MULTICULTURALISM AT CZECH UNIVERSITIES AS A PREDICTOR OF DIVERSITY WORK PLACE. THE CASE OF STUDENTS FROM FORMER SOVIET UNION.

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Abstract

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The study is focused on the problematic of spreading multiculturalism at universities in the Czech Republic. The number of immigrants mostly from regions of Eastern Europe coming to work and live in the country keeps growing. From previous research, it is apparent that success in dealing with immigrants at Universities and in the work places is conditioned by the perception of minorities and vice versa. Whereas most of the research is focused on the perception of minority groups, there is a lack of research data regarding the perception of majority groups. The current study is concerned with the perception of a majority group by foreign students from former Soviet Union studying at Czech universities. The methods were chosen to achieve the research objectives. We used free associations, which are best to explore the perception dimensions. A group of foreign students from the former Soviet Union (N = 55) studying at Czech universities were interviewed via the Internet. The research results proved the validity of Susan Fiske's Model of Stereotype Content of inter-group perception based on agency – communion dimensions. Moreover, the findings showed how different cultures and social backgrounds change the patterns of judgment. These data are considered to be highly important for work in diversified groups. Practical applications of the research outcomes and future directions are discussed.

multiculturalism, universities, diversity, perception, free associations

Globalization in Europe and in the Czech Republic

Repeatedly and in different contexts, the present post-modern society is thought of as globalized with globalization being basically a spontaneous uncontrolled process leading to efficient productivity of businesses by removing all political and social barriers of the market Rašticová (2010). However, this process is neither new nor unknown. Turek (2004) cites I. Wallerstein saying that globalization is a process that has existed in parallel with the development of the international trade since the 17th century. Although the historic roots of globalization are also mentioned by other authors such as (Baroš, 2006), it is only recently that globalization has been the subject of systematic research.

Pryor devotes several pages of his comprehensive and remarkable book, The Future of US Capitalism (Cambridge University Press, 2002), to an analysis of the statistic figures describing the present globalisation dynamics with respect to four areas: the growing importance of foreign trade, the migration of labour, the international capital flows, and the information flows (see also Turek, 2004).

Apart from the economic aspect of globalization, which is no doubt the originator of the process, it is mostly the social side of this phenomenon that most affects the lives of people. Massive migration

of population has brought about significant changes in the social order of many European countries in a historically short time. Further development of a number of advanced countries will be immediately conditioned by their capability of coping with the growing numbers of immigrants from various cultures in an effective and efficient way. Also in the Czech Republic, which has been predominantly culturally homogeneous over the last forty years, one can observe a steep rise of immigration. (Czech Statistical Office – CSO, 2010). The present study is concerned with the social aspect of globalisation and the related problems, which undoubtedly include the growing number of immigrants.

Foreigners in the Czech Republic

What follows is the definitions of the key terms and concepts related to the subject of the research:

Foreigner *is a natural person who is not a citizen of the Czech Republic. For the purposes of the Residence of Foreigners Act, a foreigner is a natural person who is not a citizen of the Czech Republic including citizens of EU member states* (Section 1, Act No. 326/1999 Coll. concerning residence of citizens in the Czech Republic). In its definition, the Czech Statistical Office says that foreigners in the Czech Republic are persons with citizenship other than Czech, persons with no citizenship, and persons with multiple citizenships neither of which is Czech one.

Emigrant *is a person leaving its home country with an aim to settle down abroad;*

Immigrant – *is a foreigner coming to the country for a long-term stay (source: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic).* In the sequel, the term foreigner will be used, which is neutral.

For a long time, the Czech Republic has been a homogeneous country in its culture and ethnic composition, which can be accounted for by its history and political development. The situation has changed considerably over the last fifteen years (Rašticová, 2009).

The number of immigrants (foreigners residing in the Czech Republic permanently or on a long-term basis) was 77,000 on 1st January 1993 (according to the CSO), which is the day on which the Czech Republic was born.

By 1998, the number of immigrants to the Czech Republic had increased almost three times reaching 220,000 immigrants living in the Czech Republic. In 2004 the Czech Republic became an EU member state with the number of immigrants living in the Czech Republic being about 254,000.

