talents.

As an employee in a leading management role, the interviewee deliberately outlined the competence to appreciate and embrace change as an important factor for collaborating across borders, as further illustrated by this quote:

The mantra is; accept the change, embrace the change and see the opportunity for change. One thing is evident: business is not for local benefit only, but it is for global impact. The impact should be positive.

Furthermore, the interviewee also shared the gained learning experiences on “how leadership can be effective”. The interviewee mirrored leadership as a source of value generation by the ability to learn and to evolve while managing inter-sectoral and cross-functional organizational processes. According to this interviewee, there are several leadership competencies which can ensure the continuity of collaboration. First is an agile approach to achieving a goal, i.e., one should have flexibility in one’s

work habits, and should also be willing to adapt to current requirements while working in a team. A second competency is an approach that focuses on people development. According to the interviewee, this shared approach is the key to growing together (collaborator). Thirdly, a leader should be able to recognize and accept their staff's different ways of working styles. The interviewee stresses that this is only possible if the first and second approaches are followed up by a moral sense of responsibility, as illustrated by this quote.

First and foremost is supposed to be an agile approach to achieving goals. Secondly, people development through a collaborative approach. Thirdly, empower people by welcoming their way of working.

We conclude that being agile while collaborating with diverse groups has a positive effect on team cooperation when working at a transcultural level. Table 9 summarizes the key findings for the focus area Leadership Traits.

*Table 9: Findings on Transcultural Learning –
Focus Area Leadership Traits*

	Measure/Process	Goal
Individual level	Enable staff to look beyond the obvious by collaborating authentically	Being empathetic and able to put yourself in someone else's shoes
	Be committed to empowering others to be their best selves	Be the first to collaborate with others and lead by example to ensure continuity of cooperation
	Encourage and help individuals focus on developing leadership competencies	Foster employee capability and create a culture of shared responsibility
	Promote an agile work culture and habits	Promote a flexible work environment → Enable staff to be their authentic selves
	Focus on people development by embracing diversity.	Reconcile or manage differences effectively.

Source: Own representation.

6. *Comparison of German, Indian and Singaporean Insights*

In the following chapter, we compare the findings from the German, Indian and Singaporean perspectives. We begin by comparing the overall challenges faced by the companies in the distinct regions and continue by comparing the focus areas per region. The emphasis of the comparison of the focus areas lies on the measures applied to engage in transcultural learning.

6.1 *Comparison of Main Challenges*

In Germany, both companies mostly face challenges regarding the growing complexity of processes within the company for several reasons. For company A, adapting to the Europe-based parent company led to challenges regarding the alignment of departments and processes. The company's history meant there was a certain resistance among staff to adapt to a new corporate culture, which requires certain instincts from leaders. In company B, the integration of smaller companies coming on board after various mergers and acquisitions led to similar challenges as there was not only a clash in national culture, but also in professional cultures. Additionally, the ongoing internationalization required more flexibility from the European headquarters, especially regarding the applicability of their strategies abroad.

In the Indian and Singaporean scenarios, the challenges identified can be assessed as similar to the German organizations in a sense that the companies in all three locations (Germany, India and Singapore) are finding ways for effective collaboration with their partners and stakeholders. However, the scope for such cooperative intervention seems to be slightly different, and there is a possibility that this is due to differences in needs and changing priorities of the national and professional cultures. In company A, the challenge was seen to be more towards relationship management with external stakeholders (for example, collaboration with a stakeholder who is a family-owned business) while in company B, managing change by strengthening relationships within the organization among diverse working groups was seen to be significant. Moreover, we conclude that at the time of the interviews, the German companies were seen to be involved more in managing organizational level challenges similar

to those facing the Singaporean firm while the Indian subsidiary was more focused on the employee-driven initiatives.

6.2 Comparison of the Focus Area Corporate Culture and Values

As stated before, work in the field of corporate culture in Germany is mainly focused on aligning values and processes after a takeover or merger or integrating smaller companies that have been added to a group following a merger.

