Much has been discussed, theorized, and written about intercultural learning and intercultural communicative competencies. However, beyond talking about diversity, what does doing diversity look like in educational settings? How can intercultural learning and communication be achieved in the learning environment of schools? For the past couple of decades, the notions of “culture” and “diversity” have been highly influential across disciplines and borders. Hence, when it comes to teaching and state education, not much of the “cultural turn” is palpable in the classrooms. In fact, teachers often feel left alone with the challenge to teach intercultural competencies.

In this symposium based on evidence of practice, intercultural competencies and intercultural learning will be approached from three different yet altogether popular viewpoints: Multilingualism, Media, and Communicative Mobility. It will be asked if and how e.g. mobility projects, web-based communication platforms, or multilingual school programs contribute to a development of mutual understanding, respect, tolerance, and empathy as well as appropriate interactions when it comes to intercultural encounters.

In particular, we will look into the effects of multilingual schools which integrate minority or immigrant languages into their bilingual programs (besides English) as well as popular ICT school projects like E-Twinning and student exchange programs. The question will be raised as to what impact such programs have not only for the development of intercultural competencies but also for identity development and social cohesion.

The event aims to bring academics, practitioners, administrative staff, and policymakers together in order to discuss the challenges of school education for intercultural learning by taking into consideration the different cultural backgrounds of all stakeholders, pupils, teachers, and parents alike. A critical appreciation of various projects will allow us to deepen the debate on potential as well as problems of intercultural learning in the Turkish education system.

The event will be held in English. Simultaneous translation in Turkish will be provided.
Program

June 6, 2014– Friday

09.00-09.30  Registration

09.30-09.40  Welcoming by Leyla Neyzi, Sabanci University

Keynote speaker(s)

09.40-10.00  Yasemin Karakaşoğlu (Bremen University, Germany)

10.00-10.20  Kutlay Yağmur (Tilburg University, Netherlands)

10.20-10.30  Coffee Break

Panel I: Multilingualism

People use all sorts of (linguistic) resources to convey messages, and languages cannot be seen as static entities, much rather as “mobile speech” which appears in multimodal and multilingual forms of communication within historical and social spaces. Hence, the notions of mobility, diversity, and complexity have become paradigmatic to the study of linguistic landscapes in urban spaces of superdiversity. With regard to state education, however, language education remains heavily influenced by monoglot ideologies and a preference for English as a foreign language. Departing from fresh approaches to linguistic diversity, in this panel we will explore the potential of multi-/plurilingualism as a precondition for learning as well as a learning objective for education in general and intercultural learning respectively. Based on insights from research and best practice, issues of language maintenance, dominance, vitality, and shift will be tackled as well as power relations, cultural capital, and social cohesion.

Moderator: Kutlay Yağmur, Tilburg University, Netherlands

10.30-10.40  Introduction by the moderator

10.40-10.55  Viv Edwards, Reading University, UK

Marketing Bilingualism: Language Shift and Language Planning in Wales, UK

10.55-11.10  Müge Ayan Ceyhan, Bilgi University, Turkey

Language Diversity in Turkey: Educational Challenges and Potentials for Social Justice

11.10-11.25  Jef van der Aa, Babylon Center for the Study of Superdiversity, Netherlands

Engaging with Superdiverse Education
11.10-11.25 Almut Küppers, Mercator-IPC Fellow, Istanbul Policy Center, Turkey
Multilingualism from ground-up: The social-cultural impact of a German-Turkish-English elementary school program in urban Hanover.

11.40-12.10 Open discussion

12.10-13.30 Lunch

Panel II: Media & (Communicative) Mobility

Mobility projects in schools aim to bring students and teachers from different cultural contexts together and stimulate an intercultural exchange between them. This mobility can be “physical” by travelling to different places in order to meet each other or it can be through a virtual meeting as in the case of “communicative mobility” through using the means of information and communication technologies (ICT). This panel aims to open up a critical discussion on the practices of both physical and communicative mobility in education and their possible contributions to intercultural learning. Through the panel we will elaborate on the examples of mobility projects on the basis of the experiences from schools as well as research projects.

Moderator: Nazan Haydari, Maltepe University, Turkey

13.30- 13.40 Introduction by the moderator

13.40-13.55 Roberto Ruffino, Secretary General of Intercultura, Italy
Mobility Projects and Intercultural Learning

13.55-14.10 Søren Kristensen, Free-lance researcher and reporter, Denmark
Evaluation of exchange programs in Europe

14.10-14.25 Mirjam Hauck, The Open University, UK
Integrating Telecollaborative Networks into Foreign Language Higher Education - INTENT

14.25-14.40 Çiğdem Bozdağ, IPC, Sabanci University, Turkey
Intercultural exchange in schools through ICT. Problems and promises

14.40-15.10 Open discussion

15.10-15.30 Coffee Break

15.30-16.30 Open Wrap-Up by Viv Edwards