

Discovery Gymnasium Plauen

15. - 19. Dezember 2014



Dieser Bericht beschreibt einen workshop, angeboten vom Discovery Team für Schülerinnen und Schüler der 9.Klassen im Dresden-Plauener Gymnasium vom 15.-19. Dezember 2014. Hintergrund, Ziele und Aktivitäten sind präsentiert sowie Ergebnisse ausgewertet aus der Sicht derer, die involviert waren. Schlussfolgerungen sind gezogen und Vorschläge für die Zukunft unterbreitet worden.

1. Hintergrund

1.1 Discovery

Das Discovery Team besteht aus Erwachsenen, die nicht Deutsche sind. Sie sind Dresdner Bürger und durch den Dual Career Service (DCS), Stabstelle Diversity Management der TU Dresden zusammengekommen. Einer oder eine von ihnen oder ein Familienmitglied ist an der Universität beschäftigt. Der DCS zielt auf die Unterstützung der persönlichen Entwicklung und der beruflichen Integration in die deutsche Gesellschaft. Das kann recht herausfordernd sein bei begrenzten Sprachkenntnissen, beschränktem zeitlichen Aufenthalt und verschiedensten familiären Verantwortlichkeiten. (wie die Betreuung von Kleinstkindern). Die agierende Gruppe umfasste 15 Personen aus 13 verschiedenen Ländern mit einem breiten Spektrum akademischer, beruflicher und persönlicher Fähigkeiten und Interessen.



Es war vorgesehen, das Discovery Team sollte mit Schulen zum gegenseitigen Vorteil arbeiten, einschließlich Vorteile für das Team, die Schülerinnen und Schüler, Lehrerinnen und Lehrer sowie die Familien.

Vereinbart wurde auch, dass die gesamte Discovery Arbeit auf folgenden gemeinsamen Prinzipien beruhen sollte: Auf einer breiten Beteiligung aller in der Projektplanung und -auswertung, einem Versprechen zur Aktivität, Reflektion, Zusammenarbeit, kreativem und kritischem Lernen und Respekt vor der Vielfalt.

Zu einer Einladung mit dem Gymnasium Plauen zu arbeiten war das Team durch den Besuch einer Lehrerkonferenz im September 2014 gekommen, in dem Ideen für eine Zusammenarbeit diskutiert worden waren. Diese beinhalteten professionelle Expertise, den Lehrplan unterstützend (z.B. in Fächern der Naturwissenschaften und Sprachen); persönliche und kulturelle Erfahrungen zu teilen sowie Projektarbeit anzuleiten.

1.2 Dezember Workshop

Im Oktober 2014 wurde das Discovery Team gebeten einen 3-Tagesworkshop zu planen und durchzuführen zum Thema 'Jugend und Werte' mit 9 Klässlern. Das Discovery Team setzte für den Workshop folgende Ziele:

Für die Schülerinnen und Schüler:

- Verbesserung ihrer Englischkenntnisse
- Von Menschen aus anderen Kulturen zu lernen
- Eigene Werte und Überzeugungen zu reflektieren und von denen anderer zu lernen
- Ihr kritisches und kreatives Denken und Verständnis lokaler sowie globaler Angelegenheiten

Für Discovery Team Members

- Neue Freunde zu gewinnen
- Sich für eine interessante und bedeutsame Arbeit zu engagieren
- Das Plauer Gymnasium, seine Lehrer/innen- sowie Schüler/-innen kennenzulernen

Insgesamt aus dem Experiment wollte das Discovery Team lernen:

- Welchen Nutzen brachte der Workshop den Teilnehmer/-innen?
- Welche waren die Herausforderungen für jede Gruppe und wie war ihnen zu begegnen?

Und schließlich, auf der Erfahrung basierend ...

- Welche Vorschläge gab es für die zukünftige Arbeit?



2. Workshop

Alle Aktivitäten wurden auf der Basis der Projektprinzipien und -ziele ausgewählt und mit dem Discovery Team entwickelt.

“(…) beim Ausprobieren und Vorbereiten der Workshops führten immer Anregungen vonseiten der Gruppe dazu diese zu verbessern – viele tolle Ideen kamen da zusammen!”

Kleine Gruppen waren gebildet worden, um mit den fünf 9ten Klassen – in Englischer Sprache zu arbeiten- eine Lehrerin oder Lehrer blieb jeweils bei der Klasse.