However, in both companies, transcultural learning processes have been triggered on an individual as well as an organizational level. It is merely the internal challenge to which these measures were applied that differs. In Germany, even at a strategic level, an elevated level of transcultural awareness could be identified, since the company's strategy regarding its corporate culture set out to create a shared understanding regarding corporate values among its workforce. Therefore, company-wide leadership programs are implemented, platforms for open dialogue are set up and various measures to raise awareness of corporate values among staff are introduced.

In Asian interviews, corporate culture is not only perceived as an important strategy to be implemented, but also as a means to an end. Through the implementation of the corporate culture of the group, the company tries, on the one hand, to promote a more collaborative working style among its staff. On the other hand, it aims to improve its conflict management. Furthermore, leaders in India and Singapore seem to be very committed to promoting an open and transparent culture by encouraging employees to voice their opinion whenever there is a disagreement. To achieve this goal, formal measures at both the individual and organizational level are implemented. Moreover, it seems that the initiatives taken at organizational level are strongly driven by the personal engagement of management/leaders.

6.3 *Comparison of the Focus Areas Global HR and Diversity Management*

In Germany, global human resources management and diversity management play a key role in the companies interviewed in this research project. They are given high priority, which manifests itself in the institutionalization of their measures and their position in the companies' internal structures.

The main challenge for the companies in Germany, as described in previous paragraphs, is to align different departments in the course of ongoing post-merger-integration processes. Hence, the focus in these departments is to offer various platforms for the exchange of knowledge, departmental meetings and huddles, learning platforms and open dialogue. Due to the crucial importance of the success of post-merger-integration at a personal level, a lot of measures are introduced at an organizational level and have the support of the companies' top management. Nevertheless, also at an individual level, high levels of awareness of these issues can be noted. Thus, leaders are attempting to act as role models and show raised levels of engagement regarding the initiation of (transcultural) learning processes among their employees.

In Germany, the diversity of the workforce and the environment of the company already seems to be accepted; in Asia, diversity is well acknowledged, too. However, strengthening the willingness and ability of employees to cooperate requires strong engagement from the company. In Germany, the main focus of the work of the diversity department is to make diversity within the company visible and to strengthen the position of minorities such as the LGBTQ community. Additionally, the company's position on diversity is being made public through specific marketing campaigns targeting various cultural minorities in society.

In Asia, the interviewees seem to be committed to embracing their multicultural and diverse working environment and to displaying the potential it provides towards their employees. However, according to the findings from the interviews, the cultural clashes provoked by this diversity still lead to challenges in daily working practices. Additionally, we found measures to raise acceptance and respect for diversity were more at an individual rather than an organizational level. Thus, the effect and success of these measures may strongly depend on the attitudes and personal development of the managers/leaders in charge. Nevertheless, pro-

grams and initiatives are being developed to strengthen the position of, for example, women. Furthermore, training sessions are being offered to raise awareness on differences and train intercultural competence among staff. In the context of our research question, especially training on empathy and solution-orientated working practices can be interpreted as a first step towards transcultural management, although the major focus still lies on developing intercultural competence.

6.4 Comparison of the Focus Areas Compliance and Integrity Management

On the German side, compliance and integrity management departments seem to be well established. In one company, there was even a separated integrity department set up a few years ago. According to our findings, the main challenge for compliance and integrity management in Germany is to raise awareness on how to implement and handle values-related differences regarding ethical and compliant behavior in other countries. Additionally, reaching the necessary level of flexibility to ensure the applicability of the compliance and integrity management systems developed in Europe still poses a challenge. In this regard, not only does applicability need to be ensured, but also the integration of local traditions and values in order to allow for acceptance of the regulations at the local subsidiary.

However, these challenges are already known to the interviewees. In both companies, the interviewees have implemented processes to foster transcultural learning, not only at an individual level, but also at an organizational one. The goals of these measures are, on the one hand, to create a trustful working environment across borders that brings the staff closer together, and, on the other, to initiate common learning processes regarding the values represented by the compliance and integrity management concept of the company.

As already mentioned in the previous section, in India and Singapore, the main challenge seems to be the management of stakeholder relationships in accordance to compliance policies of the firm. Through various individual and organizational initiatives, the interviewees were seen to focus on changing their partners' mindsets and developing an understanding on the need for, and concepts of, compliance regulations. The

goals of these measures are fostering a collaborative learning process and ensuring continuity in cooperation.