The statistical figures from early 2008, when the Czech Republic, as a country situated inside the Schengen area, lost all its border checkpoints, indicate 438,000 foreigners with permanent or long-term residence in the Czech Republic with this number continually increasing (see Diagram 1). It is estimated that about 10 percent of the Czech citizens and Czech residents has a nationality other than Czech. Immigrants from Ukraine, Slovakia, Vietnam, Russia, and Poland are the most numerous (see Diagram 2).

Foreigners participate in numerous social groups and institutions. The following diagrams show the numbers of foreigners at different school types (see Diagram 3). At present, most of the foreigners at school are at universities with the bulk formed by the citizens of Slovak Republic (see Diagram 3), with their history, culture, and language being the closest to the Czech majority. In elementary schools, however, as evidenced by Diagram 4, children from Vietnam and Ukraine prevail with Slovak children being the third most numerous group. This suggests that the structure of students at all school types and thus also that of social ratings is going to change.

From what was said above it is clear that problems with immigrants living in the Czech Republic, and their social aspects in the first place, are rather imminent. We think that the understanding of social stereotypes, associations, viewpoints and mutual prejudices of the minority and majority groups and
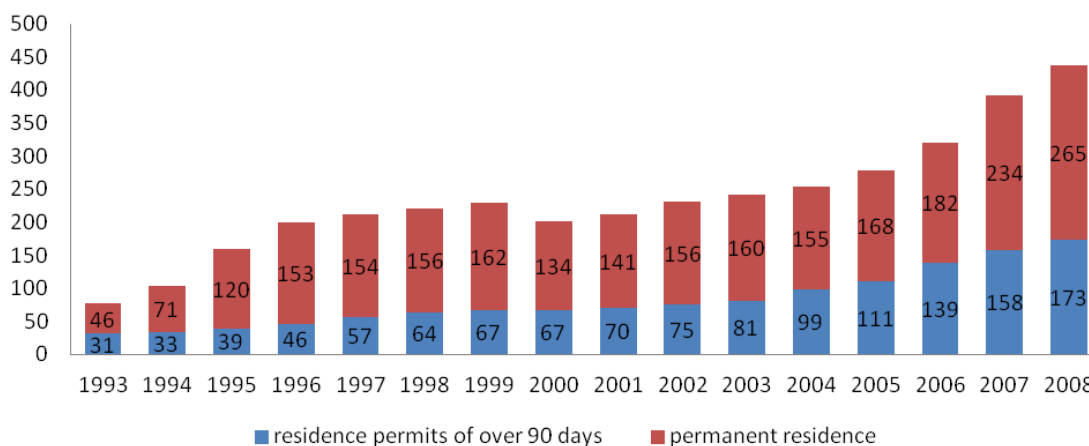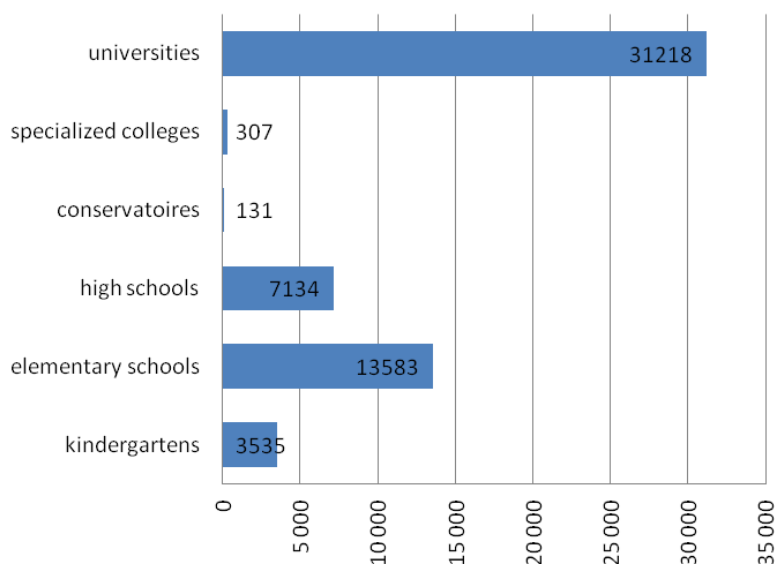