Tag 1

Aktivität	Warum?
Namenspiel: jede/r wählt einen Ton, eine Aktion, mit ihrem/seinem Namen verbunden. Im Kreis wird jedes Namen, Aktion und Ton wiederholt.	Damit das Discovery Team die Namen der Schüler/-innen lernt. Für Freude und Entspannung.
Grundregeln: In der Gruppe werden Regeln für den Workshop vereinbart und diskutiert	Um Regeln einzuführen, die den Schüler/-innen erlaubt, am workshop teilzunehmen.
Karte des Lebens: Die Schüler zeichnen einen Zeitstrahl bedeutsamer Angelegenheiten: (Menschen, Orte, Objekte, Begebenheiten, Aktivitäten) aus ihrem Leben bis heute. Discovery Team präsentiert eigene Karte.	Um über sich selbst zu reflektieren, was wichtig ist. Um bedeutsame Informationen mit anderen zu teilen, Ähnlichkeiten sowie Verschiedenheiten zu demonstrieren.
Wichtigste Veränderung (MSC): Die Schüler/-innen wählen Ereignis aus letzten 5 Jahren (seit sie in der Schule sind) welches wichtig ist für sie. Schüler/-innen hören anderen zu, diskutieren und wählen das wichtigste aus.	Darüber nachzudenken, was wichtig ist für uns und für andere. Um Diskussionsfähigkeiten zu erlernen (entsprechend der zur Verfügung stehenden Zeit)

Tag 2

Aktivität	Warum?
Ausstellung von Anlässen: Schüler/innen zeigen Bilder, die zeigen, was sie angeht. Sie diskutieren die Bilder und verbinden Beschreibungen dieser Anlässe sowie deren Auswirkungen.	Um über Probleme etwas zu erfahren, die bedeutsam für die Gruppe sind. Um den Unterschied zwischen der objektiven Realität (siehe Bild) und der subjektiven (was das Problem repräsentieren könnte) Die Auswirkung der Probleme betrachten.
Diskussions Rad: Schüler/-innen überzeugen einander über die Bedeutsamkeit der Themen, für die sie sich entschieden haben.	Über Problem zu lernen, die bedeutsam für andere sind.



Themen-Markt: Durch Diskussion überzeugen Schüler/-innen andere das Thema 'zu kaufen' das sie anbieten.	Von Problemen zu lernen, die bedeutsam für die Gruppe sind. Gruppen mit einem gleichen Interesse formen. Die relative Bedeutung der Probleme betrachten.
Ideale Zukunft: Schüler/-innen gestalten Poster, um alles zu zeigen was sie bereits über das Problem wissen. Dann gestalten sie ein Poster, das präsentiert, was die ideale Zukunft für ihr Problem wäre, auch wenn diese nicht existiert.	Um zu zeigen, was bereits über das Problem bekannt ist Um mögliche Alternativen in Betracht zu ziehen.
Meilensteine: Schüler/-innen schauen sich anderer Arbeit an. Sie bieten Ideen an, wie zwischen das erste und zweite Bild zu kommen wäre.	Um Ideen mit anderen Gruppen zu teilen, und um zu beginnen über Aktionsschritte nachzudenken.

Tag 3

Aktivität	Warum?
Spring, stop, klatsch: Students follow orders which become reversed	To focus attention To have fun and relax
Why chain: In groups students explore the causes of their issue by asking 'Why?' questions	To consider a range of causes of the problem and how these are connected
Issue tree: In groups students draw a tree diagram to further explore their issue; causes (and how these are interrelated), impacts (and how these are interrelated), and possible solutions	To consider a range of causes of the problem and how these are connected To consider a range of impacts of the problem and how these are connected To consider possible solutions based on knowledge of causes and impacts
SMART action plan: students identify one action they can take. It should be Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timebound.	To learn about and practice SMART planning To identify an action to begin tackling the issue
Feedback: Students complete a feedback form with closed and open questions.	For students to reflect on experience of the workshop For others' to learn about students' experience of the workshop
Exhibition: Students visit each other's classrooms and see what other classes and groups have done	To see what other groups have done



3. Impact

In order to understand the impact of the workshop research into the experience of participants was carried out.

3.1 The Discovery team

The Discovery team met and collated their feedback in early January. Individuals' ideas were grouped into categories and prioritised. The following factors were identified as important by the group, although the relative importance differed between group members.

3.1.1 Anticipated benefits

3.1.1.1 Make new friends

The Discovery team agreed that they had developed their relationships through taking part in the project. As one person said "people get closer, make friends, get along with people because of the team work". Another reported that:

"I was continually impressed by how dedicated the team were, and how supportive of me (for example with my time challenges, looking after my son) and each other."