Moreover, on organizational level, high levels of engagement by the headquarter can be noted in the development of the global compliance strategy, in order to integrate the local perspective into compliance guidelines. The aim of this engagement is to ensure greater discretion / room for manoeuvre for Asian leaders when it comes to implementing and adapting compliance strategies to their local context. Furthermore, many platforms for exchange within the Indian and Singaporean subsidiary are offered to allow open communication and to enable staff to identify with these values, as well as with the corporate compliance and integrity strategy.

6.5 Comparison of the Focus Area Transcultural Leadership Traits

Most similarities between the German, Indian and Singaporean perspective could be identified in the section on leadership traits. Almost all of the competences considered to be of importance for a transculturally competent leader could be identified in all three regions.

Almost all interviewees stated the importance of empowering their employees and raising levels of cooperation and collaboration. The interviewees were committed to respecting different opinions and working as transparently as possible. Another aspect named by interviewees in all regions is the willingness by employees to work on their own personal development and sensitivity towards ethical questions and interpersonal conflicts. These should be treated with empathy and honest communication. Furthermore, all interviewees showed high levels of commitment and personal integrity.

Additionally, interviewees in all regions work in a very solution-orientated manner and with a strong focus on their employees' personal development. In doing so, they trigger and foster transcultural learning processes. However, so far, the interviewees mainly act individually and have the greatest impact through the image they project when acting as a role model within the organization.

7. Conclusion and Implications for Future Research

The main objective of the research project *Transcultural Management in Global Firms* was to understand and describe the status quo of transcultural management in selected focus areas of two global firms, operating in Germany as well as India and Singapore. The selected focus areas were Corporate Culture and Values, Global Human Resources, Diversity Management, Compliance Management, Integrity Management and Leadership Traits. In order to describe the status quo of transcultural management within the aforementioned focus areas, we conducted case study research, which mainly consisted of interviews with company representatives, as well as document analysis. The insights revealed during the interviews pointed to a common theme across the cases, namely social and organizational learning processes. Therefore, we decided to focus our interview analysis and the derivation of our findings particularly on transcultural learning, which we conceive to be an inherent element of transcultural management.

The case study research comprises two cases (company A and company B), which represent two globally operating firms: Company A, which has its headquarter in Germany and its parent company in another European country; interviews were conducted with representatives from company sites in Germany and Singapore. Company B, which has its headquarters in Germany; interviews were conducted with representatives from company sites in Germany and India. The interviews were conducted with representatives from different departments, namely global human resources, diversity management, compliance management and integrity management.

To introduce the reader to the field and explain the conceptual basis of our research, we outlined the major theoretical conceptions behind transcultural management and transcultural learning in Chapter 2 of this report. Following that, we introduced the research question, the methodology and the sample in Chapter 3. To understand and describe transcultural management and transcultural learning in the selected firms and focus areas, we geared our research to the following question: To what extent and in what form can transcultural management and transcultural learning be observed and described in the selected focus areas? As a result of our explorative interviews, we were able to shed light on the status quo of transcultural management and transcultural learning in globally acting

companies. Among other insights, we discovered that even though transcultural management and transcultural learning focus on creating and strengthening commonalities, differences still matter. As Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner convincingly claim, “[i]n understanding the other’s intentions, and perhaps signalling your understanding, you take the first step towards developing a shared meaning with your partner” (2012: 244). Building on that idea, research suggests understanding transcultural learning as a sequence of steps (cf. Wieland 2014, 2016):

- Recognize existing differences: Embrace a defensive, non-normative attitude in order to observe and analyze differences; the overarching goal is not necessarily to overcome differences, but rather to develop awareness regarding “otherness” and to adopt a non-judgmental attitude and behavior.
- Recognize and strengthen existing commonalities: Be curious and learn about existing commonalities. Strengthen those commonalities through dialogue, interaction and shared experiences.
- Create new commonalities: Invest in common experiences in order to develop and strengthen new commonalities based on common perspectives.