1: *Foreigner numbers in the Czech Republic with permanent residence and residence permits of over 90 days. 1993–2008 preliminary data (in thousands)*
Source: Czech Statistical Office: http://www.czso.cz/csu/cizinci.nsf/kapitola/ciz_pocet_cizincu
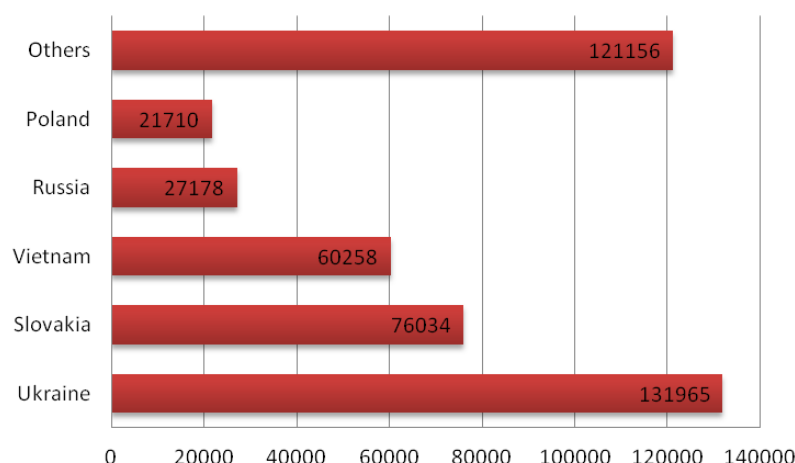
2: *Five most frequent nationalities of foreigners in CR on 31st December 2008*
Source: Czech Statistical Office: http://www.czso.cz/csu/cizinci.nsf/kapitola/
ciz_pocet_cizincu

3: *Foreigners at different school types in the Czech Republic*
Source: Czech Statistical Office: http://www.czso.cz/csu/cizinci.nsf/kapitola/
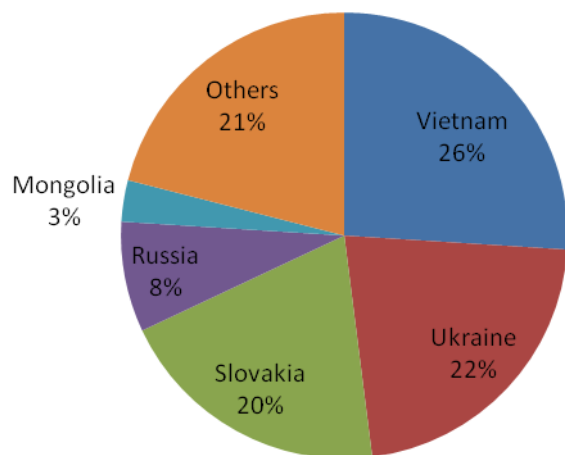ciz_vzdelavani

efforts to minimize them are the basis of successful integration of foreigners in the Czech Republic.

Foreigners in research

Immigration-related research is rather comprehensive. There is research focused on the integration of minority groups into society (Ijasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 2000; Mahalingam & McCarthy, 2000; Uherek & Černík, 2004; Tollarová, 2006), on the relations between the majority population and the minority groups, standpoints towards foreigners (Průcha, 2003, 2004, Výrost & Slaměník, 2008; Gulová & Štěpařová, 2008; Rašticová, 2010; Senichev 2010, 2010a), on the position of various groups of foreigners in the Czech Republic (Drbohlav, 1999; Kocourek,

2004; Horáková, 2009), on foreigners in the labour market (Stehlíková & Konopásková, 2008). Gender, migration and different positions of male and female foreigners in society are also among the subjects of research (Riglová & Skálová, 2008).