3.1.1.2 Engage in interesting and meaningful work

Doing something positive for the community was described as a significant motivating factor by the team. Overall they found the experience “extremely unusual and rewarding.” The group felt that all participants gained “culture experience exchange etc.” from working “alongside people from other cultures”. They thought that students benefitted from the workshop.

“I think, this workshop helped (students) to think deeply about their lives and things that are important in their lives. Also they thought about different issues and I hope that they have learned that they should not be apathetic about these problems.”

“Students could develop their understanding about their selves, family, friends, school, city or even world in which they live and increased confidence to talk about their views.”

3.1.1.3 Learn about Plauen Gymnasium staff and students

The Discovery team benefitted from “thinking about our own lives and students’ lives”. For some this was the first “experience working with teenagers”; for others with teaching experience the value was “to be in a classroom again, but this time with foreign students”. The team felt they learned through “think/discussion/play

together with students". Some were interested to experience how a German school operates, and "how the same activities were approached differently within each class". The team enjoyed working with teachers who were generally "warm hearted and very helpful".

3.1.2 Unanticipated benefits:

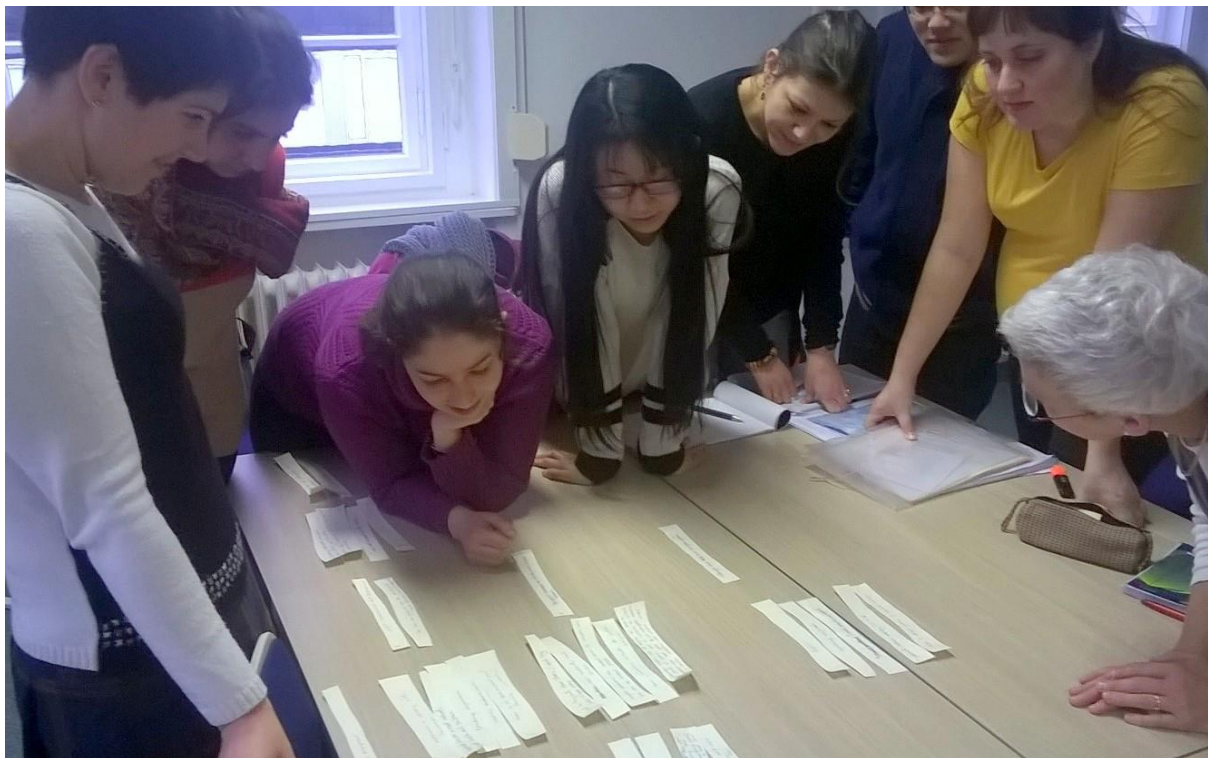
3.1.2.1 Teaching experience

Everyone on the team, including those with teaching experience, felt they developed their teaching skills through preparing for and giving the workshop. One person commented this meant that they learnt "to be open minded and flexible" which they saw as very positive.