During our case study research, we found indicators for each of the three steps in the different focus areas and regions, which is described more in detail in the findings in Chapters 4 and 5, for the European (Germany) and Asian (India and Singapore) perspectives respectively. To facilitate a regional comparison between the findings per focus area, we developed a conceptual table. In this table, we first outline key findings per focus area regarding transcultural learning measures at both the individual and the organizational level, while naming the overarching transcultural goal of that measure. Second, we use the tables as a basis for our regional comparison, which is described in Chapter 6 of this report.

In conclusion, with this field project Transcultural Management in Global Firms we aimed to understand the status quo of transcultural management in globally operating corporations. This status quo analysis is the first study of this kind and we hope to inspire both business representatives and researchers to conduct further research in the field. This study should be considered a modest contribution to the conceptualization of transcultural management and transcultural learning, as we sug-

gest interpreting the presented findings as indicators of these phenomena. However, one must be aware of the rather limited representativeness of the findings, given the scope of the project with only two cases in the sample. In the comparison in Chapter 6 of this report, we focused on the main themes per focus area that became apparent when analyzing the findings per region. While taking into consideration the overall challenges of the companies under observation, we were able to highlight the main differences and commonalities per focus area with regard to transcultural learning measures and processes. However, we suggest conducting further case study research, based on multiple case studies, which would allow more in-depth cross-case findings on the topic to be derived. This would enable researchers to derive even more representative findings on transcultural management and transcultural learning in globally operating firms.

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University Education in Transcultural Competence

The Example of the Global Studies Projects at Zeppelin University

Josef Wieland and Julika Baumann Montecinos

The research program of Relational Economics and particularly the development of a concept of transcultural leadership is not only an ambitious conceptual agenda, but also offers the opportunity to apply and test these concepts within the framework of teaching and project formats at university. If students and their lecturers become involved in such formats of transcultural learning, then – that is the assumption, at least – this opens up the possibility of achieving new dimensions in acquiring competence and in managing the realities of globalization and global value creation. This claim is behind the Global Studies Projects, which are conducted in various different ways at the Leadership Excellence Institute of Zeppelin University and which follow this university's concept of liberal arts, namely one that focuses on the ambition to educate students to become generalists with comprehensive and interdisciplinary competence.

In addition to the important findings with regard to the applicability of the theoretical construct and the transfer to practice, such projects also provide feedback on the further development of the concept itself. A recursive loop of learning between theory and practice is created – with the understanding of transculturality as a polycontextual, polycontextual and polylingual phenomenon of relation-building serving as a central thread. On the basis of some concrete examples from the work of the Leadership Excellence Institute Zeppelin (LEIZ), this chapter aims to explain the

suggestion of a further development in teaching in the sense of an integrated strategy of Global Studies Projects and towards the vision of a university as a truly global learning arena.

1. Transcultural Leadership in a Relational Economy

In the theory of Relational Economics questions of global value creation and cooperation play an important role and are integrated into this research agenda in the form of the concept of transcultural leadership. Without the capacity for transcultural leadership, according to the basic thesis, the globalization of economy and society for mutual benefit cannot succeed. Such an understanding of leadership focuses on commonalities between cultures, which are strengthened and created through collaborative experiences and learning processes, and which serve as productive resources to facilitate beneficial interaction across cultural boundaries. The description and exploration of transcultural learning processes and leadership models as well as the corresponding transcultural competencies and governance structures are therefore an important part of LEIZ's research and teaching activities. Students and staff alike have the opportunity to deal with questions of transcultural leadership on an organizational or individual level, to sharpen their own inter- and transcultural competencies and to experience the multi-faceted possibilities of transcultural cooperation in a global context by means of case studies. The interdisciplinary orientation of the LEIZ plays an important role in this respect and enables fulfilment of its claim to understand transculturality as a method in the sense of a concept of Global Studies Projects. This intention to conduct interdisciplinary research on issues of governance and relation-building in times of global value creation, with transculturality serving as a subject of knowledge and, at the same time, as a method, and to thus provide impulses for the economy, politics and society, is realized within various project formats, which are briefly described below and which are all conducted under the umbrella of the so-called "Transcultural Caravan".