As evidenced by diagrams and statistics, immigrants from the Eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union form numerous groups. Related to these immigrant groups are different attitudes of the majority population and the socio-historical and political context of the Czech Republic and countries of the Eastern Europe (see, for instance, Průcha, 2004). It is worth noting that the Czech media often do not hold other nations and cultures in much esteem or show much tolerance towards them. According
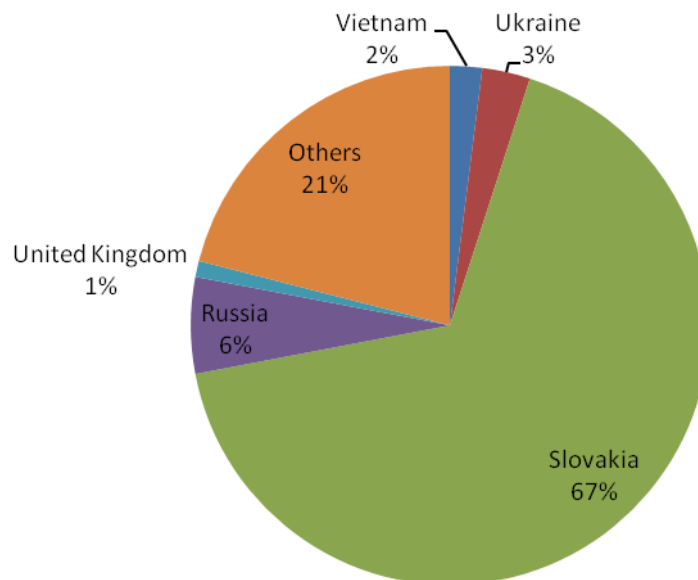
4: *Foreign students at Czech elementary schools by nationality*
Source: Czech Statistical Office: http://www.czso.cz/csu/
cizinci.nsf/kapitola/ciz_vzdelavani

has long received little research focus. A major part of such students come from countries of the Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union (most of these countries being now member states of the Commonwealth of Independent Countries – CIC with capital in Minsk).

Although the group of immigrants from the Eastern Europe and the former Soviet union is relatively well researched (Drbonhlav, Lupták, Janská & Šelepová, 1999 *et al.*), this is not so regarding students coming from this region. This project and the one following it are the first probes into this both interesting and complicated area (ibidem). In recent years, as part of the Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus international mobility programmes, Fulbright scholarship etc.[1], students, researchers, and lecturers have been coming to the Czech Republic for short and long study stays or internships, sometimes even for a full-

5: *Foreign students at Czech Universities by nationality*
Source: Czech Statistical Office: http://www.czso.cz/csu/cizinci.nsf/
kapitola/ciz_vzdelavani

to outcomes of the Media and Minorities research project (2003), it is the media that create the image of foreigners and ethnical and national minorities in the Czech Republic (with an apparent impact on education) being basically responsible for the foreigner = criminal mental shortcut.

International students in the Czech Republic

According to Senichev (2010), the situation of the international students in the Czech Republic

time university study. Under these circumstances, foreigners often find themselves amid Czech society having to communicate with and exist among the Czechs (Senichev, 2010).

As already mentioned, foreigners come from divers social and ethnic groups with different traditions customs and ideas. The foreigners and the locals communicate with each other on an intercultural basis sometimes smoothly and

1   For more information please go at:
     http://www.naep.cz/index.php?a=view-project-folder&project_folder_id=34
     http://www.fulbright.cz/
     http://www.msmt.cz/

simply but sometimes with problems leading to misunderstanding. Work with international students and researchers is a good way of improving the way universities and higher-education institutions work and, subsequently, motivating the best to stay here working at universities, with non-profit organisations or private companies (Senichev, 2010). Multiculturalism in the academic and research environment may bring a number of advantages and so research projects of a similar nature can provide some insights to improve mutual cooperation.

According to the data provided by the CSO, there were 55,908 international students in the academic year 2008/2009 at all types of Czech schools. The total number of students in the Czech Republic being 2,083,176 the international students thus formed 2.7 percent of the student population (CSO).

Over one half of the international students (27.6 thousand) were at universities, more than one half were pupils of primary schools, 6 percent of them went to kindergarten and 13 percent attended a high school (ibidem). It is mostly students from Slovakia, Russia, Ukraine, Vietnam, and United Kingdom that come to study at the Czech schools (CSO).