3.1.2.2 Educational tools and techniques

The team reported that they benefitted from learning and facilitating the activities of the workshop. For some these were "new education techniques"; for others the value was "to try out new ideas and to try old ideas in new ways". The team felt that the activities helped them and students to develop the following skills: "team work and cooperation"; "critical and creative thinking; and "problem solving". The team also enjoyed the opportunity to focus on "global and social problems".

More broadly the team valued the chance to "see how a project can be developed and become real", through their involvement at each stage.



3.1.2.3 Self- confidence

Another unanticipated benefit that the team reported for themselves and students was increased self- confidence. It was felt that the activities "help shy people to

communicate with others". One group reported that: "We saw some students who were relatively shy become more active and involved as the work-shop progressed."

"I was (...) encouraged by the fact that on the first day after some initial hesitation they (students) felt comfortable enough to ask questions about our cultures without worrying about us being sensitive or offended. They were respectful but brave."

3.1.2.4 English

The English level of team members varies, including 2 native level speakers. For all of those for whom English is an additional language the opportunity to use English was seen as valuable. This was more significant for those with a lower level of English. For other team members developing German is a priority. Several team members suggested that using the student's first language would have enabled greater participation. One observer commented that using English was a great equaliser as it was a second language for most of the participants.

3.1.3 Challenges

3.1.3.1 Logistics

The time allocated for the workshop (total time, and how the time was to be divided) changed a few times during the planning process. This meant that activities had to be rewritten, rescheduled and ultimately a different schedule developed for each class. In addition there were several room changes and changes to timings during the workshop.

3.1.3.2 Communication

There was limited communication between teachers in the school and the Discovery team during the planning of the workshop and no contact between students and the team. This may have led to the confusion over what the workshop was about. As one team member described:

"The challenge was I think that they (students) couldn't understand in the beginning the goal of this workshop – what should we learn and what will teachers ask us in the end."

Another commented:

"Communication between our team and the school was also a challenge. It was not clear to me until very late into the project what the school were expecting. (...) In addition it was clear that communication between teachers and between teachers and pupils had been limited. Some of my time during the workshop was taken up clarifying the workshop for teachers and pupils. I found this stressful."

Lack of communication between teachers and the Discovery team mean that the role of teachers within each group varied greatly with some teachers taking part as participants, others standing back as observers, and others maintaining a 'teacher' role (for example disciplining students or providing explanations). Each of these roles has potential value but this would be enhanced through better communication between facilitators and teachers.



3.1.3.3 Behaviour management

At times many of the team found managing students' behaviour difficult. Problematic behaviour included "verbal bullying" between students, students talking over others and not following instructions. The team felt uncertain if and how to discipline students, as they were anticipating a more equal relationship would be possible. As one said:

"Working alongside our team meant that students had to reframe the familiar students' teacher relationship. This led to different responses from students some of whom appeared to want facilitators to take a 'disciplinarian' role for example by misbehaving in a way that demanded correction. Others were able to engage in a more equal relationship which gave them the opportunity to get to know people from other cultures."

Ideas to improve behaviour from the team include:

- Work with smaller groups
- Mix female and male students within groups
- Make participation voluntary
- Include students in planning the workshop to ensure it is interesting

3.1.4 Conclusions

The experience of planning and delivering the workshop was overwhelmingly positive for the Discovery team. They felt they made a positive contribution to the school; that they improved their relationships with others on the team; and learnt about students and teachers in the school. In addition they developed teaching skills;

their knowledge of educational tools and techniques; their self-confidence and their English. Challenges the team experienced included the logistics; the lack of shared understanding between the team and the school over the purpose and structure of the workshop; and managing students' behaviour.

The team recommend improved communication between the team, the teachers and students in preparing future activities.

3. 2 Students

Students' feedback was gathered through forms given on the last day. A Likert scale was used to assess the achievement of the 6 aims for students (below). Students were also asked to comment on what they learnt; liked, didn't like and for further suggestions.



3.2.1 Anticipated benefits

The chart (Chart 1. below) shows the extent to which students agreed that the workshop helped them to develop skills 1-6 (listed below). We can group the responses broadly into three categories: agree (including strongly agree and agree); disagree (including strongly disagree and disagree) and neither agree nor disagree. For every item the level of agreement is higher than disagreement, which suggests students consider that in the workshop they developed the 6 skills to some extent. Interestingly, item 6 has similar numbers of agree, disagree and neither agree nor disagree.