2. *Transcultural Caravan*

The Transcultural Caravan is a platform that brings together both young and experienced researchers and representatives from practice from all over the world and supports them in exchanging and further developing, as well as connecting their ideas on global issues. As a website (www.transcultural-caravan.org), it offers a lively hub with project presentations and calls, thematic contributions, event announcements, a blog and a lab, which is constantly evolving, and invites interested parties to participate actively. Students of Zeppelin University, students from other universities as well as representatives from practice thus have the opportunity to take part in the work on research questions in global contexts and within the framework of international research groups. This not only extends the scope of the research results, but also, and above all, broadens the horizons of the participants, particularly those of the students. This approach of transcultural and transdisciplinary project work aims to develop conventional research and teaching concepts further and to strengthen their global orientation. By way of example, two formats of the Transcultural Caravan will be presented: the Transcultural Leadership Summit and the Transcultural Student Research Groups.

3. *Transcultural Leadership Summit*

The Transcultural Leadership Summit is an annual conference organized by students. Here, questions of transcultural leadership are discussed with international experts from academia and practice in keynote addresses, workshops and panel discussions each year with a new regional or country-specific focus. To date, the summits have brought together guests from China (2016), Sub-Saharan Africa (2017) and Brazil (2018) and enabled them to network with the students, alumni and partners from industry and practice. At this event, the topic of transculturality is applied to cooperation potential in various areas such as urbanization, entrepreneurship, digitalization and integrity management. What is crucial here is the approach of learning from the representatives of the respective countries, who are regarded as experts for their local realities – which lies at the core of a transcultural attitude and is supposed to particularly and con-

sistently manifest itself at the Transcultural Leadership Summit as a learning platform.

The organization of this expert conference, with around 200 participants, is implemented with a great deal of personal responsibility and commitment by a team of about 20 students. The students not only take on the organization of the event, but also the content design of the conference. They research and contact the speakers, plan and design workshops, invite participants and put together an appropriate social program. This gives them the opportunity to spend a period of about one year dealing with internationally-oriented research topics and performing practical leadership and team work, as well as taking on responsibility under the guidance of the LEIZ. The organization team is also prepared for the Summit by means of lectures and workshops, enabling them to gain insight into various areas and applications of the theory of transcultural leadership through in-house and external courses. In summary, the Transcultural Leadership Summit can be understood not only as an event for cross-cultural exchange, but also as a holistic didactic concept for members of the student community and beyond.

4. Transcultural Student Research Groups

An important component of the approach pursued within the framework of the Transcultural Caravan is to conduct not only theory-based surveys of transcultural phenomena in the global context, but also practice-oriented research that opens up new perspectives for both the researchers and the subject of research. Correspondingly, the Transcultural Leadership Summits have resulted in research projects in which Transcultural Student Research Groups work on globally relevant topics.

Following the 2016 Summit on China, a Transcultural Student Research Group came up with the research question “Transculturality or Hybridity? The Case of Hong Kong” and has since been researching Hong Kong’s transcultural and hybrid relationships and practices in the fields of politics, economics, the arts, media, migration and behavioural ethics. The individual areas are further elaborated by students as part of their so-called Humboldt research projects or Bachelors or Masters theses, and are supervised by professors from appropriate Departments. Thus, this research group brings together students and professors from various study

programs. The project lead within this research group is conducted by an Erasmus Mundus student from Hong Kong, who participated in the 2016 Transcultural Leadership Summit and developed his research idea with students and the LEIZ team. The research group itself is thus a transcultural construct made up of members of various nationalities and disciplines. As a milestone of their project, the research group spent a one-week research visit in Hong Kong to meet representatives of local organizations and universities. The results of the individual research projects are then prepared as part of a book publication and are merged with a view to addressing the common overarching research question. As a result of this transcultural experiment, this book does not become a conglomeration of individual contributions, but rather, like a mosaic, it provides an overall, common, picture.