Most of the foreign students can be found at Prague (55.4 percent of the international university students in the Czech Republic) and Brno universities (21.6 percent), these being mostly Slovak students (66.2 percent) (ibidem). After 2000 also the number of students coming from the countries of the former Soviet Union rose (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and others) (CSO). A relatively large number of students come from the United Sates, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Germany, and Poland. Students from the EU countries form 74.8 percent of all the foreign students at the Czech universities (CSO).

Social perception

Social cognition involves studying the ways in which a human individual learns about the real world, his or her social world. Thus it is individuals as well as groups of people, interpersonal relationships and situations that are being perceived. (Hewstone & Stroebe, 2006).

Interpersonal perception means understanding the way an individual perceives the characteristics and features of other people, how their emotions come across to him and how he interprets their behaviour (Baumgartner, 2008). Interpersonal perception means directing attention at the processes involving perception of and judging other people, at contents of such perceptions, at the form of stimulating information and at the functions it stimulates (Zebrovich, 1990, cited by Baumgartner, 2008). On the one hand, interpersonal perception covers perception of the way a person looks and behaves and, on the other hand, also an interpretation of such behaviour (ibidem).

Social schema covers cognitive structures representing organized cognition of a concept or stimulus (Fiske & Taylor, 1984, cited by Nakonečný, 1999). Using different schemas, one can model a great deal of information received. The schemas help us interpret new information more quickly, deciding what should be remembered (Alcock, Carment, & Sadava, 2001, cited by Výrost & Slaměník, 2008). A schema involves attributes of concept as well as relationship between these attributes. Thus, it is a certain interpretation of an object including its behavioural aspects (Nakonečný, 1999).

Attitude is a relatively stable characteristic, "psychological tendency," which is manifested in the judgement of a particular entity with a certain degree of preference or rejection (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998, cited by Výrost, 2006). Two attitude types exist. *Explicit attitude* is one of which we are aware and can be expressed (Aronson, Wilson & Akert, 2005). *Implicit attitude*, on the other hand, is an introspectively unidentified or misinterpreted trace of previous experience that causes positive and/or negative feelings, thoughts, and behaviour towards different social objects without the actor being aware of it (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). One could add that implicit attitudes are unintentional, uncontrolled, and sometimes intuitive judgements (Aronson, Wilson & Akert, 2005).

Stereotypes are conceptions, views, and attitudes taken by individuals or groups towards other groups or to themselves (Průcha, 2004). In this paper, we use the concept of a national and gender stereotype.

National stereotype is a social representation used by members of a nation about the typical representatives of another or their own nation (Kouřilová, 2006).

Heterostereotype is a representation of attributes of individuals other nations (ibidem). National stereotypes involve broader social, physical and psychical characteristics of the members of cultural entities (ibidem). According to Kouřilová (2006), national stereotypes are sometimes used to describe foreign nationals. National stereotypes involve broader social, physical and psychical characteristics of members of cultural entities (ibidem). Kouřilová (2006) says that national stereotypes are social representations used by members of a nation about the typical representatives of another or their own nation. To understand national stereotypes, it is important to realize that such stereotypes are based on certain information while satisfying certain needs of those sharing them (Kouřilová, 2006).

Regarding group perception and stereotypes, Fiske *et al.* (2002) provided a detailed model of stereotyped contents in a perception formulating two basic independent dimensions, *warmth and competency,* which explain both interpersonal and group cognition.

Even though many research results show that warmth and competency are consistent, it is clear that the perception of warmth comes first, warmth

is judged prior to competency with judgments concerning warmth being given more importance where affective and behavioural reactions are involved (Fiske, 2006; Rašticová, 2009).

Research objective

The present study aims to find out what associations a Czech university student evokes in a foreign student. To achieve this research objective, we used a method of free associations (see below).