“Being part of this workshop helped me to develop my ...

1. English communication skills
2. critical thinking skills
3. creative thinking skills

4. collaborative skills
5. reflective skills
6. intercultural awareness”

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES: ALL PARTICIPANTS
(107 Students attending 9th class)

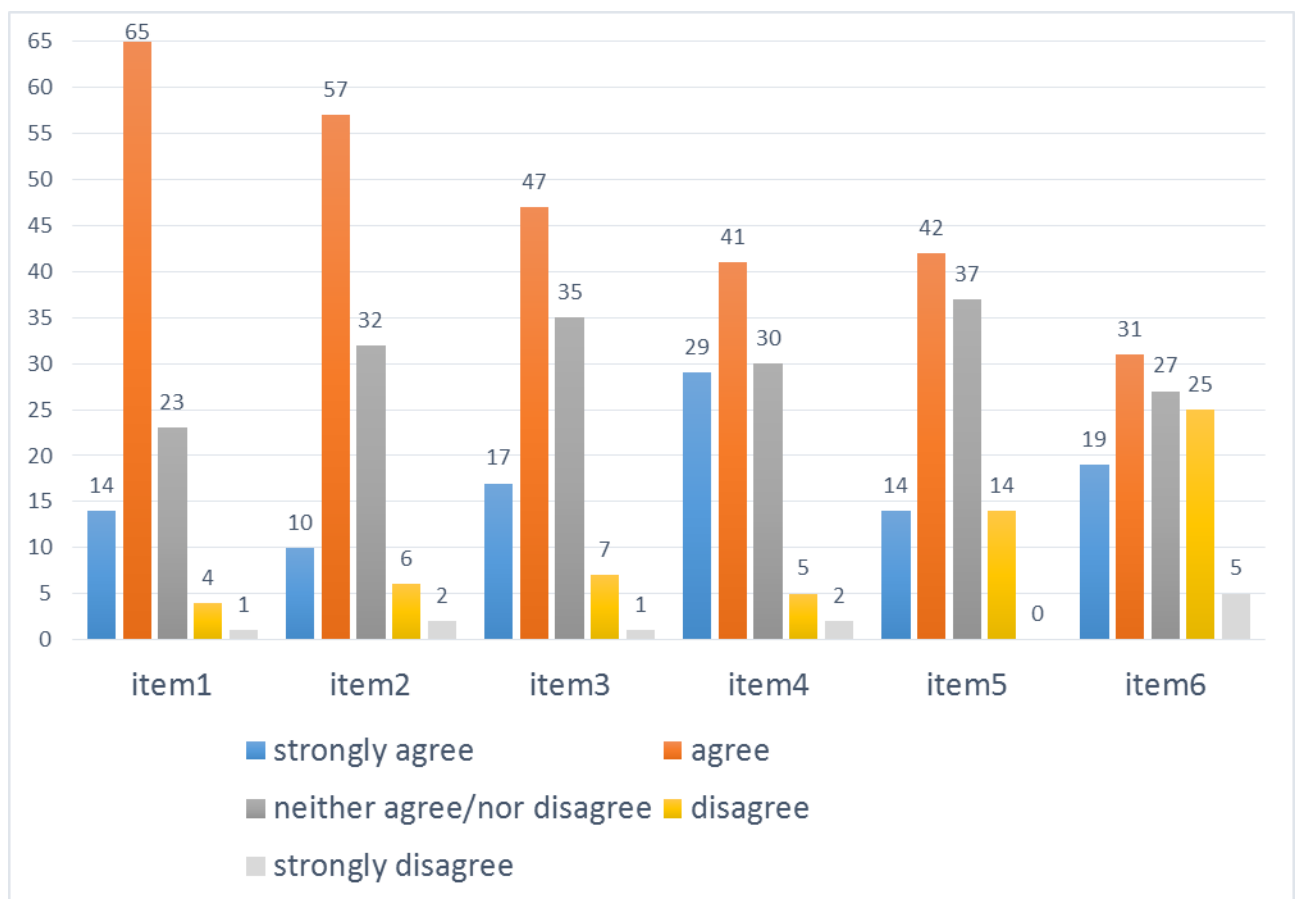


Chart 1. Distribution of responses all participants

3.2.1.1 English communication skills

14 students *strongly agreed* and 65 students *agreed* with this statement, while 4 students *disagreed* and 1 student *strongly disagreed*. Overall agreement was 79, and disagreement 5, with 23 students who neither agreed nor disagreed.