Following on from the 2017 Summit, with the focus on the Sub-Saharan region, a research group was established in cooperation with the Ugandan Hope Development Initiative, whose founder and CEO was a speaker at the Summit. This interdisciplinary and transcultural research group conducts research bearing the title “Transculturality and Community. A case study on the Hope Development Initiative in Uganda”, focusing on business, social entrepreneurship, politics & governance, civil society, culture & identity, digital transformation, leadership and arts & culture. For this purpose, a project cooperation with the Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, was set up in order to facilitate exchange between German and Ugandan students on the particular topics. Accordingly, during the German students’ 10-day stay in Uganda, a joint symposium took place at Makerere University and some students and employees from Makerere University accompanied the research group during their stay in the rural areas. As part of the final book publication, young researchers from Germany and Uganda will contribute to finding a common answer to the research question and thus integrating their diverse perspectives into a common result.

Another dimension of transcultural exchange was offered in a joint symposium uniting both transcultural research groups. At this symposium, both groups – on Hong Kong and Uganda – presented their findings, shared their experiences, and discussed the format and potential of such research groups with an audience of professors and practitioners from various disciplines.

Based on these experiences, and following the 2018 Transcultural Leadership Summit on Brazil, another Transcultural Research Group is being developed to address the topic of “Relational Leadership – Case Studies from Brazil”. For this purpose, a network of diverse cooperation partners is being set up, which plans to cooperate with various universities in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Porto Alegre as well as with representatives from business and NGOs whose projects serve as case studies. Again, the idea is that transculturality shapes both the journey and the destination of this research endeavour.

5. *Transculturality as a method*

Based on these two examples – the Transcultural Leadership Summit and the Transcultural Student Research Groups – these elaborations aim to clarify the approach and to not only process transculturality in terms of content, but also to understand it as a method with which traditional teaching and research concepts can be further developed. Such a transcultural research approach, using the formats described, aims to make a contribution to appropriately describing global relationships and phenomena in the economy, politics and culture. The increasing complexity and relevance of these in times of global interconnectedness, value creation and urbanization, and the fact that, for globally active organizations, sustainable success depends particularly on the ability to recognize and develop transcultural cooperation opportunities, seems to support the importance of this agenda.

6. *Triad of teaching, research and networking*

The projects mentioned above form a triad of teaching, research and networking. On the one hand, current research results from the projects are incorporated into the teaching of LEIZ lecturers, and, on the other hand, the work of the students participating in the projects is always supported by curricular courses, meaning that they receive the theoretical foundations to be able to realize their research and project work. In the research itself, a strong focus is placed on interdisciplinary and transcultural cooperation, since, according to the underlying view, transcultural phenomena

can only be grasped from a transcultural perspective. The networking of global partners from business, civil society organizations and academia with students and staff plays an equally important role. By means of this triad, LEIZ strives to continue to develop and establish itself as a dynamic ambassador of interdisciplinary and globally-oriented research. The concept of Global Studies Projects, which seeks to be understood as a further development of a traditional internationalization strategy, is based on the idea of focusing and promoting not only academic achievement, but also interdisciplinary student research projects and globally oriented teaching formats. In addition to the internationalization of the curriculum itself, there is also a broader internationalization in terms of opportunities and reach of student research and project work. Correspondingly, the students are always involved and not only have the opportunity to learn and develop theories and assumptions on globally relevant issues, but also to apply them practically and to reflect on them. Transculturality always lies at the heart of this endeavour – be it as a research question or as a method. The Transcultural Caravan and its projects want to offer such a vision of a university as a truly global arena. Like-minded researchers and practitioners from all over the world are cordially invited to join this learning journey.

The concept of Transcultural Leadership is gaining increasing attention among academics and in practice. In the context of the complex economical and societal developments that we face in today's world, managing the relationing of different perspectives and enabling the required learning processes calls for competencies that go beyond traditional leadership concepts. Effective transcultural leadership is about responding to the challenges that globalisation and global value creation bring - and about accessing the potentials of cross-cultural cooperation.

Against this backdrop, this volume presents the current state of research on the concept of Transcultural Leadership and the corresponding competence models. It combines innovative theoretical and conceptual approaches with topical empirical analyses, and thereby offers a sound foundation for reflections on what it means to be a successful leader in today's and tomorrow's globalising environments.

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