Data sample

The data sample included international university students from countries of the former Soviet Union studying at Czech universities. The total number of respondents N = 55 (13 males a 42 females), average age = 22.61 years. The respondents come from the following countries: Russian Federation (N = 15; N_{male} = 7; N_{female} = 8), Belarus (N = 12; N_{male} = 3; N_{female} = 9), Ukraine (N = 14; N_{male} = 2; N_{female} = 12), Poland (N_{female} = 3), Moldova (N_{female} = 2), Kyrgyzstan (N_{female} = 1), Kazakhstan (N = 4; N_{male} = 1; N_{female} = 3), and Armenia (N_{female} = 3). The respondents study various university courses and specialisations in the Czech Republic.

Data collection procedure

A questionnaire was devised for this inquiry and stored for download at http://web-kleo.wz.cz/ (see Senichev, 2010). Respondents were addressed and asked to fill in an online questionnaire using university servers, Internet servers, and mailing lists. In this way we wanted to make sure that as many potential respondents as possible are addressed. As this is a large and rather heterogeneous group of students characterised by various degrees of membership of associations and groups, we decided to contact the potential respondents through their acquaintances, friends, and colleagues in Brno, Prague and other Czech cities (method of "snow ball") as well as through the information system of Masaryk University, and selected Internet servers (vkontakte.ru, facebook.com, mail.ru, skype.com).

The message to the respondents was written in Russian[2]. The questionnaire itself, however, was submitted in Czech with the respondents being able to associate in Russian and use the Roman type. Writing Russian words in Roman letters is fairly usual among the students from Eastern Europe and

countries of the former Soviet Union studying in the Czech Republic (see Senichev, 2010).

METHOD

In view of the research objective, a method of free associations was chosen that can provide some leaked information without the respondent being aware of it. As described by Wyrobková (2007), the main advantage of such a questionnaire is that it does not enforce upon the respondents any prior perspective or framework.

According to Plichtová (2002), associations as responses reflect the way people view a given concept, where they place it, what functions etc. they assign to it while being the products of a discourse rather than individual statements. It is exactly these properties of the method of free associations that make it a tool suitable for our research design. As part of a cognitive approach in psychology, associations are seen as expressing the meaning of a given concept that is stored in the semantic memory (ibidem).

In our project, the respondents were presented with two initial phrases: *Czech university male student* and *Czech university female student*. In the on-line questionnaire they could check one of the ten boxes arranged in a column (se the attachment). The respondents were not pressed for time.

In the instructions attached to the questionnaire, we encouraged the respondents to write as many words or phrases (associations) as possible in Czech or in Russian using Roman letters. The instruction also stressed that each of the associations should be related to the initial phrase rather than the previous association. By way of an example, associations were listed to the initial phrase *Czech administrative officer*. We provided for a respondent's basic demographic and personal data such as age, gender, and length of stay in CR, country of origin, field and year of study in the Czech Republic.

Analysis of the data sample

We define perception of the Czech students by the foreign students as the frequency of individual categories in each respondent. The larger the number of associations for a given category the more important the category and association is for a respondent. We did the following when categorizing the answers. At the beginning we

I: *Descriptive sample statistics*

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	St. Deviation
Age	22.61	18	30	2.59
Length of stay in CR (in years)	5.55	1	22	4.51
Year of Study	3.07	1	7	1.88

Source: Authors

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2   Russian is a communication language used in the countries of Eastern Europe: Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and others.