The vast majority of students saw the fact that the workshop was carried out in English as positive. In their comments speaking English ranked highly as both a “like” and an area of learning. Some students said that they had learnt new words, others described improving their confidence using English; another found hearing a variety of accents valuable. A far fewer number of students “didn’t like” using English, although clearly this was challenging for all students. As one Discovery team member noted:

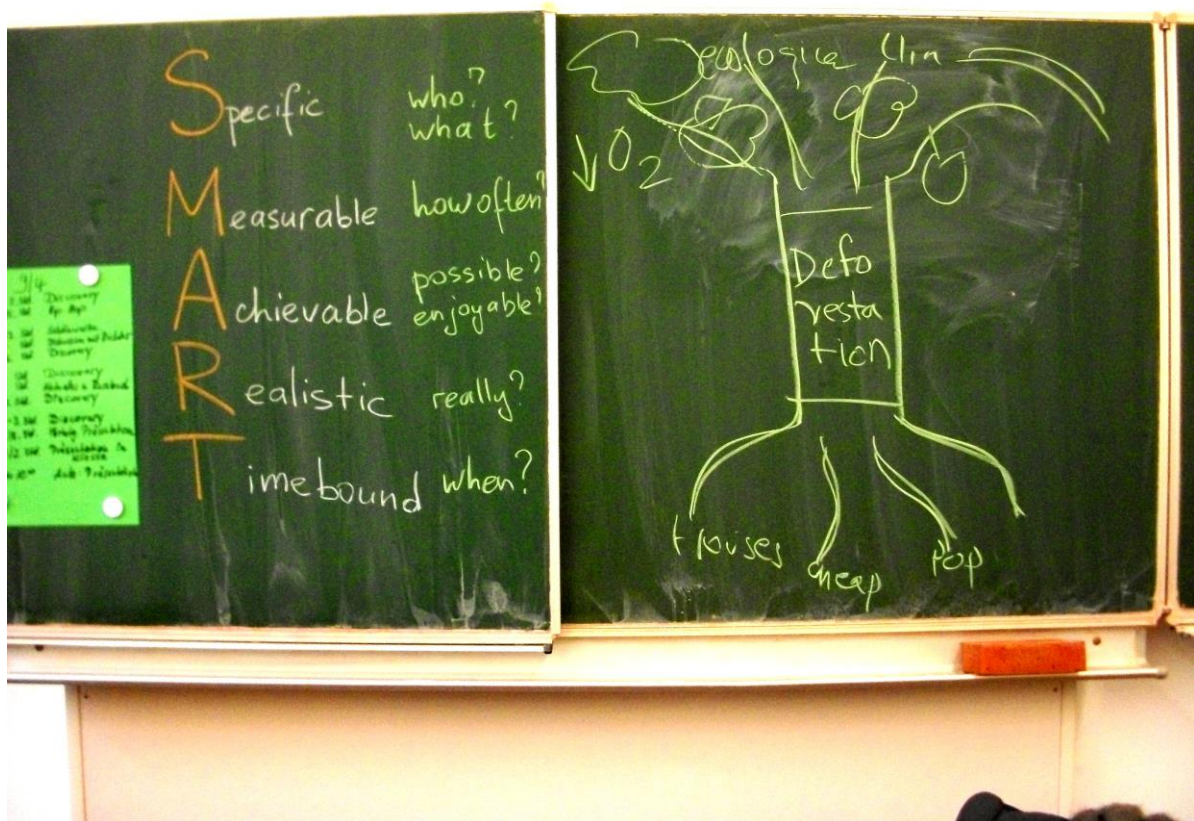
“Expressing themselves in English was a challenge for most of the students. (...) I understand that this can be particularly frustrating when your ideas are extremely subtle/intricate.”

Some students complained about confusing instructions or facilitators who were hard to understand. They recommended that facilitators speak slowly, loudly and clearly.

3.2.1.2 Critical Thinking skills

10 students *strongly agreed* and 57 students *agreed* with this statement, while 6 students *disagreed* and 2 students *strongly disagreed*. Overall agreement was 67 and disagreement was 8, with 32 students who neither agreed nor disagreed.

Students reported developing their critical thinking skills through the activities and some said they had found linking causes, impacts and solutions helpful. Many students also said they both enjoyed and learnt from the chance to focus on problems with local and global dimensions. However several commented that they wanted to go “deeper” into the topics but lacked time and information. As one said “we needed more info on the topics”. Another student suggested it would be useful to “watch movie about important issue to have more facts”.



3.2.1.3 Creative Thinking skills

17 students *strongly agreed* and 47 students *agreed* with this statement, while 7 students *disagreed* and 1 student *strongly disagreed*. Overall agreement was 64 and disagreement 8, with 35 students who neither agreed nor disagreed.

Several students commented that they liked graphic activities such as the life map and issue tree which were used to explore the issues they selected. As one student said: "I liked the games, because they helped us to understand things better. (...) It was very cool and creative". Others may have been unclear about the concept of creative thinking, indicated by the high number who neither agreed nor disagreed.

3.2.1.4 Collaborative skills

29 students *strongly agreed* and 41 students *agreed* with this statement, while 5 students *disagreed* and 2 students *strongly disagreed*. Overall agreement was 70 and disagreement was 7, with 30 students who neither agreed nor disagreed. There was the greatest representation of "strongly agree" from any of the items.



The finding is reinforced by students' comments where working in groups was the second most popular "like" (after games and activities). Team working was also highlighted as a significant area of learning by many students. It is clear that students also learnt from each other through working in groups. One student said "I learnt something about classmates and their opinions". Another enjoyed the opportunity to "hear other arguments and get another thinking about something".

Working together was also at times challenging. Several students noted they "didn't like" working with others in their class. One student commented that it was "sometimes too loud when we worked in groups" for another it was too "disorganised".

3.2.1.5 Reflective skills

14 students *strongly agreed* and 42 students *agreed* with this statement, while 14 students *disagreed*. Overall agreement was 56 and disagreement was 14, with 37 students who neither agreed nor disagreed.

This ambivalence is supported by observations of the Discovery team who noted that students found reflection, for example in the Lifemap activity, challenging. The high number of "neither agree nor disagree" suggests that the concept of reflection may be unfamiliar to some students.

3.2.1.6 Intercultural awareness

19 students *strongly agreed* and 31 students *agreed* with this statement, while 25 students *disagreed* and 5 students *strongly disagreed*. Overall agreement was 50 and disagreement is 30, with 27 students who neither agree nor disagree. This represents the weakest area of achievement overall, which is significant when we consider that it was a central aim of the project.

The finding is supported by students' comments which showed that while many students enjoyed and had learnt from the international team there could have been a

greater focus on this. This was reinforced by students' recommendations for future activities. For example, one student suggested:

"I think it would be cool if we can learn more about the cultures from the discovery people (their problems in their teenage time)".

3.2.2 Other comments

3.2.2.1 Games and activities

A large number of students said they enjoyed the games and activities. The game "Change places" was particularly popular across classes. As one student said "I liked the activities, step by step to make a presentation for example, and to discuss with a partner and change meanings."



However, some students found some of the activities childish. The least popular was the name game which several commented felt like "a kindergarden activity". The purpose of activities was not always clear to students, as one said "students must know aims of the task".

3.2.2.2 Atmosphere

Several students commented that they liked the relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Students mentioned that the team were "friendly" and "kind", and that they enjoyed the chance to work with adults who were not their teachers. This was echoed by a member of the Discovery team who felt that they "managed to create (an) environment of freedom and experimentation."

3.2.2.3 Time management

Some students appreciated the opportunity to “have a lot of time to think and collect ideas”. However this varied between individuals and groups. Some complained there was not enough time, while others found “sometimes it was a bit boring, because there was too much time to work it out.”

Many students were concerned that break times were different and sometimes too short. They said that having clear and sufficient break times is important.

3.2.2.4 Assessment

Some students said that they didn't like having to do a presentation of their work. Several otherwise positive students complained that the workshop hadn't allowed them to gather work towards their portfolio.

3.2.3 Ideas for the future

The two most frequent recommendations were that students wanted more opportunity to learn about other cultures, and to be involved in planning future activities to ensure topics and activities are interesting for them. In addition it was recommended that more technology, such as the internet, be used. Other topics suggested were music, sport, art and a focus on languages other than English.

3.2.4 Conclusions

Most students were positive about their involvement in the workshop. Some students were extremely positive, the majority positive overall but with some reservations and a small minority negative. The vast majority of students enjoyed working with 'internationals' and would like more opportunity to learn about other cultures. The strongest reported areas of learning were collaboration, critical and creative thinking. The weakest were reflection and intercultural learning. Students enjoyed most of the games and activities, and working together. They appreciated the chance to work in a relaxed atmosphere with non-teachers. Some would have liked the chance to explore the topics in more detail, for example through using technology. Priorities for students include assessment, knowing the purpose of activities and having sufficient break times.