II: *Samples of associations given by the respondents*

Category	Male student	Female student
Competency (cognitive, moral competency, conscientiousness)	• doing nothing and then stressed by exams, • good, • assiduous, • hard-working, • untrustworthy, • lazy, • loafer, • inexperienced, • blue-eyed boy, • creativity; etc.	• studies hard, • does everything by the rules, • professional, • naive, • narrow-minded, etc;
Warmth (decency, extraversion – introversion, agreeableness)	• haughty, • blowing his nose (this is considered ill-manners in Eastern Europe), • never helps, • assistance, etc;	• haughty, • ill-bred, • closed, • „non-mischievous", • blows her nose, etc;
Outer appearance (clothes, factual attributes of a student)	• bearded, • neglected, • long hair, • athletic build, • dreadlocks, • with two litres of water, • always dresses like for a holiday, • bag, • „Mattoni" (mineral water); etc.	• pretty, • ugly, • sexy, • a bit of skirt, • blond, • with a baguette, • looks like a man, • is wearing a way too big bag[1], etc.
Hobbies (favourite pastimes, lifestyle)	• Friday (Friday is thought of as the day of student parties and clubs), • freedom, • likes beer, • enjoying life, • work and travel, • untidiness, • alcohol, • plays floorball, • happy-go-lucky, • boozer; etc.	• happy-go-lucky, • emancipated, • loves freedom, • feminist, • keeps boozing, • athletic, • parties, • shopping, • does not know how to booze; etc.
University (region, district, category belonging to university activities and study stays)	• Charles University, • exams, • credits, • Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of Charles University, • halls of residence, • fellow-student, • programming; etc.	• University of West Bohemia, Pilsen, Faculty of Law, Moravia, • University of Economics, • professors, • cafeteria, • consultation, • pedagogical faculty; etc.
Age	• 20 years, • young, • grown-up, • youth; etc.	• young, • grown-up, • youth;etc.

Source: Authors

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3   It his part it is worth noting that, in female students, associations describing outer appearance of women were relatively inconsistent: on the one hand characteristics such as pretty, attractive, sexy, a bit of skirt, sympathetic, etc. On the other hand, associations to the opposite: fat, ugly, looks like a man, slovenly, dirty hair, etc. No such differences were observed in male students (see Senichev, 2010).

created 8 to13 categories including the big five dimensions of personality, that is, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism (emotional stability), and intellect (formerly defined as openness to new experiences (see Hřebíčková & Urbánek, 1999).

Next we added warmth and competency dimensions (Fiske, 2006). According to Fiske (2006), the warmth dimension involves traits related to intentions (such friendliness, willingness to help, frankness, trustworthiness, and morality) while the competency dimension reflects traits related to perceived abilities such as intelligence, creativity, and efficiency.

Based on the associations discovered during an analysis, we further created the following categories (by Senichev, 2010): *motivation, decency, outer appearance, clothes, factual attributes of a student, hobbies, lifestyle, university, area or district, and age.* Associations that could not be assigned to any of the above categories were assigned to the *miscellaneous* category. These associations were not included in the data processing. We had the system of categories verified by two independent reviewers. In the next categorization phase, we included the *conscientiousness* and *intellect* (openness to new experiences) categories in the *competency* category.

Further subcategories such as extraversion, warmth, decency, and agreeableness were then included in the *warmth* category as these categories strongly impact behaviour.

The *outer appearance* was further divided into the following subcategories: clothes, outer appearance (such as bearded, unwashed hair) and the factual attributes of a student (such as suitcase, mp3 player, book, etc.).

The *hobbies* category included the subcategories: favourite pastimes, hobbies, and lifestyle (such as frequent unhealthy food, travelling, „boozing", etc.).

The last but one *university* category was given the following subcategories (names of universities, faculties, and departments, university exams and degree projects, credit system of education, fellow-students), area or district (Pilsen, Moravia) where the university is situated.

The last, rather separated, category is *age,* which was left independent. Such associations as „young", „youth", „grown-up", etc. may serve as an example.

Finally, the following categories were left as basic: *competency, warmth, outer appearance, hobbies, university, and age.* We discarded the *neuroticism* category, as the resulting associations did not seem to fit in. While carrying out comparative analysis, we also carried out frequency analysis of each association

III: *The frequencies of association categories in male and female respondents related to the initial words Czech university male student and Czech university female student*