3.2.5 Validity

In statistics Cronbach's α (alpha) is used as a estimate of the reliability of a psychometric test. Reliability tells us whether or not an experiment is reproducible, and therefore if the findings are valid. In this study Cronbach's α (alpha) was calculated as %73 (N=6). This shows that participants (107 students) responded the questionnaire sincerely. The findings have high internal validity as students comments correlated strongly to the Likert scale responses.

benefitted from considering the issues raised by students: “I got input to open my mind concerning the problems the students raised”.

Teachers agreed that there were some challenges. All teachers felt that the purpose of the workshop and activities should have been clearer for them and students before starting work. One teacher commented that the lack of clarity reduced some students’ involvement as “they didn’t know where they were going”. This may have contributed to varying levels of participation from teachers. It was clear that teachers took different roles in different groups. As one teacher said:

“I didn’t know what my role was. It wasn’t clear what was wanted from me, what the purpose was or what would happen.”

In another class the teacher had asked a facilitator what role he should take and was asked to “join in”, which he did. An observer to the group felt this had helped students to participate actively from the start.

While the topic of the workshop was seen as beneficial, it was also recognised as challenging for students. As one teacher wrote

“it is always a challenge to discuss a problem deeply and thoughtfully, even more so when you are a young person and used to the superficial formations in our media (...) it was hard for them to face the issues and to find ways how to work on possible solutions”.

Teachers reported that in some cases activities went on too long. They felt that this resulted in students losing interest. It was suggested that using the internet to research topics in more detail could improve the quality of students work. One teacher who ran a different project during the week commented that she and a colleague didn’t have enough time to work on their project with students. She suggested that there might be opportunity to co-ordinate between the various projects in the future. In general teachers would have liked to learn more about the Discovery team as individuals; including their cultural backgrounds and personal experiences.

The teachers agreed that closer planning together with the Discovery Team would improve the experience of the workshop for students and themselves. It was agreed that representatives from the Discovery Team join the school in planning the activity next year. The Discovery team were also invited to attend regular teacher meetings and other school events such as parent teacher association meetings (Eltern Rat). Other suggestions from teachers included more class projects, tandems and regular presentations from the Discovery Team.

4. Summary of conclusions

The experience of planning and delivering the workshop was overwhelmingly positive for the Discovery team. They felt they made a constructive contribution to the school; that they improved their relationships with others on the team; and learnt about students and teachers. In addition they developed teaching skills; their knowledge of educational tools and techniques; their self-confidence and their English. They enjoyed the opportunity to explore issues with students, and felt their own knowledge and skills developed as a result. Challenges the team experienced included the logistics; the lack of shared understanding between the team and the

school over the purpose and structure of the workshop; and managing students' behaviour.

Most students were positive about their involvement in the workshop. Some students were extremely positive, the majority positive overall but with some reservations and a small minority negative. The vast majority of students enjoyed working with 'internationals' and would like more opportunity to learn about other cultures. The strongest reported areas of learning were collaboration, critical and creative thinking. The weakest were reflection and intercultural learning. Students enjoyed most of the games and activities, and working together. They appreciated the chance to work in a relaxed atmosphere with non-teachers. Some would have liked the chance to explore the topics in more detail, for example through using technology. Priorities for students include assessment, knowing the purpose of activities and having sufficient break times.

Overall teachers considered that the workshop had been successful. They felt that students benefitted from groupwork, activities, using English, considering their values and issues of interest to them and working with the internationals. Some teachers felt that the purpose of the workshop and activities was not clear to students or themselves. Teachers reported that in some cases activities went on too long. The teachers agreed that closer planning together with the Discovery Team would improve the experience of the workshop for students and themselves.

5. Recommendations

Students and teachers should be more involved in planning future activities with the Discovery team, which includes their involvement in selecting aims, activities and assessment methods. This could increase understanding of and interest in activities, and ensure they connect better with school systems, procedures and priorities. Additional skills and relationships will also be developed through the process. Time must be identified for different groups to contribute to future projects. To best benefit from the diverse backgrounds, skills and interests of teachers and Discovery Team members it is important that time is given for them to meet and to negotiate how they will work together, rather than prescribe roles or specific practices.