Category	Sex of the Respondent	N	M	St. Deviation
competency of male student	man	13	2.54	2.67
	woman	42	2.38	2.35
competency of female student	man	13	1.46	2.33
	woman	42	1.50	1.89
warmth of male student	man	13	0.85	1.07
	woman	42	1.19	1.84
warmth of female student	man	13	0.85	1.07
	woman	42	0.90	1.65
outer appearance of male student	man	13	0.92	1.71
	woman	42	0.76	1.30
outer appearance of female student	man	13	1.23	1.54
	woman	42	1.00	1.48
hobbies of male student	man	13	1.00	1.41
	woman	42	0.71	1.29
hobbies of female student	man	13	0.92	1.04
	woman	42	0.60	1.04
association of studies of male student	man	13	0.92	1.32
	woman	42	0.45	1.11
association of studies of female student	man	13	0.77	1.42
	woman	42	0.45	1.11
association of age of male student	man	13	0.15	0.38
	woman	42	0.14	0.42
association of age of female student	man	13	0.08	0.28
	woman	41	0.17	0.50

Source: Authors

in each respondent. What follows are samples of associations given by the respondents.

Outcomes

A numerical analysis of the association frequencies has yielded the following results (see Table III).

The respondents listed most of the associations with the initial word Czech *university male student* in the competency category (males (M = 2.54[4]), females (M = 2.38).

The second most frequent category was competency in a *Czech university female student* (males (M = 1.46), females (M = 1.50).

An interesting finding is that the difference between the appraisal by males and females of a male student was considerable with the male respondents (M = 0.85) judging the warmth of a Czech university male student to be less than the female respondents did (M = 1.19). In judging the outer appearance of a male student, associations occurred more often with the male respondents (M = 0.92) than with the female respondents (M = 0.76). In judging the outer appearance of the Czech university female students, a difference was marked between males (M = 1.23) and females (M = 1.0). Thus, in males, associations related to outer appearance were more frequent than in females.

A qualitative analysis of the association contents assigned to male and female students brings more information on the occurrence and meaning of associations.

The outer appearances of male and female students were being described differently. Czech female students were described in a rather inconsistent way: there were such associations as *pretty, attractive, sexy, a bit of skirt, sympathetic* while opposite characteristics existed, too, such as: *fat, ugly, looks like a man, slovenly, dirty hair,* etc. No such differences were found in male students. As mentioned above, this may be attributed to the gender stereotypes, which attach more importance to the outer appearance in women than in men and, according to which, men more than women are assigned attributes related to the performance, profession, and expertise. Another cause may be the different dressing cultures of women in the Czech Republic and in the respondent's country of origin.

SUMMARY

Comparing the numbers of associations related to individual categories, one sees that the greatest number of associations were related to the competency category in a Czech male student, the second most frequent category was competence in a Czech female student. The male respondents ascribed warmth to a Czech male student significantly less than the female respondents did. In judging the outer appearance, the male respondents listed ore associations than the female ones. This may be caused by the Czech university students' outer appearances, behaviour, and dress codes are different from those of the students from Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union. It may also copy the traditional stereotypes in demanding that a woman should always look fresh and neat. The male students described the outer appearance in a way different from that of female students.

The Czech female students were described in a rather inconsistent way: although there were such associations as pretty, attractive, sexy, a bit of skirt, sympathetic, one could also encounter opposite attributes such as: fat, ugly, looks like a man, slovenly, dirty hair, etc. No such differences were found in male students. Here again, one can observe a certain similarity to gender stereotypes, which attach more importance to the outer appearance of women than that of men and, according to which, men more than women are assigned attributes related to the performance, profession, and expertise.

The conclusions of this study are in good correspondence with the stereotype content model of Susan Fiske, which defines agency and communion as two basic dimensions of social perception. The research results also bring valuable facts about the ways in which foreigners perceive Czechs, what is important for them, what they appreciate, and what they do not like or think problematic.

The spreading globalization will soon have to address the challenge of diversified teams grouping together people of different nations, ethnicities, and cultural environments.

Although these conclusions cannot be generalized to apply to the entire population of international university students, we believe that the present study may be used as a starting point for further studies of intercultural differences and communication both at universities and in organizations. Among the limiting factors of our research may also have been the order of the initial words, the inquiry being conducted electronically as well as the size and selection of the sample.

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4   We use averages for associations.

Despite this, the research was unique by targeting a majority group. The mutual perception of people from different co-existing cultures will no doubt affect the future decision making, behaviour, communication, and coexistence between two worlds – majority and minority groups – and further research projects should be conducted in this direction.

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